

# Food safety in chinese take-away restaurant



A field research was done to find the answer to the problem statement was: To what extent do Chinese takeaway restaurants In Learned comply with the food safety regulations of European and Dutch law? Therefore, qualitative and quantitative data was gathered as well as a broad field of literature and articles were studied. With the help of five interviews and five restaurant observations the authors could find out, that all of those checked Chinese Takeaway restaurants obviously stick to the regulations and are familiar with quality review systems like HACK.

The quality of the purchased food was each time sufficient and the taste quite similar, which is on the assumption that extremely much flavor enhancer is used in Chinese restaurants.

No support was found for the question regarding bacteria and harmful ingredients, as the researcher had no access to any laboratory to test the purchased dishes. It is recommended to go a step deeper and check those restaurants a second time with testing the food in a laboratory, thus the research would be significant. 2. Introduction: Food safety is nowadays a very prevalent aspect in eateries worldwide.

Many asses of food mishandling appear and cause finally fodder illnesses by the consumers.

Ensuring the safety of food is a shared responsibility among food business operators, industry, government, and consumers. Especially the Chinese food is on focus to be frequently contaminated respectively the restaurants are said to be rather impure. For that reason this hospitality research project was launched to find out the connections between the political theory and

<https://assignbuster.com/food-safety-in-chinese-take-away-restaurant/>

the unpleasant reality by doing a field research in Chinese Takeaway restaurants in Leerdam, The Netherlands. The project is based on the European and the Dutch Food Safety law.

The focus of the research project was to find out whether the Chinese takeaway restaurants are performing in accordance with the law and its corresponding regulations. Consequently, the context between the theory and the reality was expected to be evaluated. It is essential for a restaurant to comply with hygiene standards, for instance the HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point), as food safety is regarded to be a vital factor which is implemented in a hospitality organization. Therefore each restaurant is monitored by national Food Safety Authorities who are responsible for the enforcement of the law.

The institution European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) provides independent scientific advices with an impact on food safety. In this case authorities control, announced or unannounced, different eateries, check whether the safety regulations are well implemented or where the business has to put more effort in.

However, in fact not every restaurant sticks to these rules, although it is their responsibility, as it was seen in the last years more and more cases of foodborne illnesses were revealed in a lot of countries, like the BSE epidemic or the latest bird flu cases.

Numerous people were infected cause of a lack of hygiene and food mishandling in many restaurants. Especially Chinese restaurants “ failed to reach all legal food safety requirements” (Greenshank, 2010). Furthermore, <https://assignbuster.com/food-safety-in-chinese-take-away-restaurant/>

some doctors found out, that there is a Chinese Restaurant Syndrome which is affected by too much flavor enhancer (glutamate) in the food.

After eating Chinese food, some consumers complained about symptoms like headache, vomiting, diarrhea or sickness in general. There are some groups of people who are at a higher risk of becoming seriously ill: children, elderly people and pregnant women.

Moreover an improper storage of food, incorrect temperatures handling as well as impure kitchen equipment are also possible indications for an unsafe business. According to the US Food and Drug Administration homepage FDA. Gob there is another insecure source, the less hygiene of the employees of an organization. The pathogens will spread earlier with such circumstances and as a consequence fodder illnesses are born.

This research pointed out the hidden reason for improper food handling and safety negligence with the aid of mystery shopping and food testing.

In this experiment different Chinese takeaway restaurants were visited, food was purchased and the different meals as well as the restaurants were examined. Finally the outcome of this research is to spot out by field research if restaurants do comply with the law or even do stick to the hygiene regulations. The relevance of this project was to monitor restaurants to ensure safe food for the customers and therefore reduce the infections and illnesses which are caused by lack of hygiene and unsafe food provided by food business operators.

2. Problem Analysis: Food safety is regarded as a handling, preparation and storage of food in ways that prevent food borne illness. With regard to the increasing food safety scandals generated in China in recent years, food safety tends to be the hot topic discussed all the time of daily life. On 17 September 2008, Chinese Health Ministry authorities announced that over 6200 babies had fallen ill, many developing kidney stones, from drinking milk contaminated with melamine, a chemical used in making plastics which has been illegally added to food products in China to boost their apparent protein content.

Afterwards, melamine was found in fruit smoothies at a Chinese restaurant which was located in Graz, Austria.

These ingredients were supplied by a Chinese food store in Vienna in 2009. Recent investigation and media coverage on a few notorious incidents in China had raised great concerns regarding the country's food safety status (Cue & Ghana, 2011). As there is an old saying in China that food is the first necessity of the people, the exposure of Chinese food safety scandals helps risk communication and food safety regulation and management (Knowles, 2011).

It was estimated that approximately every year there were 1.5/2.000.

000 cases of foodborne illnesses generated in the Netherlands. 70% of these cases usually took place at home caused by insufficient hygiene, while the other 30% happened in restaurants and catering industry. The problem was revealed that what are the hidden reasons of the 30% food borne illness caused by restaurants and catering companies.

<https://assignbuster.com/food-safety-in-chinese-take-away-restaurant/>

It is assumed that especially for takeaway food, in order to provide fast service for customers, restaurants have to employ precooked and prepared food instead of fresh ingredients, which may bring positive effect on health hazards growth. Although restaurants are bound to take the responsibilities of food borne incidents, while Dutch food safety authorities are also in charge of preventing the possibilities of these incidents.

If the frequencies of authorities' inspections are not sufficient or restaurants don't comply with food safety law and regulations thoroughly, these doubts drove authors to the problem statement which was indicated in chapter 5.

Being confronted with food safety concerns nowadays, a perspective from Dutch food laws to explore the food safety of Chinese restaurants, which were located in Leerdam, was generated based on the macro environment mentioned above.

This research aimed to take a deep and concise look into the food quality from five takeaway Chinese restaurants with the assistance of interviews with restaurants operators and an expert with professional background. 3. Literature Review: "Serving safe food it's not an option it's an obligation" In the context of the hospitality research project and its associated topic, a certain amount of relevant literature has been studied to get a better understanding and awareness of the subject.

Governments regulate the food business while issuing laws and regulations and working in line with worldwide organizations like WHO or FEES. To ensure the implementation of food safety standards, authorities monitor the

food market and make those businesses accountable which do not comply with the regulations.

Each restaurant and hospitality business is individually responsible to ensure their compliance with the law. The safety of food is essential to all customers and food businesses, as the guests of a restaurant should have the confidence that they get served fresh and uncontaminated food.

To decrease the hazard of possibly infested dishes, several sectors have to work together to ensure that all food meets the consumer's expectations in terms of nature, substance and quality (The Food Safety Act, 2009).

Unfortunately more and more cases of foodborne illnesses appear especially because the most critical hazards in a restaurant / kitchen like bad cooling capacity, not enough heating of raw products or problems with personal hygiene.

The significance of this huge subject should be obvious to the entire hospitality business as each restaurant has the liability to serve and provide their customers safe food.

The main aim is to prevent foodborne illnesses and moreover to sell and serve proper food in the way it is demanded by the guests as it is assured that the food quality and safety are central issues in the minds of the consumers (Grunter, 2005). 3. 1 Critical incidents In the last few years several illnesses and diseases have been the effect of unsafe food in different food businesses.

These incidences may emerge because of an ignorance of the eateries owners concerning the hygiene standards and their negligence as well as the laziness of the employees to implement those significant rules. Besides, the topic of fodder illnesses is being discussed all over the world and in general the facts like mass production Of food due to population growth and changed food habits (Kfretters & Abdullah, 1999) are reasons for such appearing cases.

In industrialized countries, each year the percentage of people suffering from fodder diseases is reported to be up to 30%, which is also noticed that there is a global increase in recent years due to the industrialization of animal production, mass food processing and distribution, globalization of food trade and increased mobility of people and goods around the world (Carcass, Crossroads, & Cello, 2012). The risk of fodder diseases is high in areas where food is produced, processed and consumed. Approximately every year 1. 5 - 2.

MIM cases of fodder illnesses occur in the Netherlands. 70% of these cases take place at home caused by bad hygiene, the other 30% take place in restaurants and the catering industry (Mr.. De Varies, 2013). There are unfortunately many restaurants which do not comply with the hygiene standards and consequently the hazard of fodder illnesses increases.

Numerous devastating cases were mostly caused by viruses, bacteria and fungi. The consumers were infected with salmonella, e-coli or the Norris's that lead to symptoms like diarrhea, vomiting and sickness in general.



A synthesis of enumerated documented reports of food handler related outbreaks from worldwide around 233 outbreaks resulting in 16,028 cases of food poisoning the majority in restaurants and catering facilities (Mcintyre, Ballasted, Wolcott, Henderson, & Soothsay, 2012). An up to date case 2012 is an occurrence in German schools where over 4000 pupils have been infected by gastroenteritis virus.

It is presumed that the pathogen was in the frozen food the caterers delivered, but the determinations are holding on.

The author Mainline (2005) mentions, that a development of a strategic plan is essential for every school and will definitely assure the safety of foods.

Moreover an implementation of such concept reduces the fodder infections at schools and creates awareness of the importance of food safety.

Furthermore, a case in the year 2009 shocked united Kingdom. The famous “The Fat Duck restaurant” in Berkshire closed in February because of an incidence of the Norris’s in the restaurant.

529 Diners at the restaurant became ill with symptoms of diarrhea and vomiting within 48 hours of eating there.

Therefore the owner himself, Hector Blumenthal, decided to close the restaurant and the investigations were realized by the Thames Valley Health Protection unit. In addition, the “Fat Duck Restaurant” implemented a survey among the customers who complained about the restaurant by using a web-based questionnaire to identify the source of infection. This is one possibility to find out what the cause of the illnesses was. In the article of the “Fat Duck Restaurant” (Health Protection Agency, 2009) it is mentioned, <https://assignbuster.com/food-safety-in-chinese-take-away-restaurant/>

that it is essential to wash the hands with soap and water to protect against such pathogens like the Norris's.

Also alcohol-based hand rubs are generally very effective against bacteria and viruses, providing a 90-99 % reduction with a 30 second contact time.

Finally it is necessary that each restaurant is aware of the consequences of serving unsafe quality and their responsibilities. Moreover to protect the customers and the public better of such critical incidences, different measures for the final consumers as well as for the whole production and distribution chain (Carcass, Crossroads, & Cello, 2012) have to be undertaken to gather a higher understanding of the importance of safe food handling.

It is absolute important to continue improving the knowledge of good hygiene in the food operations and to highlight hazardous food handling techniques to revert cases of fodder illnesses. Further improvements especially in food safety practices are also expected by means of on-site training of the personal, management support, monetary awards, inspections, removal of perceived barriers and co-worker peer pressure (Mcintyre, Ballasted, Wolcott, Henderson, & Soothsay, 2012).

Therefore, several national and international organizations like the European Food Safety Agency or the World Health Organization are dealing with this relevant topic and are setting rules and standards for a better and safer food society and to reduce the critical incidents. 3. 2 Chinese restaurants Recent investigation and media coverage on a few notorious incidents in China, such as the melamine contamination in infant milk powder and the overuse of <https://assignbuster.com/food-safety-in-chinese-take-away-restaurant/>

cholesterol in animal food production has raised great concerns regarding the country's food safety status (Cue & Ghana, 2011).

Regarding to several articles and surveys, Chinese restaurants and takeaways have mostly dirtier kitchens than other restaurant types. A survey of hygiene ratings in Britain figured out, that of 491 examined Chinese restaurants more than the half does not meet the legal requirements for a hygiene standard (Hickman, 2010). So the majority of Chinese restaurants are not preventing food poisoning and possible fodder diseases.

The British agency " Scores on the door" works in cooperation with the Food Standards Agency and all information has been gathered by Environmental Health Officers in accordance with the British Food Safety Act 1 990 and the European Communities. They tested different types of eateries, and the results of the investigation of the Chinese restaurants were alarming. This may occur because of a disagreement of culture and language and moreover because of the difficulties of the eatery' s owners in understanding the law and the isolations (Freeing, 2010).

Furthermore it is known that there is a gap between Chinese and European food safety standards. Many of China's food safety problems can be traced back to the farm level, as the farmers rely on heavy use of chemical fertilizers for their plants and products. The Chinese government has reacted by trying to build a food safety system for exports to establish the international reputation of the country for producing safe food (Waves, 2006) as the image Of Chinese restaurants here in Europe is rather poor.

The less hygiene standards and the fact that those eateries are often places for an outbreak of Debora illnesses are alarming for the food industry. 3. 3

Organizations dealing with Food and F-DOD Safety Worldwide multiple organizations operate in the health area to ensure safe food on the market.

One example is the Codex Alimentarius Commission which develops international food, guidelines and codes of practice to shelter the health of the consumers and to assure fair trade practices in the food trade.

The commission promotes all work referring to food standards undertaken by governmental and non-governmental organizations with their slogan " safe good food for everyone" (existentialism's. Erg).

The Codex Alimentarius was established in 1963 by The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The FAO is a knowledge organization which designs and shares critical information about food by operating together with food experts and with those who need the knowledge.

Moreover the WHO is directing and coordinating authorities for health in the United Nations system (WHO), setting norms and standards and providing different techniques for countries. All the EX.

countries have to work according to HACCP written down by the World Health Organization. However, the authors Kfretters & Abdullah (1999) mentioned that WHO should intensify its efforts on the application of risk assessment for the development of standards for biological hazards in food.

Local enforcements, ministries for health, agriculture, environment and trade, all these have to work in cooperation to achieve their common goals. Moreover a strong food safety agency is needed to bring the government and other organizations together. In practice, all restaurants as well as businesses in production, processing, storage, distribution and sale of food have to follow various deadlines and legislations to secure the safety of food and comply with the hygiene standards.

If any level does not stick to these rules and sells or produces any food which is not of the nature, substance or quality demanded by the purchases is guilty Of an offence (The Food Safety Act 1 990, 2009). The united Kingdom has the Food Standards Agency (IFS) which offers advice, practical support materials and financing for inspection and sampling programs at a national and local level. The Food Standards Agency works closely with local authority enforcement officers to make sure that food law is applied throughout the food chain and legal requirements are maintained and monitored in all areas.

Moreover they oversee the work of the local authorities and advise them on implementation through the issuing of statutory Food Law Codes of Practice (The Food Safety Act 1990, 2009). This Codex suggests local authorities on the timing and commonness of inspections for food businesses and gives additionally instructions and criteria that food authorities should follow when enforcing food laws. It is the responsibility of enforcement authorities to decide on their priorities when hey want to control and test restaurants and their food (Food Standards Agency, 2007).

In addition, The Netherlands has an independent agency which has an intensive cooperation with the European Food Safety Agency. It is the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NINJA) located at Utrecht. The task of the NAVA is to protect human and animal health. And it moreover monitors food and consumer products to safeguard public health and animal health and welfare. There are local authorities controlling the production chains, from raw materials and processing aids to ND products and consumption (via.

MI).

Indeed, it is comparable with the IFS as it is also an independent governmental department working together with local authorities, however the NAVA focus most on supervision, risk assessment and risk communication. Furthermore the Bureau De Wit, which is located in Elmer / NC, is a company for scientific studies and has an own laboratory for testing the safety and quality in healthcare, hospitality industry as well as in food and catering companies. Their main field of duty is pest control, prevention measures and analyzing sample rates of groceries as well s monitoring eateries in the Netherlands.