WHAT DO THE STUDENTS THINK ABOUT FOOD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS?

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OBJECTIVES

Foodborne illnesses representing various medical conditions, which are occurred by the consumption of food or water contaminated with bacteria and/or their toxins, parasites, viruses or chemicals. The foodborne diseases are still dominating globally. The aim of the study is to evaluate the food safety awareness of the students of the University of Pécs by exploring their level of theoretical knowledge.

METHODS

459 students of the University of Pécs participated a cross sectional study between 26/11/2022 and 10/12/2022. The online, anonymous questionnaire consisted of 3 parts: sociodemographic data, food handling practices and a sample of questions about theoretical knowledge in food safety. SPSS 27.0 Statistics software was used to process the data using descriptive statistics, T-test, ANOVA, Kruskal-Wallis tests ($p \leq 0.05$).

RESULTS

There was a significant difference among the current education and food hygiene knowledge ($p=0.017$), that participants with higher educational level seems to have more awareness with food safety. Students with "older age" seems to be more sensible for food hygiene rules $p<0.01$, not only the age but also the educational attainment ($p=0.002$) or the different social status ($p=0.001$) seems to be playing a crucial role in food safety awareness, as students, who have a student job have usually higher levels of food hygiene knowledge. Those who have children, indicating a better awareness ($p=0.002$). The results show that this theoretical knowledge stay theoretical: even they know, that they have to do, they don't care about it in the practice ($p=0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS

Current study focused on undergraduate students, with the aim to use conclusions for developing targeted educational materials in order to reduce the incidence and complications of foodborne illness. The result of current study is for great interest to change inappropriate beliefs and inadequate practices connected to food habits, so has its importance regarding health promotion and primer prevention.

VARIABLE	TOTAL N	LOW HYGIENIC KNOWLEDGE N (%)	MIDDLE HYGIENIC KONWLEDGE N (%)	SATISFACTORY HYGIENIC KNOWLEDGE N (%)	P-VALUE
GENDER					
FEMALE	389	52 (13.4%)	201 (51.7%)	136 (34.9%)	0.219
MALE	70	7 (10%)	32 (45.7%)	32 (45.7%)	
AGE GROUPS					
AGE 18-24 YEARS	358	51 (14.2%)	195 (54.4%)	112 (31.2%)	<0.01**
AGE 25-30 YEARS	34	1 (2.9%)	17 (50%)	16 (47.05%)	
AGE 30< YEARS	67	7 (10.4%)	20 (29.8%)	40 (59.7%)	
SOCIAL STATUS					
UNIVERSITY STUDENT	338	47 (13.9%)	183 (40.8)	108 (31.9%)	0.016*
UNIVERSITY STUDENT WITH A FULL TIME JOB	114	11 (9.6%)	46 (40.3%)	57 (50%)	
STUDYING ON MATERNITY LEAVE	7	1 (14.2%)	3 (42.85%)	3 (42.85%)	
CURRENT EDUCATIONAL LEVEL					
SECONDAY EDUCATION WITHOUT MATURITY	371	49 (13.2%)	198 (53.3%)	124 (33.4%)	0.014*
COLLEGE DEGREE	88	10 (11.3%)	34 (38.6%)	44 (50%)	
PARENTAL STATUS					
HAVE CHILDREN	49	5 (10.2%)	14 (28.5%)	30 (61.2%)	0.001*
DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN	410	54 (13.1%)	218 (53.1%)	138 (33.6%)	

Table 1.
Sociodemographic data versus food hygiene knowledge (N= 459)

VARIABLE	TOTAL N	LOW HYGIENIC HABITS N	MIDDLE HYGIENIC HABITS N	SATISFACTORY HYGIENIC HABITS N	P-VALUE
GENDER					
FEMALE	389	68 (17.4%)	282 (72.4%)	39 (10.02%)	0.719
MALE	70	10 (14.2%)	54 (77.1%)	6 (8.57%)	
AGE GROUPS					
AGE 18-24 YEARS	358	71 (19.8%)	256 (71.5%)	31 (8.6%)	0.006**
AGE 25-30 YEARS	34	2 (5.8%)	30 (88.2%)	2 (5.8%)	
AGE 30< YEARS	67	5 (7.4%)	50 (74.6%)	12 (17.9%)	
PARENTAL STATUS					
HAVE CHILDREN	49	4 (8.1%)	35 (71.4%)	10 (20.4%)	0.012*
DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN	410	74 (18.04%)	301 (73.4%)	35 (8.53%)	
PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
DORMITORY	116	22 (18.9%)	77 (66.3%)	6 (5.1%)	0.003**
OWN APARTMENT	175	37 (21.14%)	126 (72%)	12 (6.8%)	
RENTED APARTMENT	168	19 (11.3%)	122 (72.6%)	27 (16.07%)	

Table 2.
Sociodemographic data versus food hygienic habits (N= 459)

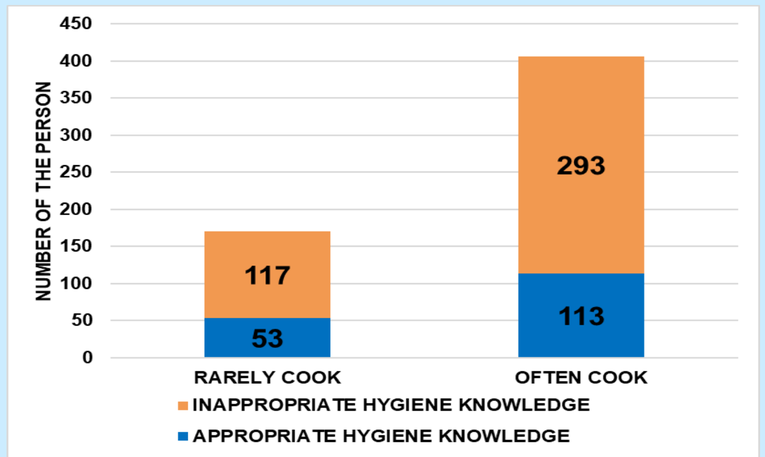


Figure 1.
Difference and relationship between cooking habits and hygiene knowledge (N=459)

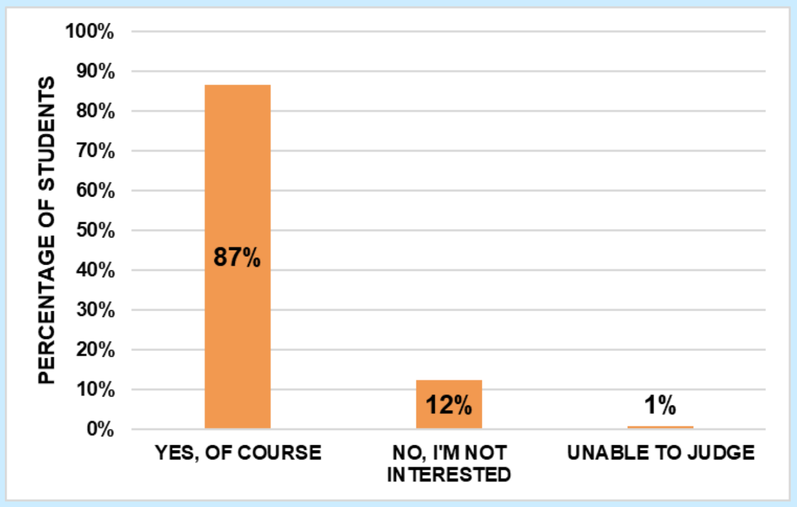


Figure 2.
Willingness to increase students' knowledge of food hygiene (N=454)

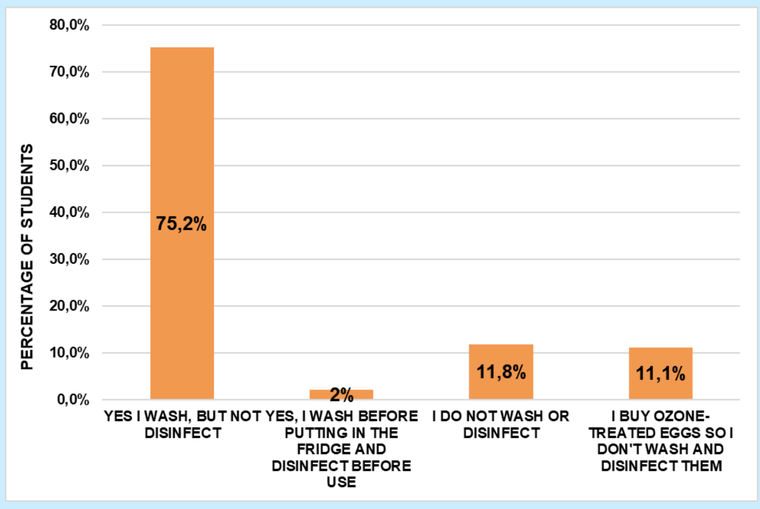


Figure 3.
Hygienic treatment methods for eggs before use (N=459)

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