

BARRIERS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE HACCP SYSTEM IN THE CATERING SECTOR

Eldina Smječanin^{1*}, Zarema Obradović¹, Amar Žilić¹, Ema Pindžo¹

**¹Faculty of Health Studies, University of Sarajevo,
Stjepana Tomića 1, 71 000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

***e-mail: eldina.smjecanin@fzs.unsa.ba**

Abstract

The proactive food safety system HACCP is recognized as a leading public health instrument that ensures high standards of hygiene and safety in the entire food chain, however, its application and maintenance by food business operators (FBOs) often encounter difficulties and barriers to its successful functioning in practice. This study aimed to determine the limitations and barriers to the effective implementation and maintenance of the food safety system - HACCP in the catering sector in the area of the city of Sarajevo.

The research was conducted as a descriptive-analytical, cross-sectional study that included 33 FBOs/“restaurants” with and without the HACCP system, 197 food handlers and 33 managers in the selected FBOs. The “snowball sampling method” was used as a method to select FBOs. Anonymous survey questionnaires and a checklist were used as research instruments. Descriptive and analytical statistical methods were used with the application of statistical significance tests: Chi-squared test, Mann-Whitney U test, and Fisher’s exact test. The value $\alpha < 0.05$ was used for the limit of statistical significance.

Food handlers employed in FBOs operating according to HACCP principles had statistically significantly better knowledge ($Z = -7.797$; $p = 0.0001$) compared to food handlers employed in FBOs without HACCP. Managers’ non-affirmative attitudes towards HACCP have been identified as one of the barriers to successful risk management. As many as 57.3% of food handlers and 40% of managers of FBOs without an implemented HACCP system consider the HACCP system exclusively as an administrative-technical measure of inspection bodies. The sanitary-technical and hygienic conditions of FBOs without HACCP were evaluated as very poor. As many as 80% of FBOs without a HACCP system had non-compliant prerequisite programs.

The specifics of the catering sector require strict fulfilment of prerequisite programs, motivation and devotion of employees as well as management commitment and investment in human resources.

Key words: HACCP, Food safety, Restaurants, Barriers.