

Compliance of traditional eateries chop-bars to food safety laws in Ghana: Preliminary studies into its operations in the Kumasi metropolis of Ghana**P G Owusu Darko**

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The objective of the research is to investigate the compliance of operators of some selected traditional eateries (chop-bars) in the Kumasi Metropolis of the Ashanti Region of Ghana to the Food and Drugs Act 1992, PNDCL 305B and LI 1574 of Ghana. Interviews, questionnaires, observations and discussions were employed for needed information. Chop-bars operators, customers, Sanitary Inspectorate Department of the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA) of Ghana were contacted for the needed information. It was observed that 45% of chop-bars were too close to sanitary sites. Operators had insufficient knowledge in food, kitchen, personal and environmental hygiene leading to unhygienic food handling. 80% of chop-bars did not meet provisions of Section 1 of the Food and Drugs Act 1992 and few had in-house toilet facilities. Only 10% of chop-bars had first aid kits and 66% had medical screening. 71% employed unskilled workforce and 70% fell short of provisions spelt out in section 7 sub section 1 of the Act and 75% failed to meet provisions of section 7 subsection 2. There is therefore a high possibility of cross contamination of food with contaminants that could lead to food borne illnesses. The study revealed that chop-bars have no class designation, nor star rating, neither did they have hygiene nor standards score for motivation nor any schedule for training. Noncompliance could be reduced if the requisite training is planned for operatives. There is the need for such planned training of operatives in food safety and hygiene as will be suitable for their level of operations. It is important that officials from the food standards and sanitary department ensure strict adherence to environmental, food and personal hygiene by chop-bars operators after such trainings. An investment in a hygienic and safe traditional eating places with well trained staff is recommended.

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