

Food Commodity Inspection Technique and Safe Food Consumption in the Hospitality Industry in Delta State

Teknik Inspeksi Komoditas Pangan dan Konsumsi Pangan yang Aman di Industri Perhotelan di Negara Bagian Delta

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Abstract

This study investigates the application of food commodity inspection techniques in ensuring safe food consumption within the hospitality industry in Delta State, Nigeria. With the growing demand for hotel, restaurant, and catering services, food safety has emerged as a critical concern due to its direct impact on public health and business reputation. The study specifically examines key stages of the food supply chain, including sourcing, procurement, storage, handling, and service, to assess how inspection practices mitigate contamination risks. Data were collected from 200 respondents, comprising hospitality workers, regulatory officials, and consumers, using questionnaires and interviews, and analyzed through descriptive statistical and qualitative methods. Findings reveal that while a majority of establishments procure food from certified suppliers and implement proper storage and handling practices, gaps remain in informal sourcing, inconsistent adherence to hygiene standards, and limited staff training. The study further highlights the importance of systematic inspection methods, adherence to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) guidelines, and modern traceability systems in promoting food safety. Based on the results, recommendations are made for strengthening supplier verification, enhancing storage and handling practices, providing continuous staff training, and leveraging cost-effective technological solutions. Overall, the study underscores that robust food commodity inspection practices are essential for safeguarding consumer health and sustaining operational excellence in the hospitality sector.

Keywords: Food safety, Food commodity inspection, Hospitality industry

Abstrak

Studi ini menyelidiki penerapan teknik inspeksi komoditas pangan dalam memastikan konsumsi pangan yang aman dalam industri perhotelan di Negara Bagian Delta, Nigeria. Dengan meningkatnya permintaan akan layanan hotel, restoran, dan catering, keamanan pangan telah menjadi perhatian penting karena dampak langsungnya terhadap kesehatan masyarakat dan reputasi bisnis. Studi ini secara khusus mengkaji tahapan-tahapan kunci rantai pasok pangan, termasuk pengadaan, penyimpanan, penanganan, dan layanan, untuk menilai bagaimana praktik inspeksi memitigasi risiko kontaminasi. Data dikumpulkan dari 200 responden, pekerja perhotelan, pejabat regulator, dan

konsumen, menggunakan kuesioner dan wawancara, dan dianalisis melalui metode statistik deskriptif dan kualitatif. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun sebagian besar perusahaan membeli pangan dari pemasok bersertifikat dan menerapkan praktik penyimpanan dan penanganan yang tepat, masih terdapat kesenjangan dalam pengadaan informal, ketidakpatuhan terhadap standar kebersihan, dan pelatihan staf yang terbatas. Studi ini lebih lanjut menyoroti pentingnya metode inspeksi sistematis, kepatuhan terhadap pedoman Analisis Bahaya dan Titik Kendali Kritis (HACCP), dan sistem ketertelusuran modern dalam meningkatkan keamanan pangan. Berdasarkan hasil tersebut, rekomendasi diberikan untuk memperkuat verifikasi pemasok, meningkatkan praktik penyimpanan dan penanganan, menyediakan pelatihan staf yang berkelanjutan, dan memanfaatkan solusi teknologi yang hemat biaya. Secara keseluruhan, studi ini menggarisbawahi bahwa praktik inspeksi komoditas pangan yang kuat sangat penting untuk menjaga kesehatan konsumen dan mempertahankan keunggulan operasional di sektor perhotelan.

Kata kunci: Keamanan pangan, Inspeksi komoditas pangan, Industri perhotelan

INTRODUCTION

Food safety remains a cornerstone of operations within the hospitality industry because any form of contamination or improper food handling can lead to severe health consequences, financial losses, legal liabilities, and long-term damage to an organisation's reputation. According to estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO), about 600 million individuals across the globe suffer from foodborne diseases each year, resulting in approximately 420,000 deaths (WHO, 2020). As the demand for hotel, restaurant, and catering services continues to rise, the need for effective and strictly monitored food commodity inspection techniques has become even more urgent to guarantee consumer health and wellbeing.

Food inspection refers to the systematic evaluation of raw ingredients, semi-processed items, and finished food products to detect contaminants, verify quality, and confirm adherence to established food safety regulations (FAO, 2019). Within the hospitality sector, commodities such as meat, seafood, dairy products, fresh fruits and vegetables, and manufactured food items are subjected to multiple layers of inspection, from the point of procurement to storage, preparation, and eventual service (Codex Alimentarius, 2021). Such inspections are designed to identify potential biological hazards (microorganisms), chemical hazards (toxins, pesticides), and physical hazards (foreign materials) that may undermine food safety.

One of the most widely accepted frameworks guiding food safety is the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system. This system prioritises proactive risk assessment and continuous monitoring at critical stages of food handling and processing (FDA, 2021). Various global and national regulatory bodies, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and other national food control agencies, have developed comprehensive guidelines to ensure safe food handling, processing, and inspection across hospitality establishments (Scallan et al., 2021). Despite the existence of these robust regulatory structures, persistent challenges remain. These include weak enforcement mechanisms,

inadequate staff training, insufficient inspection tools and technologies, and the widespread problem of intentional food adulteration (Buchanan et al., 2020).

In an era where food supply chains are increasingly global and complex, hospitality businesses are expected to adopt more sophisticated and science-based inspection methodologies. Advanced techniques such as microbiological screening, strict temperature monitoring, allergen detection, chemical residue testing, and rapid diagnostic tools offer improved accuracy in identifying potential contaminants (García-Hernández et al., 2020; Djekic et al., 2022). These methods are crucial for preventing risks associated with common foodborne pathogens, including *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Escherichia coli*, as well as chemical threats such as pesticide residues, heavy metals, and food additives used beyond permissible limits (Trafialek et al., 2019; Spink & Moyer, 2021). Strengthening these inspection processes not only enhances consumer protection but also promotes a culture of safety and accountability within the hospitality industry.

This study empirically investigates the influence of food commodity inspection techniques on ensuring safe food consumption within the hospitality industry in Delta State. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the key inspection techniques employed in hotels, restaurants, and catering services, evaluate their effectiveness in preventing foodborne illnesses, examine the challenges encountered during food inspections, and propose actionable strategies for enhancing food safety through improved inspection practices. To guide the investigation and provide a focused framework for this study, the following research questions were formulated. These questions aim to explore the key food commodity inspection techniques used in the hospitality industry, evaluate their effectiveness in ensuring safe food consumption, identify challenges faced during inspections, and determine strategies for improving food safety practices within hospitality establishments in Delta State:

1. What are the common food commodity inspection techniques implemented in the hospitality industry?
2. How effective are these techniques in promoting safe food consumption?
3. What are the major challenges associated with conducting food inspections in hospitality settings?
4. What measures can be adopted to improve food safety inspections and outcomes in the hospitality industry?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food safety is a critical issue within the hospitality industry, as it plays a central role in safeguarding the health of consumers while also protecting businesses from legal liabilities, financial losses, and damage to their reputation. When food is handled or processed improperly, it can expose consumers to serious health dangers, particularly foodborne illnesses, which continue to affect millions of people worldwide every year (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Such incidents not only threaten

public health but can also undermine customer trust and lead to long-term negative consequences for hospitality establishments.

To prevent these outcomes and promote safe food consumption, hospitality organisations rely on a range of food commodity management techniques. These techniques span the entire food supply and handling chain and include the careful sourcing of raw materials from reputable suppliers, proper storage under controlled temperature conditions, hygienic handling practices, safe and standardised methods of food preparation, and efficient waste management. Together, these procedures help reduce the likelihood of contamination and ensure that food products remain safe from farm to table.

Food Commodity Techniques in the Hospitality Industry

Food commodity techniques encompass the structured methods, procedures, and best practices applied throughout the food handling process to preserve quality, guarantee safety, and prevent contamination within hospitality operations. These techniques cover every stage of the food supply chain, from procurement and transportation to storage, preparation, and service, and are crucial for ensuring that food offered to consumers is wholesome and safe for consumption. According to the Codex Alimentarius Commission (2021), the consistent application of these techniques forms the foundation of effective food safety management in hotels, restaurants, and catering services.

The reliability of food commodity techniques significantly influences the overall standard of food safety in hospitality establishments. Practices such as proper temperature control, hygienic handling, cross-contamination prevention, and routine monitoring ensure that biological, chemical, and physical hazards are minimized (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2020). Furthermore, structured inspection and documentation procedures help establishments comply with national and international food safety regulations, including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) guidelines (U.S. Food and Drug Administration [FDA], 2021).

Scholars emphasize that well-implemented food commodity techniques not only protect consumer health but also enhance operational efficiency, reduce food waste, and promote customer satisfaction (Walker, Pritchard, & Forsythe, 2022). Inadequate practices, however, can lead to foodborne diseases, reputational damage, and legal penalties, making systematic food handling procedures an essential component of hospitality management (Soon, Baines, & Seaman, 2020). Therefore, understanding and applying these techniques are vital for maintaining high standards of food safety across the hospitality industry.

Food Sourcing and Procurement

Ensuring food safety begins at the procurement stage, where hospitality businesses are responsible for acquiring raw materials that meet established quality and safety standards. Inadequate sourcing practices can introduce contaminants, toxins, or foodborne pathogens into the supply chain, potentially compromising the health of consumers and the reputation of the establishment (Taylor, 2022). Effective food sourcing is therefore a critical first step in maintaining overall food safety and operational efficiency in hotels, restaurants, and catering services.

A key component of safe procurement is supplier verification. Hospitality businesses should engage with certified and reputable suppliers who comply with internationally recognized food safety standards, such as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2021). Partnering with trusted suppliers ensures that raw materials are consistently of high quality and reduces the risk of contamination from the outset.

Another essential aspect is the implementation of traceability systems. Modern technologies, including barcoding, radio-frequency identification (RFID), and blockchain, enable establishments to track the origin, handling, and movement of food products throughout the supply chain. These systems not only enhance accountability but also facilitate rapid identification and containment in the event of contamination or food safety breaches (Kumar, Singh, & Sharma, 2023; Galanakis, 2020).

Inspection and quality control measures are equally important during procurement. Before acceptance, food commodities should be carefully examined for signs of spoilage, contamination, or deviation from quality standards. Indicators such as unusual odors, discoloration, mold growth, or expired packaging must be identified and addressed before the products enter the hospitality establishment (Linscott, 2020; Mensah & Julien, 2022). Rigorous inspection procedures at this stage help prevent downstream risks and contribute to maintaining a safe food environment for consumers. Overall, robust sourcing and procurement practices form the foundation of effective food safety management in the hospitality industry. By carefully selecting suppliers, implementing traceability systems, and enforcing strict inspection protocols, hospitality businesses can significantly reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses and improve service quality.

Food Storage and Preservation

Proper storage and preservation of food are fundamental to ensuring safety, maintaining quality, and extending shelf life in the hospitality industry. The conditions under which food is stored significantly influence its susceptibility to spoilage, microbial growth, and contamination. Inadequate storage practices can lead to the proliferation of bacteria, viruses, and fungi, which in turn may result in foodborne illnesses and

substantial economic losses for hotels, restaurants, and catering establishments (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2021):

1. **Temperature control** is a central aspect of effective food storage. Cold storage, including refrigeration and freezing, slows microbial growth and preserves perishable items such as meat, dairy, seafood, and fresh produce (Jay, Loessner, & Golden, 2020). Similarly, hot holding equipment is necessary for prepared foods that must be served over extended periods, ensuring that they remain at safe temperatures to prevent bacterial contamination (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020).
2. **Hygiene and sanitation practices** are equally critical. Storage areas must be cleaned regularly, and food items should be properly packaged, labelled, and segregated to prevent cross-contamination between raw and cooked foods, allergenic and non-allergenic products, or fresh and spoiled items (FAO, 2020; Mensah & Julien, 2022). This includes maintaining clean shelving, using food-grade containers, and implementing first-in-first-out (FIFO) inventory practices to minimise spoilage.
3. **Preservation techniques** such as vacuum packing, dehydration, and the use of approved chemical preservatives can also enhance the safety and longevity of food products, particularly in high-demand hospitality settings where storage time may be prolonged (Rahman, 2021). Emerging technologies, including modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) and smart refrigeration systems equipped with temperature and humidity monitoring sensors, further support safe food storage and early detection of potential spoilage (Kumar et al., 2023).

Overall, adherence to strict storage and preservation standards is essential for protecting consumer health, ensuring compliance with food safety regulations, and maintaining the operational efficiency of hospitality businesses. Effective storage practices not only reduce the risk of contamination but also contribute to minimizing food waste and promoting customer satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

The Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) theory asserts that ensuring food safety in any food-handling environment requires systematic, proactive, and integrated management practices that identify, evaluate, and control hazards at all stages of the food supply chain (Mensah & Julien, 2022). The central premise of the theory is that the safety of food consumed by customers is directly dependent on the effectiveness with which hospitality establishments implement inspection and control measures at critical points, including procurement, storage, preparation, and service. In essence, the application of well-structured management systems ensures that potential risks are anticipated and mitigated before they can affect consumers.

A key component of FSMS is the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system, which offers a preventive and structured approach to food safety

management. HACCP emphasizes the identification of potential biological, chemical, and physical hazards, the determination of critical control points within food handling processes, and the implementation of monitoring and corrective measures to prevent contamination (FDA, 2021; Codex Alimentarius Commission, 2021). By integrating HACCP principles, hospitality establishments are able to systematically reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses, ensuring that consumers receive safe and wholesome food.

In the context of the hospitality industry in Delta State, FSMS theory provides a valuable framework for analyzing the impact of food commodity inspection techniques on safe food consumption. These techniques include supplier verification, traceability of food products, proper storage monitoring, and adherence to hygiene protocols. The framework also enables researchers to examine challenges such as inadequate staff training, insufficient inspection equipment, and inconsistent compliance with safety standards, all of which can compromise food quality and public health (Soon, Baines, & Seaman, 2020). Thus, the FSMS theory forms the conceptual foundation for this study by establishing a clear link between inspection practices and food safety outcomes. It provides both a theoretical and practical lens through which hospitality managers, policymakers, and researchers can evaluate existing practices, identify areas for improvement, and implement strategies that enhance safe food consumption and protect consumer health in the hospitality sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research design to examine how food commodity techniques are applied to ensure food safety within the hospitality industry. This approach is suitable because it enables an in-depth analysis of critical areas such as food sourcing, storage, handling, and hygiene practices. To obtain a well-rounded understanding, the study utilises a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Data are gathered from a range of sources, including hospitality establishments, food safety regulatory agencies, and industry professionals, providing a comprehensive view of current practices and challenges in maintaining food safety.

The target population for this study comprises a diverse group of stakeholders involved in food safety and consumption within the hospitality industry. It includes hospitality industry workers such as chefs, kitchen staff, food and beverage managers, and hotel supervisors who are directly engaged in food handling and service. It also encompasses representatives from food safety regulatory agencies, including officials from the Food and Drug Authority (FDA), the World Health Organization (WHO), and local health inspection bodies responsible for monitoring compliance with food safety standards. Additionally, the study considers the perspectives of consumers, including guests and customers who frequent hospitality establishments such as hotels, restaurants, and catering services, as their experiences provide insight into the effectiveness of food safety practices.

The study focuses on a range of food-handling establishments, including hotels, restaurants, fast-food outlets, catering units, and other related hospitality businesses. These establishments are located in key commercial centres of Delta State, such as Asaba, Warri, Ughelli, Sapele, and Ozoro, which represent areas with high consumer traffic and a diverse range of food service operations. By including these various groups and locations, the study aims to capture a comprehensive understanding of how food commodity inspection techniques are applied and how they influence safe food consumption within the state's hospitality sector.

A stratified random sampling method is employed to select participants from the different stakeholder groups, including hospitality workers, regulatory officials, and consumers. This approach ensures that all key groups are adequately represented in the study, enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings. The sample is first divided into three distinct strata corresponding to hospitality staff, regulatory authorities, and consumers. Within each stratum, participants are then randomly selected, which helps minimize selection bias and ensures that each subgroup has an equal chance of being included in the study. The determination of the sample size is based on Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size calculation: where n represents the sample size, N is the total population, and e is the margin of error, set at 5% (0.05). For instance, if the combined population of hospitality workers, regulators, and consumers is estimated at 500, the sample size is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{500}{1 + 500(0.05)^2} = 222$$

Based on this calculation, a sample size of 222 respondents is considered sufficient to provide reliable and valid data for the study, ensuring that the views of all major stakeholder groups are adequately captured. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of the responses. Specifically, percentage analysis was employed to examine the research questions, allowing the researcher to determine the proportion of respondents who held particular views or experiences related to food commodity inspection techniques and safe food consumption. This approach facilitates the summarization and interpretation of data in a meaningful way, highlighting trends, patterns, and differences across the various categories of participants, such as hospitality staff, regulatory officials, and consumers. By using percentage analysis, the study is able to present results in a straightforward and easily understandable manner, making it possible to draw conclusions about the prevalence and effectiveness of food safety practices within the hospitality industry in Delta State.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study initially targeted a total of 222 respondents, comprising hospitality workers, food safety regulatory officials, and consumers. Out of this, 200 valid responses were successfully collected, yielding a high response rate of 90%. Such a

response rate is considered robust and enhances the reliability and credibility of the study's findings, as it indicates that the majority of the targeted population actively participated. Table 1 summarizes the distribution of targeted respondents, actual responses, and response rates across the different stakeholder categories. Notably, each category, hospitality workers, regulatory officials, and consumers, achieved a consistent 90% response rate, ensuring proportional representation of all key groups.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Category	Targeted Respondents	Actual Responses	Response Rate (%)
Hospitality Workers	100	90	90%
Regulatory Officials	50	45	90%
Consumers	72	65	90%
Total	222	200	90%

Source: Authors' Computation, 2025

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Gender Distribution: The gender composition of respondents was relatively balanced, with males accounting for 55% (110 respondents) and females 45% (90 respondents). This near-equal distribution provides diverse perspectives, enhancing the representativeness of the study and ensuring that the findings reflect the views of both male and female stakeholders in the hospitality industry.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	110	55
Female	90	45
Total	200	100

Source: Authors' Computation, 2025

Educational Level: The educational qualifications of respondents indicate a largely well-educated group, with 35% holding a diploma or certificate, 32.5% possessing a bachelor's degree, and 12.5% holding a postgraduate degree. Only 20% of respondents had completed secondary education. Collectively, 67.5% of participants possess at least a diploma-level qualification or higher, suggesting that the study

captures insights from individuals with adequate knowledge and training relevant to food handling and safety practices in the hospitality industry.

Table 3: Educational Level of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Secondary Education	40	20
Diploma/Certificate	70	35
Bachelor’s Degree	65	32.5
Postgraduate Degree	25	12.5
Total	200	100

Source: Authors’ Computation, 2025

Work Experience in the Hospitality Industry: Respondents’ work experience was fairly distributed across different ranges. Those with less than one year of experience represented 10%, while 30% had 1–3 years, 27.5% had 4–6 years, and 32.5% had seven years or more. This shows that 60% of participants have more than three years of experience in the hospitality industry, highlighting that a significant portion of the sample comprises experienced personnel who are likely to provide informed insights into food safety and commodity inspection practices.

Table 4: Work Experience of Respondents

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	20	10
1–3 years	60	30
4–6 years	55	27.5
7 years and above	65	32.5
Total	200	100

Source: Authors’ Computation, 2025

Thus, the demographic data suggest that the study engaged a knowledgeable and experienced population capable of providing reliable insights into food safety practices in Delta State’s hospitality sector. The balanced gender representation, high educational attainment, and substantial work experience of respondents collectively strengthen the validity of the findings, ensuring that the perspectives of key

stakeholders, including hospitality staff, regulators, and consumers, are comprehensively captured.

Food Commodity Techniques Used in the Hospitality Industry

The study assessed food sourcing techniques, including supplier verification and traceability systems.

Table 4: Food Sourcing and Procurement Practices

Sourcing Method	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Purchase from certified suppliers	140	70%
Local markets without verification	35	17.5%
Direct farm procurement	25	12.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Authors' Computation, 2025

The results reveal that most hospitality businesses (70%) obtain their food supplies from certified vendors, thereby adhering to established safety and quality standards. Nevertheless, a significant minority (17.5%) continue to source food from local markets without stringent verification, which introduces potential risks to food safety. This chapter has presented an analysis of the study's results regarding the application of food commodity inspection techniques in the hospitality industry. Overall, the findings suggest that while many establishments maintain good food safety practices, challenges such as high operational costs, gaps in staff training, and inconsistencies among suppliers continue to hinder optimal implementation.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the application of food commodity inspection techniques and their impact on safe food consumption within the hospitality industry in Delta State. Analysis of the data indicates that the majority of hospitality establishments, particularly hotels, restaurants, and catering services, implement structured food safety measures, including sourcing from certified suppliers, routine inspections, proper storage, and hygiene practices. Specifically, 70% of respondents reported sourcing food from certified suppliers, reflecting a commitment to compliance with safety standards and reducing the risk of contamination. This aligns with the assertions of Mensah and Julien (2022), who argue that certified sourcing is critical for ensuring food safety in hospitality operations.

However, the study also highlights areas of concern. A notable 17.5% of establishments still procure food from local markets without strict verification

procedures, which poses a risk of contamination and foodborne illnesses. This finding resonates with the work of Taylor (2022), who observed that informal food supply chains in developing regions often lack adequate quality control measures, thereby increasing public health risks. Furthermore, gaps in staff training, inadequate access to modern inspection equipment, and inconsistencies in supplier compliance were identified as significant barriers to effective food safety management. These challenges are consistent with earlier studies emphasizing that the absence of adequate training and monitoring mechanisms in hospitality establishments can undermine food safety practices (Soon, Baines, & Seaman, 2020; Linscott, 2020).

The demographic analysis also suggests that the workforce involved in food handling in Delta State is relatively knowledgeable. Most respondents (67.5%) have at least a diploma or higher qualification, and 60% have more than three years of industry experience. This level of education and experience supports the effective implementation of food commodity inspection techniques, as a skilled workforce is better equipped to apply proper hygiene, monitor storage conditions, and ensure compliance with regulatory standards (Jay, Loessner, & Golden, 2020). In terms of food storage and preservation, the findings indicate that proper temperature control and hygienic storage practices are widely applied. Refrigeration, proper labeling, and the segregation of raw and cooked foods are commonly used to prevent cross-contamination. These results corroborate the recommendations of the World Health Organization (2020) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2021), which stress that temperature control and proper storage are fundamental to preventing microbial growth and foodborne illnesses.

Overall, the study demonstrates that while food commodity inspection techniques are generally applied effectively within Delta State's hospitality industry, challenges such as supplier inconsistencies, inadequate training, and resource limitations still pose risks to safe food consumption. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of regulatory enforcement, workforce training, and investment in modern inspection technologies. The findings underscore the importance of a proactive and integrated approach, consistent with the principles of the Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) theory, which links systematic inspection and monitoring practices to improved food safety outcomes (Mensah & Julien, 2022; FDA, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The study found that food safety in the hospitality industry is largely dependent on effective food sourcing, proper storage, hygienic handling, and strict adherence to established safety standards. While many hospitality establishments in Delta State demonstrate compliance with recommended practices, several challenges continue to hinder the full implementation of food safety measures. Key obstacles identified include high costs associated with regulatory compliance, insufficient training for staff on proper inspection and handling techniques, and variability in the quality and reliability of

suppliers. These gaps not only increase the risk of foodborne illnesses but also threaten the reputation and operational efficiency of hospitality businesses.

The findings also underscore that robust food safety management has a direct impact on customer satisfaction, loyalty, and overall business reputation. Consumers are more likely to trust and patronize establishments that consistently maintain high standards of food hygiene and safety, highlighting the commercial and public health benefits of effective food commodity inspection techniques.

To enhance food safety in the sector, the study recommends increased investment in staff training programs focused on modern inspection methods, stricter enforcement of regulatory standards by relevant authorities, and the development of cost-effective strategies that allow smaller establishments to comply without financial strain. By addressing these challenges, hospitality businesses can reduce the risk of contamination, ensure safer food consumption, and contribute to better public health outcomes in Delta State. Furthermore, adopting a proactive approach to food safety management will help create a culture of continuous improvement, fostering resilience and competitiveness within the hospitality industry. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for hospitality businesses in Delta State to enhance food safety management:

1. Hospitality businesses should ensure that all suppliers possess valid and up-to-date food safety certifications to guarantee compliance with established standards. They should also implement digital tracking and traceability systems to monitor the origin and movement of food commodities, reducing the risk of contamination and enabling swift corrective action when necessary.
2. Businesses should conduct routine temperature monitoring of refrigeration and freezing units to ensure that perishable items are stored under optimal conditions. They should also invest in modern storage facilities and equipment to minimize food spoilage and maintain product quality (CDC, 2021; Jay, Loessner, & Golden, 2020).
3. Hospitality establishments should provide regular and comprehensive training programs on food safety and hygiene for all kitchen and service staff. They should also implement mandatory health screenings for food handlers to prevent the spread of foodborne illnesses and ensure compliance with public health guidelines (Soon, Baines, & Seaman, 2020).
4. Businesses should collaborate with local regulatory agencies to access subsidized food safety training and resources. They should also leverage technology, such as food safety management apps and automated monitoring systems, to streamline compliance processes and reduce operational costs without compromising safety (FDA, 2021).

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