

LEGALFOXES LAW TIMES

IMPLEMENTATION OF FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS IN EATING ESTABLISHMENTS FUNCTIONING IN TANJORE

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Food safety has become more important as a result of the development in eating-out culture in India and the burden of foodborne infections. For commercial eating establishments (EEs), the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has established food safety and standards regulations (FSSRs). The objective of the current study, "Scope and Implementation of FSSAI Standards" in free standing restaurants, was to examine the various facets of food safety in eating establishments in Tanjore.

OBJECTIVE: The study's goal was to determine how eateries were using FSSAI requirements.

METHODOLOGY: A random sampling was used to choose the restaurants. A checklist was used to determine the current state of the FSSAI standards.

RESULT: It was found that 20% of the restaurants were evaluated as good, with the bulk (40%) of eateries falling into the ordinary grade category. According to the most recent FSSAI standards, just a tiny portion of restaurants (25%) were rated negatively, while 15% were rated excellently.

KEYWORDS: Food Safety and Standard Authority of India, Food safety, Checklist, food handlers, food safety and regulations

INTRODUCTION:

The FSSAI holds the responsibility for watching over and regulating food safety in order to safeguard and advance public health. (FSSAI, 2006). With the implementation of FSSAI, 2006, the quality of food provided to the general public will undoubtedly improve and the situation with regard to food safety in India will change for the better. To guarantee the security and calibre of food products and services, India's Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) has created food safety and hygiene standards for the country's food industry. To function legally, restaurants in India must adhere to these requirements. The FSSAI standards for restaurants cover a broad variety of procedures, such as staff training, food safety and hygiene, labelling and packaging, and display of FSSAI licence or certification. A positive reputation in the industry, customer faith and confidence, and food safety and quality are all dependent on the application of these standards. Studies have revealed that many Indian restaurant owners and operators are still not completely compliant, and that there is a need for greater knowledge and enforcement of FSSAI standards among them. This emphasises the significance of ongoing attempts to enhance compliance with FSSAI standards in the Indian restaurant sector. Food safety has become more important as a result of the development in eating-out culture in India and the burden of foodborne infections. "The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has established food safety and standards regulations (FSSRs) (EEs) for commercial dining facilities."

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The food service sector in India is also one of the sectors with the fastest growth rates in the nation. The younger population, increased urbanisation, and globalisation are the main drivers of this growth. People are leaving their hometowns in greater numbers to work in major and smaller metropolitan areas. Also, in metropolitan India, where both spouses work, there is less time for cooking, which encourages the spread of the eating-out culture. Food safety is becoming a top priority because to the FBIs' growing workload and India's expanding restaurant culture.

For the purpose of inspecting the cleanliness and food safety standards of eating venues, the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has created a checklist (EEs). There are no studies on this checklist's compliance, though. The present study was to determine if the Eating Establishments complied with these rules.

METHODOLOGY:

The study used a survey design. A checklist was created using the FSSAI regulations. A checklist was made so that the premises could be observed. For the research study, a list of 15 restaurants, 5 cafe's open and functioning in Tanjore was collected. Inquiries about participating in the research were made to all eating establishments. The exercise was performed with the food business operator's (FBO) consent after informing them that it was only for research reasons. After removing criteria that did not apply to the eating establishment under investigation, each eating establishment was evaluated independently. The highest score that could be attained for each Eating Establishment varied because not all tool items applied to all Eating Establishments. The percentage score was determined for each eating establishment based on the corresponding maximum score and score achieved in order to make comparisons between all eating establishments possible. In order to not interfere with the Eating Establishment's regular operations, the Eating Establishment was visited outside of work hours. For each one, it took an average of 40–45 minutes to examine and score. The authors physically inspected each item on the questionnaire list, and scoring was approved while they were there. At the conclusion of the examination and interview, recommendations specific to the needs of each eating establishment were made. During the interaction, the food handlers were encouraged to pose any questions they had about food safety.



The checklist was given to the management, and the location was also observed. For the purpose of data analysis, a scale was created with the following ranges: excellent, good, average, and poor, on the basis of which restaurants were assessed.

RESULTS:

The checklist was administered in 20 eating establishments (15 restaurants, 5 cafe's) of Tanjore. The checklist was adapted from FSSAI(2006). All the 20 eating establishments were set up away from environmentally polluted areas. Around 80% of the eating establishments has smooth and clean walls, ceilings, and floors. The secret to producing safe food is cleanliness in and around the kitchens. It was observed that around 90% of the eating establishments were following cleaning schedule.

It was found that 75% of the eating establishments provided proper hand washing stations and provisions of sanitizers and above 90% provide waste management systems. During the

preparation of the food material 80% were keeping the vegetarian and non vegetarian foods separate. Habit of smoking, chewing gutka in food handling areas were not practiced in 85% of the eating establishments. The other essentials like first aid, fire extinguishers, and master cut off of electricity was observed in 85% of the restaurants.

Only 50% of restaurants considered having separate restrooms, refreshment areas, and areas for food preparation and service, which in the current environment needs to be emphasised. 80% of the restaurant had sufficient room for production and storage.

Maintaining documentation of records is a crucial idea for the food industry. In the course of the investigation, it was found that 80% of the restaurants kept track of their purchases, 25% did not keep track of time and temperature, and 40% lacked standard operating procedures for handling food.

Restaurants lacked certain kitchen necessities, such labs for analysing food, which are essential for kitchens.

After data analysis, it was discovered that the majority (40%) of the restaurants fell into the average grade group, followed by 20% of establishments that were rated as good. Only a small percentage of restaurants (25%) were evaluated poorly in accordance with the current FSSAI regulations, with 15% of them being found to be excellent on the scale.

TABLE:

S.No	CLASSIFICATION	Yes	No	NA
1	Set up away from environmentally polluted areas	20	0	0
2	Smooth and clean walls, ceilings, and floors	16	4	0
3	Cleanliness, proper lighting and ventilation, and enough room for movement	18	0	2
4	Accessibility of waste management systems	20	0	0

5	Use of sterile hand gloves, and aprons	15	3	2
6	Keeping vegetarian and non-vegetarian food separate	16	2	2
7	Whether food handlers have enough personal hygiene (Nails, Hands)	16	4	0
8	Usage of a disinfectant in cleaning	20	0	0
9	Appropriate food storage	16	2	2
10	Separation of trash cans for different waste types	17	3	0
11	Appropriate hand washing stations with sanitizers available	15	2	3
12	Other Personnel Facilities, such as Restrooms	10	3	7
13	Proper vents for smoke, steam, etc., such as a chimney or exhaust fan.	17	1	2
14	In the places where food is handled, food handlers can be seen smoking and chewing gutka.	3	17	0
15	Access to Fire Extinguishers, first aid and master cut off of gas and electricity	20	0	0
16	Maintaining records of ingredients, food additives, and raw materials, along with their source of purchase	16	2	2
17	Controlled time and temperature are ensured through systems and records.	15	5	0
18	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provision for food processing	12	8	0

CONCLUSION:

The study comes to the conclusion that in order to give consumers safe food, effective ways must be used to implement the FSSAI's current criteria. To make it more effective, both the government and the restaurateurs must put up effort. All businesses and undertakings in the restaurant industry need to be designed and informed about the necessity for "Food Safety" and "FSSAI Standards"; these programmes should address all facets of food safety and how it affects

food preparation. Restaurants should perform routine external or internal training programmes. By offering incentives like tax breaks for the top-performing restaurants, the government may promote the safe manufacturing of food and maximal adherence to FSSAI rules.

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