

Effects of Use of Standard Recipe on Food Quality Control in Selected Fast Food Outfits in Lagos State

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Abstract

Recently, the idea of eating away from home has become the order of the day as a result of tight economic activities in the era of industrialization cum capitalization. The paper examined the functions of standard recipe in food quality control in fast food. The results revealed that standard recipe is significant to quality control in fast food. The findings further showed that effective application of standard recipe in fast food operation requires staff induction programme ($\chi^2 = 9.14$, $p < 0.05$). Also the results indicated that use of standard recipe wastes time ($\chi^2 = 6.17$, $p < 0.05$). The use of standard recipe was also found to have significant relationship with trade mark creation ($\chi^2 = 8.14$, $p < 0.05$), taste consistency ($\chi^2 = 4.17$, $p < 0.05$), cooking moderation ($\chi^2 = 5.65$, $p < 0.05$). It was concluded that majority of fast foods use standard recipe in varying degrees, and standard recipe was found to have significant relationship with quality control. The study recommended that consumer protection agencies should expedite action on enforcement of use of standard recipe in all food operations of fast foods. They should also constitute a board that will see to the training/induction of staff on the rudiments of standard recipe for effective and efficient application.

Key words: Standardization, Recipe, Quality control, Fast food, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Due to pressures of increased technology, communication, transportation, deregulation, elimination of political barriers, sociocultural changes and global economic development, together with growing competition in a global economy, eating outside the home has become the order of the day. Lillcrap, *et al.*, (2002) reported

that there is a widening diversity in the nature and type of food and beverages on offer. Michael, (2004) observed that the fast food sub-sector is the top growing industry in the Nigerian hospitality industry.

Food is very important in the life of every individual. The upsurge of fast foods in Nigeria is as a result of economic drive and

diversity coupled with increased consciousness of time management. Onasanya, (2007) traced the cause of high level of patronage of fast foods especially, during festivals, public periods, weekends, to private sector initiatives. Fast foods being convenient, handy and easily affordable, a good number of the working class people rely on them for mid day meal and refreshment while in office. In metropolitan cities like Lagos, Abuja, Ibadan, Port Harcourt and other Nigerian cities consumers are increasingly patronizing more fast food centers. The upsurge in the growth of fast food business especially in urban areas has no other justification than the economic profile of urban growth and activity pattern of 24hours/7days a week work schedule with varying levels of work shifts, complex travel patterns among workers and business people during weekend and social activities. Canet and N' Diaye, (1996) reported that food away from home is common and an important feature of urban centers in many developing countries. Considering the popularity of fast foods patronage and its unflinching demand by the growing population, there is a great need to trace into the operations that border on quality control of fast foods.

Quality control is the sum

total of activities, observation, examination, actions and measures taken mainly during preparation to ensure that the quality of the ingredients and finished food correspond to specification or meet desired quality. Foskett, *et al.*, (2003) assured that if there is laid guideline on the recipe to be used for food preparation, half of the problem with food is solved. Hence, standard recipe provides total information that is required for food preparation quality control. Dacosta, (2000) supported that use of recipe does not only insure food product of excellent quality but also saves time and energy and avoids waste of food materials thus the time taken to abide by the procedure of a recipe is well spent.

Akinyele, (1992) asserted that contamination of food may be through insects, pesticide residue, metal fragments, glass splinters from mechanical processing and the presence of food poison, micro organism or their toxins due to improper processing or poor storage conditions. Food poisoning can result from excess usage of certain ingredients that are of chemical component, under/over cooking of some organic and inorganic materials in food. Recipe implies a set of instructions for cooking a particular type of food. Usually recipes are development to

obtain standardization in results. Standardization refers to consistent and better results. Standard recipe is a procedure in which the amounts/proportions of the ingredients and methodology will consistently produce a high quality product that possesses better nutrition, good economy and good sensory quality.

Food is outrightly inevitable to health and living. This is supported by Alade, (2002) that food is the most important factor in enhancing the quality of life and in prolonging health and productive living. Food, in spite of its significance to human existence, may turn out to the detriments of the body system if it is unwholesome. Dacosta, (2000) averred that good results in food preparation are obtained when carefully formulated and tested recipes (standard recipes) are used. He described a standard recipe to contain the methods that can consistently produce a high quality product. Hence, a standard recipe is the one that has been tested and found to possess certain qualities relating to colour (appearance), taste, texture and relative nutrition. Kehinde, (2005) asserted that one major obstacle faced by the operators of fast food business is getting to approach the establishment of standard both in recipe formulation and delivery as

well as administration. This shortfall is attributed to the excuse that most of the operators are non professionals but their access to funds enables them to venture into the business. Addo, (2001) lamented that the biggest challenge of the world today is how to achieve food and nutrition security for all humans. Nutrition security here refers to assurance of wholesomeness of food which other wisely transcribes to quality assurance. In essence, use of standard recipe will avert any casualty that may arise from improper processing through strict adherence to steps and procedures laid down for preparations. It is then imperative to examine the effect of use of standard recipe on food quality control of fast foods which has now become a saving grace from hunger for the working population.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ikeja Local Government Area of Lagos State. Ikeja, being the capital city of Lagos State, hosts to its advantage, many public offices/centers among which the Muritala Mohammed Airport is one. Therefore, it is predominantly saturated with fast food outfits. Ikeja has about fifty fast food centers. A total of 80 respondents were interviewed, five staff each

from sixteen differently branded fast food outlets, in Ikeja. The study employed simple and purposive random sampling techniques to select fast food outlets and respondents respectively. The research used structured interview method to collect information from the respondents involved in the study. The data were subjected to both descriptive (percentages and frequencies) and inferential (chi-square) statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 showed that majority (58.00%) of the staff of fast foods fall within the age bracket of 20-40 years. It further showed that majority (60.80%) of fast food workers are females. Also, majority (56.25%) of staff of fast food are singles. The findings revealed that a high percentage (77.50%) of staff have no relevant professional qualification for fast food operations while only 22.50% have fast food related educational

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics		Frequency (%)
Age	Below 20yrs	23 (28.8)
	20-40yrs	46 (58.0)
	Above-40yrs	11 (13.1)
Sex	Male	33 (39.2)
	Female	47 (60.8)
Marital Status	Single	45 (56.3)
	Married	12 (15.0)
	Separated	23 (28.8)
Edu. Status	Below WASC	19 (23.8)
	WASC	36 (45.0)
	Above WASC	07 (08.8)
Experience	Professional	18 (22.5)
	0 - 2yrs	49 (61.3)
	3 - 5yrs	24 (30.0)
	6 - 10yrs	07 (08.8)

qualification. The findings agreed with Kehinde, (2005), who stated that most of the operators of fast foods are non professionals.

Application of Standard Recipe

The results indicated in Table 2 that virtually all the fast food centers use standard recipe but the degree of usage differs

from one brand to the other. Majority (63.13%) claimed that it is mandatory for all staff on shift to use standard recipe; another 78.13 % opined that the standard recipe used in their center is replicated in other branches (the same). This is adduced to the seldom complaint on food poisoning by customers of fast foods.

Table 2: Involvement of Respondents in the Use of Standard Recipe

Involvement variables	Always (%)	Rarely (%)
Applied on all cookies	36 (45.60)	44 (55.00)
Applied on selected cookies	41 (50.66)	39 (48.75)
Applied only for special order	13 (16.83)	67 (89.75)
Applied only by interested staff	28 (35.00)	52 (65.00)
Mandatory for all staff on duty	51 (63.13)	29 (36.25)
Same in all center's outlets/branches	63 (78.13)	17 (21.25)
Varies with center management	12 (15.00)	68 (85.00)

Table 3 also revealed the perception of respondents on use of standard recipe as a means of quality control. The results indicated that use of standard recipe helps to maintain consistency (88.13 %), helps to create identity (66.25%), helps to ascertain taste (77.50%), work progress in case of lateness or absence of staff (94.39%) and prevents costly mistake, (70.60%).

In a way, the above variables with their scores showed that standard recipe stands the chance of controlling quality in terms of consistency in taste, time and availability. Also some flaws that could result into loss of trust /loyalty to the customers could possibly be averted via use of standard recipes in the preparation of fast food.

Table 3: Perception of Respondents on use of standard Recipe as a means of Quality control

Perception	Frequency (%)
It helps maintain consistency	71 (88.13)
It helps create identity	53 (66.25)
It protects the company's image	45 (55.63)
It helps to ascertain taste	62 (77.50)
It helps to express professionalism	47 (58.75)
It prevents drudgery incase of staff absence/lateness	76 (94.38)
It prevents costly mistake	56 (70.60)

Hypotheses Testing

Findings in Table 4 showed that there is a significant relationship between use of standard recipe and trade mark creation ($\chi^2 = 8.14$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$), taste consistency ($\chi^2 = 4.17$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$) overcooking prevention ($\chi^2 = 5.65$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$) and seasoning moderation ($\chi^2 = 7.11$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$). This finding is in agreement with assertion of Dacosta, (2000) that good results in food preparation are obtained when carefully formulated and tested recipe (standard recipe) are used. The finding in Table 4 also

corroborated with Akinleye and Ikpi, (2007) that fast food products are often made with ingredients formulated to achieve a certain flavour or consistency and improved shelf life attributes use of standard recipe and some shortfall variables was presented in Table 5. The findings showed that there is significant relationship between use of standard recipe and time wastage ($\chi^2 = 6.17$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.05$). This means that use of standard recipe is time consuming. This finding contradicts Dacosta, (2000) that use of standard recipe saves time and energy.

Table 4: Chi square Test of Relationship between Use of Standard Recipe and Selected Quality Control Variables

Variables	χ^2	df	Decision
Trade mark creation	8.14	1	Significant
Taste consistency	4.17	1	Significant
Cooking moderation	5.65	1	Significant
Seasoning moderation	4.11	1	Significant

Table 5: Relationship between Use of Standard Recipe and Some Shortfall Variables

Problems	χ^2	df	Remark
No room for Creativity	3.13	2	Not significant
Requires Expertise	5.42	2	No significant
Wastes Time	6.17	2	Significant
Requires Staff Induction	9.14	2	Significant

CONCLUSIONS

Food is very important to health and living. It performs these functions only when it is taken in wholesome state. Among the conditions that affect food quality are ingredient composition and processing procedures. Use of standard recipe however, borders on adhering creatively to a tested and standardized procedure that can give the best results in taste, texture, appearance with serious emphasis on relative nutrition.

Use of standard recipe was found to be instrumental to quality control in fast food operations thus moderates both ingredients and processing procedures. Use of standard recipe was found rampant among fast food operators but the degree of application varies within brand. It was also found that staff induction is very important in effective application of standard recipe hence most of the staffers of fast food have no professional qualification. Training on unit of measurements and the scale of

measurement for different food stuffs is highly necessary to ensure that things are done right. Use of standard recipe was found to guide quality through identity creation, taste consistency, cooking moderation and seasoning moderation. Hence, it is recommended that the consumer protection agencies should reinforce and expedite action on enforcement of standard recipe on all fast food operations. Also there should be a training body that will be saddled with induction (trainings) of staff of fast food on the rubrics of the operations like measurement and units, scales, cooking methods, personal hygiene and food safety practices among others.

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