

**EXPOSURE TO HEALTH INFORMATION ON WORLD-FOOD-SAFETY-DAY AND ADOPTION OF SAFE FOOD CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOURS AMONG NIGERIAN UNDERGRADUATES**

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**Abstract**

Careless food consumption behaviour has been identified among the causes of foodborne diseases. This rise in foodborne disease instigated global action of commemoration of the world food safety day to enhance food safety awareness. The need to understanding what the public do with the messages of world food safety day through an empirical approach instigated this study. Specifically, the study examined the respondents' level of exposure to the day's campaign messages, ascertain the dominant source of exposure to the campaign messages, find out whether the respondents' exposure to these campaign messages translate into a positive attitude toward food consumption and finally, to find out the factor that mainly influenced adoption of the world-food-safety day messages. The study used the survey research approach as its method and reasoned action theory as its theoretical framework. The purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting 389 undergraduate students of COOU sampled from a population of 14,000 students using the taro Yamni's sample size determination formula. Finding from the study revealed that although the respondents are poorly exposed to the world-food-safety day messages, their level of adoption of food safety day measures is high. It was also found that social media was the major source of exposure to World Food Safety Day messages, while fear of getting sick dominated the reason for adoption of safe food culture among respondents. It was concluded that further efforts in making more information available to the public will increase the respondents' exposure to World Food Safety Day messages, as well as increase the adoption of safety measures among the people. It was recommended that more effort should be intensified by the media and government agencies to enhance effective two-way communication using mix media approach to increase awareness and adoption of World Food Safety Day messages.

**Keywords:** *Foodborne, food safety, World Food Safety Day, consumption behaviour, adoption.*

**Background of the study**

Globally, the issue of food safety is a life-threatening public health concern. The reason for this is the possible dangers of unsafe food consumption, which cannot only lead to foodborne diseases but also pose significant health risks to the victims. While citing (Flynn, 2014; CDC, 2014), Ma, Almanza, Ghiselli, Vorvoreanu & Sydnor, (2017) argued that behind the health implications of unsafe food consumption, there are both economic and population reduction implications associated with it. The World Health Organization (WHO), report (2024) revealed that 600 million people became sick after consuming food and 420,000 of these people die yearly as a result of foodborne diseases. Specifically, the challenge of unsafe food consumption is usually rampant in developing countries because that is where people are more vulnerable to unsafe food due to poor hygiene practices, insufficient food safety regulations, and limited awareness (De Boeck, Jacxsens, Vanoverberghe, Vlerick, 2019). In Nigeria, food safety issues are prevalent because of inappropriate food handling practices, lack of committed regulatory enforcement, and limited public knowledge about food safety measures (Tuglo, Agordoh, & Tekpor, 2021; Alemayehu, Aderaw, Giza, & Diress, 2021; Todd, 2020).

Universally, university undergraduates are a unique demographic group, that are mainly exposed to various food sources. Among the food sources available to university undergraduates include but are not limited to campus cafeterias, street vendors, and self-prepared meals. The simple implication of this is that this demographic set of people is susceptible to foodborne diseases at any point when there is no compliance with food safety measures (WHO, 2024; Tamiru, Bidira, Moges, Dugasa, Amsalu, & Gezimu, 2022; Yusof, Rahman, & Haque, 2018). This underscores the importance of World Food Safety Day and its desire to ensure that there is public awareness of food safety culture among food consumers.

In the face of the above-established facts, there is a need for effective health information dissemination on the dangers of unsafe food consumption to the people. The focus of this information should be on the five crucial components for achieving safer food as outlined by the World Health Organisation. Among the key features of these crucial components that must be captured in any awareness message are cleanliness of the environment, separating raw from cooked food, cooking foods thoroughly before distribution, keeping food at safe temperatures, and using safe water and raw materials in food preparation (Fontannaz-Aujoulat, Frost & Schlundt, 2019). Food safety culture describes a collection of learned and shared attitudes, values, and beliefs that form the foundation of the hygienic behaviors used within a particular food handling environment (Nwankwo, & Agbasiere, 2021).

In this regard, the role of health communication theorists, educators, and practitioners is increasingly needed to bridge the knowledge gap in the sector and save people from unsafe food risk behaviours. Previous studies such as Marklinder, Wersén, & James, (2025) and Zenbaba, Sahiledengle, & Nugusu, (2022) have indicated that although health information on food safety is available through various media, its accessibility, credibility, and effectiveness in influencing behavioural change among university students remain inconsistent. This is because of the varying degrees of knowledge of the dangers associated with the risk of consuming unsafe food among the students. Among the factors that control the food cultural behaviours of students include their respondents' knowledge level, attitude, perception of risk, peer influence, and cultural beliefs which play complementary roles in determining whether students will adopt safe food consumption practices or not (Fekadu, Kinde, Dagnaw, Dessalegn, Dejene, & Gessese, (2024). Additionally, the proliferation of

misinformation and myths about food safety on digital platforms can either enhance or hinder the adoption of appropriate food safety behaviours (iMIS food global, 2025; Zhang, (2022).

Sharman, Wallace & Jespersen, (2020) define food safety culture as a long-term paradigm in a food handling organization deeply rooted in beliefs, behaviours, and assumptions that impact the food safety performance within the organization. Recently, food safety culture assessments among consumers and food businesses have gained attention from both scientists and food regulatory agencies and researchers (Jespersen, Butts, Holler, Taylor, Harlan, Griffiths, Wallace, 2019; de Andrade, Stedefeldt, Zanin, Zanetta, da Cunha, 2021; Jespersen, Griffiths, & Wallace, 2017; de Andrade, Stedefeldt, Zanin, L.M.; da Cunha, 2020; Zanin, Stedefeldt, da Silva, da Cunha, Luning, 2021; Nwammuo & Ikegbunam, 2025).

Despite this high attention and the United Nations' efforts to establish World Food Safety Day, consumer food poisoning remains an important cause of human disease and death (Jespersen et al, 2019; de Andrade et al, 2021; European Food Safety Authority and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (EFSA and ECDC), 2017). Hence, the focus has shifted from public effort towards raising awareness of the danger of foodborne diseases to what the public, who forms the target of the health safety messages on the subject matter, does with the messages they receive.

This study became necessary because Nigeria alone records over 200,000 deaths from foodborne illness annually, spending over US\$ 3.6 billion per annum on foodborne-related disease management (Ezirigwe, 2018). As in most developing countries, meeting the WHO's five key requirements for achieving safer food has been a struggle in Nigeria, where basic amenities, particularly running water and robust sanitary units, are lacking (Fasoro, Faeji, Oni, Oluwadare, 2016). In a situation like this, the actions of the food consumers are considered a major factor in determining what they consume to live. Since there is poor implementation of regulatory frameworks, self-regulation and compliance with the necessary food safety culture may be significant in staying safe. To what extent does the exposure to the message of World Food Safety Day influence students' food consumption culture for the safety of their lives? It was in line with the above views that this study examined the extent to which exposure to World Food Safety Day campaign messages influenced COOU undergraduates' food consumption attitudes.

### **Statement of the problem**

Every human being ideally eats to be alive. In the real sense, many a man eats and gets themselves hurt by what they eat to live. This occurred as a result of several reasons, including ignorance of the danger of unsafe food, poor food preparation attitude, poor food preparation environment, and the price of quality foods. These challenges have led many to consume unsafe food. While some end up in the grave others spend a lot in the hospital over what they are to be alive. To combat both ignorance and encourage good food cultural attitudes, the United Nations established the World Food Safety Day. How this effort of the UN has yielded positive results as it affects the consumers of the food in the university environment is what triggered this study. Having been exposed to the dangers of unsafe food, what has changed among the people is a critical question that this study intends to answer

## Research questions

The following research questions guided this study

1. What is the respondent's level of exposure to World Food Safety Day campaign messages?
2. What is the dominant source of exposure to the World Food Safety Day campaign messages?
3. Does exposure to these campaign messages translate into a positive attitude toward food consumption?
4. What is the factor that mainly influences audience adoption of the World Food Safety Day campaign messages?

## Significance of the study

This study is an audience-based one, premised on university undergraduates and their attitudes towards the adoption of safe food consumption culture after being exposed to world food safety campaign messages. The study will expose the readers and the public to how significant the World Food Safety Day campaign messages are to the change of attitudes expected for safe food action among the students. To the students, the study will expose them to the healthy food consumption practices that they need to know and the dangers of absconding from taking action in line with the communicated safety tips in food consumption. To the government and policymakers, this study will expose the factors that hinder students from adopting of safe food consumption attitude. This will inform policy reforms and put the regulatory body on their toes as to how to regulate food handling in the country. The study will remind the university community of the need to also look into what is prepared in their area and how that influences the health of the people. Academically, this study will serve as a source of vibrant literature to future and emerging scholars who are going to engage in more inquiries into this area.

## Scope of the study

This study covers only the undergraduate students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam campus. Any other undergraduate students of any other universities in the state were not captured in the study. As well, the postgraduate and weekend program students of the University under study is not covered in the research. Thematically, this study looked at the respondent's exposure to the campaign message on World Food Safety Day. The target is to understand their level of exposure before looking for influence. Again, the study covered the respondents' knowledge of healthy safe food attitudes and how their exposure and knowledge translate into adopting of the communicated food consumption culture. Finally, the factors responsible for the adoption or otherwise of the safe food consumption culture were covered in the study. Methodologically, this study is based on the survey research approach which enabled the researcher to select the sample from the population and study for generalisation. Theoretically, this study is carried out using methodological triangulation combining the health belief and the social exchange theory to explain the relationship between the variables in the study and previous literature.

## Challenges Confronting the Promotion of Food Safety Culture in Nigeria

Concerns about how food is prepared, sold, and consumed, particularly in informal or unsuitable locations, are growing in Nigeria, making it increasingly difficult to foster a culture of food safety. Although these informal vendors offer affordable meal options, their practices often fall short of basic hygiene standards due to poor food handling, inadequate sanitation, lack of clean water, refrigeration, and disinfection facilities (Ezirigwe, 2018; Iyadi, 2015; Okojie & Isah, 2019). Unfortunately, widespread public indifference toward food safety

practices, an unstructured food control system, and weak enforcement of food regulations have further worsened the problem of food contamination and foodborne illnesses (Omojokun, 2013, cited in Onyeak *et al.*, 2020).

Contributing factors include a poorly organized food supply chain, limited ability to trace food origins, and a general lack of awareness around food safety protocols and quality standards (EatSafe Project Report, 2020). Additionally, the absence of reliable data on foodborne illness outbreaks and a lack of understanding of the social and economic impact of unsafe food have compounded the issue (Kilders, Caputo, & Liverpool-Tasie, 2021).

Other significant barriers to food safety include negative attitudes toward risk management and a reluctance to learn from past incidents or safety indicators (Okpala, Nwobi, & Korzeniowska, 2021; Odipe *et al.*, 2019; Chikaire *et al.*, 2020). Studies have shown that food is frequently prepared in unhygienic environments, handwashing is infrequent, and meals are often left exposed to insects (Fasoro *et al.*, 2016; Adeolu *et al.*, 2019; Gali *et al.*, 2019; Iwu *et al.*, 2017; EatSafe Report, 2020; Okpala *et al.*, 2021). Cultural practices also play a role some communities store and prepare food long before consumption, while others attribute food poisoning to supernatural causes like ancestral curses or evil spirits (Oyemade *et al.*, 1998, as cited in Onyeaka *et al.*, 2021).

All these underlying issues have significantly hindered efforts to advance food safety awareness and behaviour in Nigeria. Public apathy and lax enforcement by regulators continue to be major obstacles. Attempts to address these issues through public education have seen limited success, as many food handlers and consumers cling to traditional practices passed down through generations. Moreover, climate change poses an emerging threat to food safety and security globally, with Nigeria likely to be heavily affected (Oyedele *et al.*, 2020; Yakubu *et al.*, 2020; Aluko, 2020).

Given this complex landscape, there is an urgent need to adopt adaptive measures, such as implementing a national food safety management program that emphasizes early hazard detection and builds a culture of food safety. A key first step would be stronger regulatory oversight by the government. Many experts agree that improved regulation and closer collaboration with food producers could significantly enhance food safety standards in Nigeria (Nwaiwu & Itumoh, 2017). Continuous evaluation of core food safety components such as leadership, communication, risk awareness, personal responsibility, and organizational support is essential to making meaningful progress.

### **Empirical review of related literature**

Iweama, Boniface, Ozoemena, Ajani, and Abugu (2024) explored the level of food hygiene knowledge and hygiene-related practices among undergraduate students at Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The study used a descriptive cross-sectional design to assess self-reported knowledge and practices relating to food hygiene among the students. Through the theoretical framework of the health belief model, the study found that a majority (61.6%) of the students demonstrated substantial knowledge of food hygiene

principles. Furthermore, an even higher proportion, 89.5%, reported engaging in good hygiene practices, such as purchasing fresh food items and washing fruits before consumption. These results suggest a relatively high level of awareness and application of safe food handling behaviours among the undergraduate population studied. The findings call for targeted interventions that consider gender- and age-specific factors in promoting food safety behaviour among youths in tertiary institutions. This study is related to the current study in the sense that they were both interested in undergraduate food safety attitudes. However, it is important to state that there are some differences between these two studies. The previous study is premised on no known food safety campaign while this current one is premised on the media messages on food safety as contained in the world food safety day messages. Again, the previous study is located at Enugu whereas the current one is premised on undergraduates in Anambra state owned university. Interestingly, the previous study created a gap for an Anambra counterpart of a similar study.

In another study, Madaki and Miroslava (2021) conducted an empirical study aimed at examining the factors influencing food safety behaviours among food vendors operating within public higher education institutions in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study holds significant relevance for understanding behavioural determinants of food safety, especially within institutional food environments. The primary objective was to investigate the relationships between food safety knowledge, food safety attitudes, accessibility of sanitation facilities, and perceived economic and social constraints, and how these variables affect food safety practices. The study used purposive sampling technique to select six out of thirteen public higher education institutions in the state. From a total population of 342 food vendors operating within these institutions, 181 participants were randomly selected. The findings revealed that food safety knowledge and food safety attitudes had statistically significant positive effects on the vendors' food safety behaviours. Furthermore, perceived economic and social constraints were found to be influential, suggesting that limited resources and social factors can hinder the adoption of proper food handling practices. Notably, the inaccessibility of sanitation facilities was shown to hurt food safety behaviours, highlighting the importance of adequate infrastructural support in promoting safe food practices. The study recommended that there should be a multi-faceted intervention strategy if food safety behaviour is going to be massively communicated. The study is related to the current one by discussing food vending services and food safety behaviours as a result of exposure. However, the study differs from the current one in the sense that while it is on food vendors as profit makers, the current one is on undergraduate food consumers on campus who are expected to display attitude that can save them from food-borne diseases.

Again, Iweama, Boniface, Ozoemena, Ajani, & Abugu, (2023) investigated issues relating to food hygiene among undergraduates in Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). The study, which was set to determine the proportion of undergraduates in the university who possess knowledge of food hygiene and food hygiene practices adopted by the undergraduates, studied 480 students through the use of a survey research method. Findings reveal that overall, the proportion of undergraduates in ESUT who possess knowledge of food hygiene was high. Throwing away food when in doubt is a preventive measure for food poisoning, with a high sense of food hygiene practice, and risk factors for food poisoning. In all, an overwhelming majority of undergraduates adopted good food hygiene practices such as buying clean and fresh foods for cooking, covering their hair while cooking, not wearing accessories like rings, bracelets when cooking food, and washing fruits and vegetables before eating. This study is related to the current one because

it not only looks at food safety practice and adoption but also was premised on university undergraduates in Southeast. However, the study differs in target and research objectives. The implication of this is that if a study of this nature exists in Enugu, there is an academic gap for a study of such nature to be conducted in Anambra State.

Similarly, Eruaga, (2024) examined the role of public education initiatives in enhancing food safety practices among consumers. The study used a systematic review of existing literature to establish the pivotal roles played in this regard by public education of the masses. The study explored all the strategies and approaches that can be employed in public education campaigns to enhance the promotion of food safety awareness among the people. The study also delved into establishing the influence of these educational interventions on influencing consumer behaviour towards adopting safe food practices, paying special attention to understanding the correlation between education levels and adherence to recommended guidelines. Furthermore, the paper sheds light on the collaborative efforts of regulatory bodies, non-governmental organizations, and public health institutions in spearheading educational initiatives. The paper emphasizes the importance of evidence-based strategies and innovative technologies in overcoming challenges to effective food safety practice and enhancing the efficacy of educational campaigns. The indispensable role of public education in fostering a culture of food safety among consumers was also established. Again, while acknowledging the relationship between these studies, the researcher observed a difference in methodological approach to the studies. While the previous study is premised on the extant literature review, the current one is based on a survey research approach.

In another study, Barnabas, Bavorova, Madaki, and Kächele (2024) examined food safety knowledge, attitudes, and practices among food vendors engaged in Nigeria's ongoing Home-grown School Feeding Program. the mixed-method study of survey and interview research approach was used in studying 240 food vendors from 3 states in northeast Nigeria. Findings revealed that increased education and access to information through radio, television, and food inspection institutions increased food safety knowledge. Also, it was found that an increase in household size and food safety information from friends and colleagues negatively affected food safety attitude scores. The study recommended that there is a need for the dissemination of improved food safety information via radio, television, and food safety inspection institutes. This study is related to the current one in the sense that it is looking at the food safety attitude of the food vendors in Nigeria. Importantly, this study differs from the current one in the area of target and location; while the previous study is in northeastern Nigeria, the current study is in southeastern Nigeria. Again, while the food vendors in SFP form the target of the previous study, the undergraduates are the target of the current study.

## **Method of Study**

The survey research method was used in this study to quantitatively generate data on the respondents' respondent's level of exposure to World Food Safety Day campaign messages, their dominant source of exposure to those messages, relationship between their exposure to these campaign messages and attitude toward food consumption and finally understand the factor that mainly influences audience adoption of the

world food safety day campaign messages. The population of this study was the number of undergraduate students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam campus. The reason for the choice of undergraduate students was that they form the majority of the population using social media platforms and also get and share content through the networks. According to the students' affairs units of the university, the population of undergraduate students is 14,000 students from where a sample size of 389 respondents was selected using Taro Yamani's formula of sample size. The sample was purposively selected to ensure that all respondents are knowledgeable to the world food safety day and its messages. Data were collected through the questionnaire designed for the study.

**Data Presentation**

This chapter deals with data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings based on information collected from the research questionnaire used in gathering information for the study. Considering the fact that the study did not pay attention to the influence of demographic details of the respondents on the study, the researchers skipped the respondents' demographic details in the analysis. It is very important to state that all data gathered from this study are presented hereunder in frequency tables and percentages, with their respective implications provided under each table. A total of 389 respondents were sampled for the study. At the time of data collection, only 376 copies of the questionnaire, representing 96.6% of the entire sample, were found valid for the study. This figure is still substantial to the study, and therefore, formed the basis for data presentation and analysis, as can be seen below

**Table 1:** The respondents' frequency of exposure to World Food Safety Day campaign messages

<b>Response category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Frequently	97	25.7%
Very frequently	17	4.5%
Sparingly	119	31.6%
Very sparingly	143	38.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Researcher's field survey, 2026

This table implies that the respondents have slim exposure to the campaign messages on the World Food Safety Day.

**Table 2:** The dominant source of exposure to the World Food Safety Day campaign messages

<b>Response category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Radio	50	13.2%
Newspapers	35	9.3 %
Television	47	12.5%
Social media	234	62.2%
Magazine	10	13.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Researcher's field survey, 2026

Despite the low exposure to the campaign messages, the dominant source of exposure is social media. This implies that campaign messages on World Food Safety Day are not massively disseminated using different media of transmission to reach wider audiences. Again, this data revealed the prominence of social media use

among the respondents.

**Table 3:** Whether exposure to these campaign messages translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption and safe food consumption behaviours among respondents

<b>Response category</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UN</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>RMKS</b>
Exposure to these campaign messages, to a significant extent, translates into positive change in attitude and safe food consumption behaviours among respondents.	118	98	68	50	40	1326	3.5	Accepted
Exposure to these campaigns, to a <i>very significant</i> extent, translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption.	109	125	47	53	42	1228	3.2	Accepted
Exposure to these campaign messages, to a very <i>insignificant</i> extent, translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption	68	73	45	117	73	1074	2.8	Rejected
Exposure to these campaign messages, to no significant extent, translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption	41	62	60	126	87	972	2.5	Rejected
<b>Total</b>								

**Source: Researcher's field survey, 2026**

The rejection of the only two negative and acceptance of the two hypothetical statements supporting the positive influence of the campaigns' messages of the World Food Safety Day is an indication that, despite a low exposure level as found in Table one, the little exposure the people had exerted significant influence on their safe food behaviour and attitudes.

**Table 2:** Dominant factor that mainly influences audience adoption of the World Food Safety Day campaign messages

<b>Response category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Respondents' knowledge of foodborne disease	97	25.7%
Price of food	71	18.8 %
Respondents' perception of fear of getting sick	157	41.7%
Accessibility to safe food on campus	51	13.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Researcher's field survey, 2026**

This table demonstrates that fear of getting sick is the dominant factor that forces the respondents into the adoption of the safe food culture as a result of exposure to the food safety day campaign messages.

### **Discussion of findings**

The data on the respondents' frequency of exposure to the World Food Safety Day messages shows that the majority of the respondents are very sparingly and sparingly exposed to the World Food Safety Day messages. According to the table, it is only 97 and 17 respondents, accounting for 25.7% and 4.5% of the entire sample size, admitted being frequently and very frequently exposed to the world food safety messages. Importantly, the remaining 143 and 119 respondents, controlling 38.0% and 31.6% of the sample, said that they are *very sparingly* and *sparingly* exposed (see Table 1). This data revealed the fact that there is a need for more on the day and its activities to enhance public exposure and adoption of a safe food consumption culture.

Answer to the research question 2 of this study revealed that the majority of the respondents who are exposed to the campaign messages get exposed to it through their social media handles. According to the data, while 234 respondents, representing 62.2% got exposed to the messages through social media, 50 others heard about the World Food Safety Day messages through the radio (see table 3 for more). This table demonstrates that social media is now a medium that can best be used to reach out to people. Its interactive nature and universality make the medium a versatile instrument for public health safety message dissemination. This finding corroborates that of Obiakor and Ikegbunam (2022), where the scholars concluded that social media is one of the most vibrant means of information dissemination to the people. This is connected to the universality of social media and the subsequent proliferation of internet-enabled gadgets (Ikgebunam & Obiakor, 2023; Obiakor, Ikegbunam & Ezeja, 2024).

A look at the third research objective, designed to ascertain whether exposure to World Food Safety Day messages translates to a positive attitude towards safe food consumption behaviours, revealed that exposure has a significant impact on the attitude of the respondents. Considering the data from Table 3, there are four hypothetical statements that were tested using the 5-point Likert rating scale. Of those four hypothetical statements put forward to examine the influence of exposure on adoption of safe food culture, the two negative statements which were “*Exposure to these campaign messages, to a very insignificant extent, translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption*” and “*Exposure to these campaign messages, to no significant extent, translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption*” were rejected at the mean score of 2.8 and 2.5 respectively. On the other two positive hypothetical statements made in the study, “*Exposure to these campaign messages, to a significant extent, translates into positive change in attitude and safe food consumption behaviours among respondents*” and “*Exposure to these campaigns, to a very significant extent, translates into a positive attitude toward food consumption*” were accepted. This implies the respondents admitted that exposure to these campaign messages influenced their actions towards food safety concerns. (See table 3 for more). This finding agrees with that of Madaki and Miroslava (2021), who found that food safety knowledge and food safety attitudes had statistically significant positive effects on the vendors' food safety behaviours. The study corroborated Iweama, *et al* (2023)'s finding that undergraduate students adopted good food hygiene practices after gaining knowledge and being aware that bad food consumption culture can expose them to foodborne diseases. This finding is connected to the views of the proponents of the theory of reasoned

action and planned behaviour, which argues that people take actions after examining the cost and benefit of such an action at all times (Lange, *et al*, 2012).

On the fourth research question which sought to ascertain the dominant factor that compels respondents to adopt safe food culture after exposure to the food safety messages of World Food Safety Day, it was found that the respondents' fear of foodborne diseases dominates other factors in the list. According to the data from Table 4, an overwhelming majority (157) of the respondents, accounting for 41.7% of the sample size, admitted that they adopt food safety measures to avoid getting sick. This was followed by another 97 respondents representing 25.7% of the sample who said that their knowledge of foodborne disease is what inspired their adoption of food safety measures. Meanwhile, 71 and 51 respondents, covering 18.8% and 13.5% stated that they adopt the food safety measures because of the price and accessibility of the safe food. This finding corroborates that of Uzochukwu and Ikegbunam, (2023) where it was found that individuals' beliefs about cancer risk factors significantly influenced their adoption of cancer preventive behaviours. This finding is also connected to the health belief model, which, according to Lawrence (2000), cited in Mazumder (2019), emphasizes that the motivation to avoid illness propels effort towards remaining safe among the people. This finding also supports the position held in Colleen (2000) as cited in Nwakpu, *et al* (2020), which argues that individuals are more likely to adopt preventive health behaviours when they perceive that failure to do so could expose them to severe health consequences.

### **Conclusion**

It was concluded that despite the fact that efforts towards making the world food safety day messages reach out to the people are in short supply, the respondents acted normally by striving to adopt some health safety measures to remain safe. The power of social media in setting the public agenda as a tool for information dissemination is acknowledged and commended. It is the conclusion of the study that further efforts in making more information available to the public will increase the respondents' exposure to World Food Safety Day messages as well as increase the adoption of safety measures among the people.

### **Recommendations**

**Based on the research findings of the study, the researcher recommended as following:**

1. The international community and the World Health Organisation (WHO) should adopt a communication mix in disseminating food safety information to enhance robust public exposure to the World Food Safety Day messages.
2. Food consumers should strive to gain access to safe food and adopt a safe food consumption culture to stay away from foodborne diseases
3. Since findings has demonstrated that the little exposure the respondents have translated to positive attitude change for good food safe food consumption culture, efforts should be geared towards consolidation **and building on existing messages**, reinforcing behaviours like food hygiene, checking expiry dates, and proper food storage to enhance public safety.
4. That future food safety campaign messages should identify and **capitalise on key motivating factors** such as health concerns, family wellbeing, and trust in message source in designing campaigns to control adoption of health safety measures.

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