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Understanding residents in supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC) attitudes and behaviors regarding food safety and food waste reduction in Muncie, IN

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in six people (~48 million) become sick as a result of foodborne diseases every year in the USA and of those who become sick, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die. Further, more than 20% of foodborne illnesses were attributed to food consumed in the home in 2009 and 2010. Consumer's general fear of foodborne illnesses and lack of knowledge regarding how long left-over food is safe to eat and how to properly store food results in billions of pounds of food waste every year in the USA. The USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) estimates that the leading 15 foodborne pathogens cost the United States economy more than \$15 billion dollars annually. While the estimated value of food waste is \$160 billion using retail prices. Sixty percent of food waste happens at the consumer level. The total food wasted at all levels, slightly less than 1/3 was recovered in some fashion. The remaining 72% of wasted food, over 7,000 tons, goes to landfills. The literature on food safety and food waste suggests that people's behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions regarding food safety, waste, and reuse of leftover foods is influenced by their education background, sociocultural, household ages, children ages, and income factors. The purpose of this study is using interview survey methodology, to explore and better understand the food safety knowledge, practices, and beliefs of primary food prepares who receive the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits in Muncie, Indiana. Data analysis will allow us to analyze the relationship among a variety of variables including: demographics (age, gender, education level, education field, income, work, and race), behavior, and attitude toward food waste. Participants will be asked to respond to a face to face survey to analyze the relationships among a variety of variables such as behaviors and attitudes toward food safety and food waste. Survey results will be used to develop a framework that food organizations that can use to educate their members in food safety practices and waste reduction procedures that are culturally appropriate.

Biography

Huda Al Herz has her expertise in Relationship oriented health professional with over 5 years' experience in patient care, nutritional education, and child development. Interests include health research amongst international demographics, and reducing the side effects of chronic disease through healthy cooking for geriatric populations. Excels in creating Arabic education focused curriculums, and locating educational resources. Outstanding ability to plan events and activities utilizing Arabic and English language background.

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