



## Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)

Volume 6, Issue 9, September 2021

e-ISSN : 2504-8562

Journal home page:  
[www.msocsciences.com](http://www.msocsciences.com)

### Food Borne Disease and the Lifestyles of the Students and Food Handlers in Rural Schools: A Preliminary Observation

Song Jing, L.<sup>1</sup>, Hassan, Z.<sup>1</sup>, Regina, G.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Correspondence: Song Jing, L. ([songjing\\_1992@yahoo.com](mailto:songjing_1992@yahoo.com))

#### Abstract

Food borne diseases cause millions of deaths every year around the world. The major factors contributing to food borne diseases and the prevalence of food poisoning among students are the food preparation process, lifestyles, physical cleanliness and water supplies. Food mismanagement by food handlers and students' and food handlers' poor knowledge of food hygiene are the factors that lead to food poisoning among school students. The objectives of this study are to: investigate how food handlers carry out food preparation; determine students' and handlers' standards of food hygiene assess the physical cleanliness of school canteens and the purity of their water supplies; and develop guidelines for the prevention of food poisoning. The aspects investigated in this study are the food preparation process, knowledge of food hygiene, physical cleanliness and food poisoning prevention methods.

**Keywords:** food borne diseases, food handlers, food preparation process, food poisoning prevention and physical cleanliness

#### Introduction

Food borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid fever, hepatitis A, dysentery and food poisoning occur because of consumption of foods contaminated with chemicals and microorganisms (Sharifa Ezat, Netty & Sangaran, 2013). *Salmonella* bacteria are the main cause of food borne illnesses around the world and they are normally are transmitted to humans through consumption of contaminated food of animal origin, such as eggs, chicken, meat and milk (World Health Organization, 2019). This study focuses on food borne diseases, and particularly on food poisoning, among school students. Food borne diseases causes and lifestyles are interrelated (Sharifa Ezat, Netty & Sangaran, 2013). The increase in the incidence of food poisoning may be because food handlers ignore the importance of safe food handling and the correct way to prepare food in the kitchen (Abdul-Mutalib et al., 2015). Studies in New Zealand found food handling practices still to be the main threat circumstance for food borne diseases. Therefore, the causes of poor practices need to be investigated (Al-Sakkaf, 2013). School premises are checked and school food handlers have been trained to practice safe food handling but food poisoning outbreaks still occur (New et al., 2017). In Malaysia different ethnic groups practise different food preparation approaches and hygiene directly associated with the socio-cultural differences and dietary and culinary practices of each group (Sharifa Ezat, Netty & Sangaran, 2013). Data from sociological approaches are needed to take account of the populations' food habits and beliefs and identify the influences on food safety in the population (Ehiri & Morris, 2013). This