

Abstract

The street food trade is a growing sector in many developing countries today and Kenya is one of those countries. The increase in the street food trade especially in market places has been brought about by the larger number of people who are involved in different kinds of businesses who mainly depend on the street foods. One of the main health hazards associated with street foods is microbial and environmental contamination. Studies conducted in Africa have revealed that pathogenic organisms like Salmonella and Escherichia Coli are some of the bacteriological contaminants that pose a health hazard to consumers of street foods. The main objective of this study was to determine the bacteriological contamination of street vended foods by Escherichia .Coli, Salmonella, Shigella, Staphylococcus Aureus and Clostridium Perfringes in Githurai and Gikomba markets- Nairobi County. The target population was 149 street food vendors who were selling the street foods at the market places with reference to Githurai and Gikomba markets. This population was targeted because of the nature of businesses that are carried out within these markets mainly being the sale of cheap second hand clothes and other items that attract a large number of people. This study adopted an analytical research design whereby microbial analysis of food samples was carried out in the laboratory. Systematic random sampling was used to select the study participants from whom food samples were bought totaling to 218 food samples. The overall level of occurrence of food contamination was 34.9%. 25.2% of these food samples were fecally contaminated evidenced by testing positive for E. coli. Klebsiella pneumoniae was also detected in a sample of boiled egg with “kachumbari” though this microorganism was not among those to be tested in this study.