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Nutritional awareness of ix standard students

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Abstract

The present study was aimed to assess the nutritional awareness of IX standard students in Coimbatore district. The survey method was employed in this investigation. 300 IX standard students from the eight different schools in Coimbatore district were selected using the stratified random sampling method. A self-designed and well-structured questionnaire was distributed randomly to the IX standard students. Demographic details were also recorded. The questionnaires which are completely filled were obtained and further analyzed. The mean scores obtained by the IX standard students from the nutritional awareness scale were calculated in order to find out the significant difference between the level of nutritional awareness among the IX standard students. Results showed that there is a significant difference between the rural and urban IX standard students in their nutritional awareness. And also the study indicated that there is a lack of adequate nutritional awareness among IX standard students. Hence, the study revealed an urgent need to educate not only the students but their families as well. Due to the importance of nutrition and its impact on health the study suggests that nutrition courses should be made as the part of the school curriculum.

Keywords: Nutritional awareness, Health, School Curriculum

Introduction

The role of nutrition in health promotion, disease prevention and treatment of chronic diseases is well recognized. Nutrition plays a critical role in numerous pathophysiological conditions, including such prevalent diseases as diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular diseases. There have been considerable changes in human lifestyle all over the world. Especially in recent years, the lifestyle has rapidly been industrialized. This has caused changes in diet, types of food, and cooking styles. Nowadays processed foods are rapidly replacing organic food. Another change is the rapid increase in the number of restaurants and in the people's tendency to eat fast food. Many studies have shown that not keeping a healthy diet and not having sufficient nutrition knowledge lead to issues such as health problems, overweight and obesity. Obesity itself leads to cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, an increase in blood cholesterol and diabetes. The main goal of nutrition plans is to obtain the appropriate and necessary nutrition to remain healthy, to be physically prepared and to lead a healthy life. For this reason to promote the health level of a society, the attitudes of its people must be taken into account.

Rationale for the study

Everyone needs a balanced diet to stay healthy and active. Children need to eat a variety of foods to grow, develop and be strong. Nutrition education is an important way to encourage healthy eating, build good lifelong habits, and combat our country's childhood obesity epidemic. Unfortunately, in many schools, nutrition education has been squeezed out of the curriculum. In order to remain healthy and physically active and enjoy a healthier life style it is necessary to obtain good nutritional knowledge and implement it. Schools provide the most effective and efficient way to reach large portions of the population, including young people, school personnel, families and community members. Students can be reached at influential stages in their lives, during childhood and adolescence when lifelong nutritional patterns are formed. Recent studies have demonstrated that nutrition affects students' thinking skills, behavior, and health, all factors that impact academic performance. Finally, research has also established a link between nutrition and behavior. Studies have found that access to nutrition, particularly breakfast, can enhance a student's psychosocial well-being, reduce aggression and school suspensions, and decrease discipline problems. Hence the present study was aimed at assessing the nutritional awareness of IX standard students in Coimbatore district.

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Objectives

To find out the nutritional awareness of IX standard students with regard to their gender, type of school, area of living, type of family, fathers' qualification, mothers' qualification, fathers' occupation, mothers' occupation and family annual income.

Method and subjects

The survey method was employed in this investigation. The study included 300 IX standard students from six different schools in Coimbatore district. After obtaining permission from the school principal and class teachers, a self-designed and well-structured questionnaire was distributed randomly to the IX standard students. The questionnaire assessed nutritional awareness of the IX standard students. Demographic details were also recorded. The questionnaires which are completely filled were obtained and further analyzed.

Statistical techniques used

Means, standard deviation and percents were calculated for the scores which are obtained from the nutritional awareness rating scale. ANOVA was used to analyze the nutritional awareness of IX standard students with regard to their type of school, mothers' qualification, fathers' qualification, mothers' occupation and also t-test was used to compare the nutritional awareness of IX standard students with respect to their gender, area of living, type of family and family annual income.

Null hypotheses

- There is no significant difference between the male and female IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant difference between the rural and urban IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant difference among the IX standard students studying in government, government-aided, private and corporation schools in their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant difference between IX standard students who belong to the nuclear and joint families in their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant association between the family annual incomes of IX standard students and their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant association between fathers' occupations of IX standard students and their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant association between mothers' occupations of IX standard students and their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant association between fathers' qualifications of IX standard students and their nutritional awareness.
- There is no significant association between mothers' qualifications of IX standard students and their nutritional awareness.

Results

Difference between the nutritional awareness of IX standard students with respect to their gender, type of family and family annual income.

| Variable | Sub Variables | N | Mean | SD | t-value | Significance at 5% level |
|------------------------|----------------|-----|--------|--------|---------|--------------------------|
| Gender | Male | 157 | 151.75 | 17.660 | 0.479 | Not significant |
| | Female | 143 | 150.85 | 14.546 | | |
| Type of family | Nuclear | 218 | 151.57 | 16.747 | 0.465 | Not significant |
| | Joint | 82 | 150.65 | 14.843 | | |
| Family's Annual Income | Below 1,00,000 | 213 | 150.89 | 16.473 | 0.438 | Not significant |
| | Above 1,00,000 | 83 | 151.78 | 15.540 | | |

At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96.

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between the nutritional awareness of IX standard

students with respect to their gender, type of family and family annual income.

Difference between rural and urban IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.

| Variable | Locality | N | Mean | SD | Calculated t-value | Remarks |
|-----------------------|----------|-----|--------|--------|--------------------|-------------|
| Nutritional Awareness | Urban | 189 | 148.17 | 16.663 | 4.730 | Significant |
| | Rural | 111 | 156.68 | 13.982 | | |

At 5% level of significance the table value of 't' is 1.96.

From the above table, it is inferred that there is a significant difference between rural and urban IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.

Difference among the nutritional awareness of IX standard students with regard to their type of school, fathers' qualification, mothers' qualification, fathers' occupation and mothers' occupation.

| Sub variables | Source of variance | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square Variance | Calculated t-value | Remarks |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Type of School | Between groups | 3247.013 | 3 | 1082.338 | 4.243 | Significant |
| | Within groups | 75512.267 | 296 | 255.109 | | |
| Fathers' qualification | Between groups | 989.238 | 3 | 329.746 | 1.255 | Not Significant |
| | Within groups | 77770.042 | 296 | 262.737 | | |
| Mothers' qualification | Between groups | 475.497 | 3 | 158.499 | 0.599 | Not Significant |
| | Within groups | 78283.783 | 296 | 264.472 | | |
| Fathers' occupation | Between groups | 601.589 | 3 | 200.530 | 0.759 | Not Significant |
| | Within groups | 78157.691 | 296 | 264.046 | | |
| Mothers' occupation | Between groups | 49.483 | 3 | 16.494 | 0.062 | Not Significant |
| | Within groups | 78709.797 | 296 | 265.911 | | |

At 5% level of significance the table value of 'F' is 3.00

It is inferred from the above table that, there is no significant difference among the nutritional awareness of IX standard students with regard to their fathers' qualification, mothers' qualification, fathers' occupation and mothers' occupation. And it also inferred that there is a significant difference among the nutritional awareness of IX standard students studying in government, government-aided, private and corporation schools.

Findings

- There is no significant difference between the male and female IX standard in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is a significant difference between the rural and urban IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is a significant difference among IX standard students studying in government, government-aided, private and corporation schools in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is no significant difference between IX standard students belonging to the nuclear and joint families in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is no significant association between the family annual incomes of IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is no significant association between father's occupations of IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is no significant association between mother's occupations of IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is no significant association between father's qualifications of IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
 - There is no significant association between mother's qualifications of IX standard students in their nutritional awareness.
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Conclusion

The study concluded that there is a lack of adequate nutritional knowledge among IX standard students. In order to remain healthy and physically active and enjoy a healthier life style it is necessary to obtain good nutritional knowledge and implement it. Schools provide the most effective and efficient way to reach large portions of the population, including young people, school personnel, families and community members. Students can be reached at influential stages in their lives, during childhood and adolescence when lifelong nutritional patterns are formed. And also the school environment is recognized as having a powerful influence on students eating behaviour. Hence, the recommendation is to develop nutritional education and designing more nutritional intervention programs for the students in general, specially focusing on the nutrients and their benefits to the body, the consequences of skipping meals and the way they prepare their food. Also the study revealed an urgent need to educate not only the students but their families as well. Due to the importance of nutrition and its impact on health the study suggests that nutrition courses should be made as the part of the school curriculum.

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