

THE EFFECTS OF A HEALTHY DIET PROGRAM ON NUTRITION AND DIET KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR OF PUPILS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN TAIWAN

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Background and Aims: In recent years, there has been a growing importance of issue concerned with childhood weight control in Taiwan. This study was designed to obtain preliminary estimates of the effectiveness of a healthy diet teaching program about nutrition and diet compared with one control group.

Methods: A quasi-experimental research design was conducted in this study. The research target contained 65 students as the experimental group from the fifth grade students of one rural elementary school in central Taiwan and 35 students as the control group from the fifth grade students of another rural elementary school in the same district. Students of the experimental group received a healthy diet teaching courses including food combining, diet, nutrition and healthy eating in two units and the control group did not receive these instructions during the experimental period. Both groups were pre-tested before the intervention and post-tested one month later and the obtained data was statistically analyzed by using paired t-test and t-test. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, a questionnaire including the Scale of Healthy Diet Knowledge (Kuder-Richardson reliability = 0.67), Attitude (Cronbach's α = 0.84), and Behavior (Cronbach's α = 0.74) was designed.

Results: The results on the experimental group showed that the knowledge and behavior scores of the posttest were significantly higher than the pretest, while the control group demonstrated no significant difference between the pretest and the posttest. For healthy diet knowledge on the posttest, the experimental group exhibited a significant increase than did the control group, with no significant difference between the two groups on the pretest.

Conclusions: The results indicated that the healthy diet program had positive effects on students in elementary school. Base on the findings of the study, several recommendations for health promoting school were proposed.

References:

Vadiveloo M, Zhu L, and Quatromoni PA. Diet and Physical Activity Patterns of School-Aged Children. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 2009;109(1):145-151.