

A pilot survey on the impact of nutrition education received during school years and its impact on nutrition knowledge and dietary practices among college students: A survey study

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Abstract

Nutrition Education provided during the school years can influence the current dietary practices. This pilot survey aimed to explore the impact of school- based nutrition education on dietary practices on college going students. A structured questionnaire was administered to 21 college students to collect information regarding their exposure to nutrition knowledge in their school years. The findings suggested that students who had received nutrition education in school generally demonstrated better nutrition awareness.

Keywords: Pilot survey; Nutrition Education; Awareness; Dietary practices

1. Introduction

Nutrition is the science of utilization of Nutrients through a metabolic process which includes ingestion, digestion, absorption, utilization and assimilation [1]. Through this specific subject, a detailed idea of Nutrients along with the utilization of that specific nutrient can be observed. The building blocks of Nutrition is its Nutrients. Several nutrients play a vital role in maintaining health, supporting growth and preventing disease. Macronutrients prevent several main stream deficiencies whereas the Micronutrients prevent Hidden hunger[2].

Now days due to sedentary lifestyle, there is increasing consumption of empty calorie foods like fast foods, processed foods and inadequate nutritional knowledge have contributed to the rising rates of obesity, Malnutrition, Imbalance and Micronutrient Deficiency. After home, the School is the base of all important lifelong learnings that will have an impact on future habits. Nutrition education in schools aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitude necessary to make informed food choices that will lead to positive outcome on their lifelong progress[2].

Schools are considered one of the most effective platforms for promoting nutrition literacy. However, the extent to which school-based nutrition education influences dietary knowledge and practices among college students remains insufficiently explored. Therefore, this study aims to assess the nutrition education received during school years and examine its impact on the current nutrition knowledge and dietary behaviors of college students.

2. Objectives

Here are some core objectives of this study that need to be established like-

- To determine whether college students received Nutrition education in the previous school years.
- To evaluate the impact of previous nutrition education on current nutrition knowledge.

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- To identify student's opinion regarding nutrition education in school curriculum.
- To identify the student's perception regarding the quality of Nutrition education received.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Design

A cross- sectional survey was conducted. The study aimed to assess student's exposure to Nutrition education during their school years and its perceived impact on their current nutrition knowledge.

3.2. Study Population and sample size

This study was conducted on 21 college students.

3.3. Data collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of **some nutrition education related** questions. Participants were voluntary, responses were collected through a google form. The collected data were analyzed using simple frequencies and percentages.

3.4. Inclusion Criteria

Students currently enrolled in the college.

3.5. Exclusion Criteria

Incomplete responses.

3.6. Data analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages.

4. Results

A total of **21** college students out of them **17** female college going and **4** male college going students participated in this pilot survey.

4.1. Nutrition Education received during school

From the participants given data, 18 students out of 21 students reported receiving Nutrition Education during their school years, while remaining 3 students reported not receiving any Nutrition Education prior.

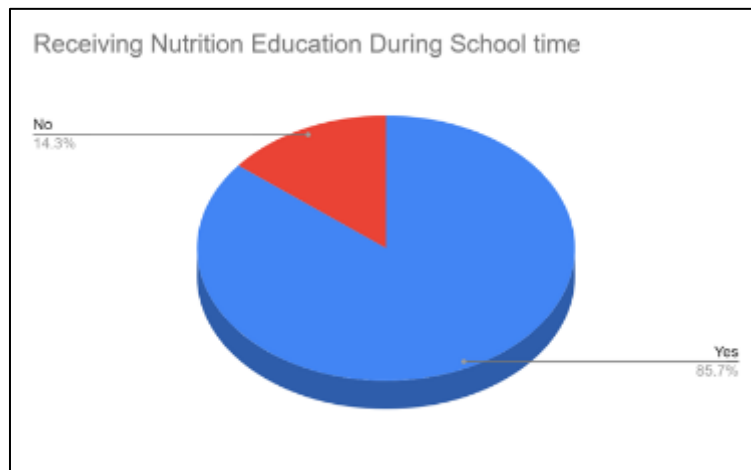


Figure 1 Showing majority of participants received Nutrition Education during school

4.2. Mode of Nutrition Education during the school time

From the participant's given data, some students 66.67% concluded that they gain Nutritional Knowledge from the school as a main curriculum subject. Whereas some of them 9% of students come in contact with Nutrition Education through Seminars. Some of them 19% of students gain Nutrition Education through extracurricular activities and others 4% of students gain Nutritional Education through as a part of different subjects like Life sciences and Biochemistry etc.

Table 1 The statistical representation of the different modes of Nutrition Education in School years

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage %
Through Regular curriculum	14	66.67%
Through Seminars	02	9.5%
Through Extracurricular activities	04	19%
Included with Science subject	01	4.8%
Total	21	100

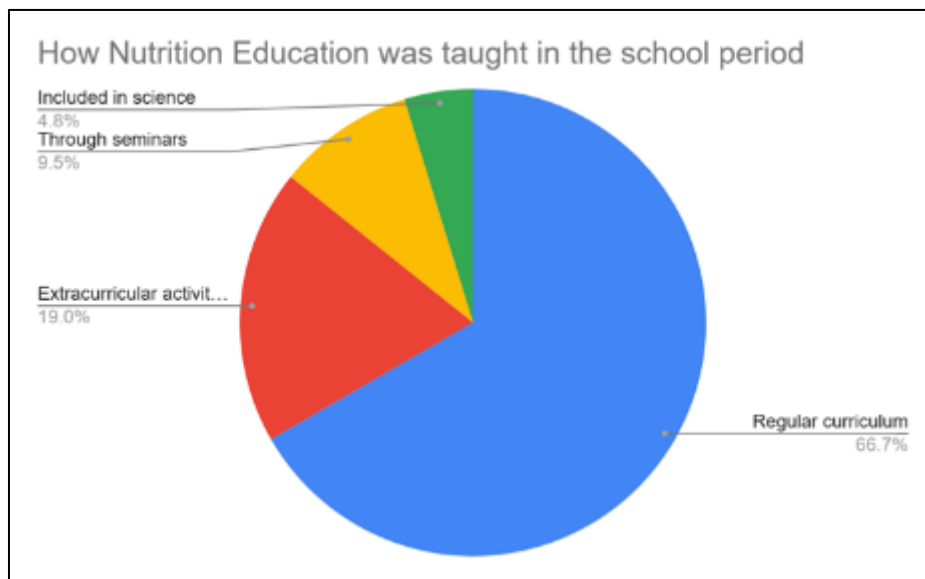


Figure 2 Showing different mode of Nutrition Education in School

4.3. Influence of prior Nutrition Knowledge in their eating choices

5 students strongly claim that Nutrition taught in their school has an influence on their daily diet habits. Whereas the other 16 students not strongly but admit that they might be influenced by the previous nutrition knowledge in daily dietary habits.

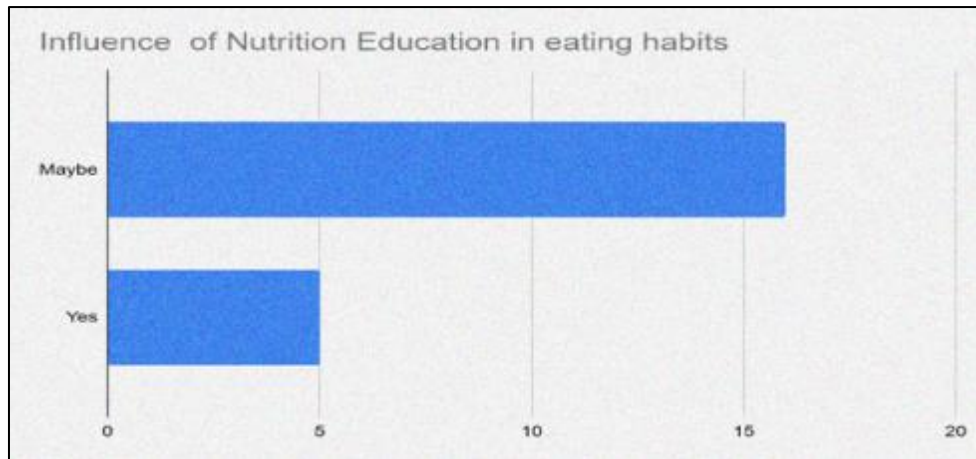


Figure 3 The influence of Prior Nutrition knowledge on their daily eating habits

4.4. Student's opinion on mandatory Nutrition Education

As per student's responses it is clear most of students supported the thought of the inclusion of the Nutrition Education in their school period. Where some students thought it is not necessary to include Nutrition Education as a compulsory one and some are in dilemma about this thought.

Table 2 The statistical representation of the student's response on mandatory Nutrition Education

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage %
Yes	18	85.71
No	01	4.76
May be	02	9.52
Total	21	100

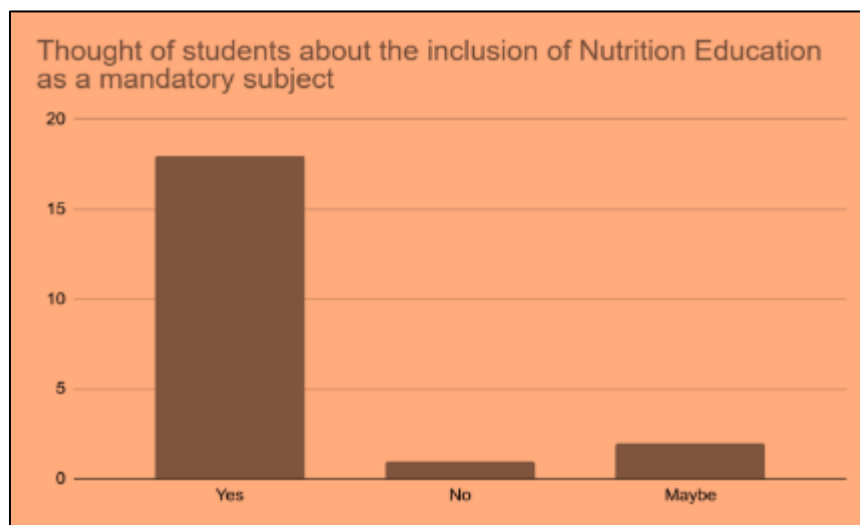


Figure 4 The opinion of students about the inclusion of Nutrition Education as a compulsory one

5. Discussion

The findings suggest that school-based Nutrition Education is the foundation of life-long learnings. From the findings it is concluded that Nutrition Education has a positive influence on Nutritional knowledge and dietary behaviors among

college students. Students who receiving Nutrition Education prior were more likely to report a positive impact on decision making on the field of healthy food choices.

A majority of participants reported that Nutrition Education was included in their regular school curriculum and most of the students who received Nutrition Education in their school curriculum has strongly claimed that Nutrition Education should be compulsory in the school Education and they are confident to make healthy food choices. One of the most important findings from the study is that most of the students come in contact with Nutrition Education during their high school period most notably in the late school period mostly in higher secondary period.

6. Conclusion

Overall, all the study highlights the importance of integrating comprehensive and practical related subject Nutrition in the education. As food is defined as the alternative option to the medicine, the science of utilization of those foods should be compulsory in the school level of education. From this pilot study, we can conclude that Nutrition Education has an immense positive impact on daily life style. So, Nutrition should be compulsory from primary level because as the quote defines "Morning shows the day". Establishing on this quote, Nutrition Education in primary level helps to establish a positive and healthier food choices concept from the starting level.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

"Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study."

References

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- [2] Das, S.(2016).TEXTBOOK OF COMMUNITY NUTRITION. Academic Publishers.