Title : **Food Behaviour Change as Impacted by Educational Intervention in School Children**

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Introduction:

Long term food behaviour and lifestyle practices in children spells the difference between health and illness.These choices are based on various factors including environmental stimuli. Improving knowledge about food choices and lifestyle has an impact on immediate behaviour patterns but to impart a sustaining effect, effective psychometric models of communication need to be applied. The study explores the
impact of an intervention of nutrition education based on social cognitive theory (SCT) on daily food behaviour, lifestyle practices and analyses its associative factors on urban school children (6-11 years, N=630) in Bangalore, India.

Methodology:

A longitudinal study was done to assess the change in daily food behaviour of the children and impact of nutrition education on both parents and children of experiment and control groups. The education programs based on SCT with operant conditioning and positive reinforcement were aimed to elicit autosuggestion in behaviour choices. The experiment group received the intervention in focus groups along a defined scheme of contents to compliment both what the children and their parents learned. The control group had no intervention of nutrition education. Food behaviour, lifestyle choices, nutrition knowledge scores were assessed in the pre-test and post-test levels. A stepwise linear regression analysis was applied to define the determinants of food behaviour and lifestyle choices based on nutrition knowledge scores of the subjects.

Results:

Results showed that the experiment group subscribed to better food behaviour and lifestyle practices in the post-test phase and an abating change was observed in the control group. A statistically significant improvement ($p<0.001$) was seen in increase in consumption of green leafy vegetables (43.44%) in the experiment group and reduction (-32.44%) in the control group. A statistically significant decrease in families watching television while eating and overall number of hours of television viewing ($p<0.001$) was seen in the experiment group. A step wise multiple linear regression analysis showed a positive association of complex carbohydrates, plant proteins, fruits, vegetables and healthier lifestyle choices with improved nutrition knowledge in the experiment group.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that the nutrition intervention model was effective in eliciting autosuggestion, hence improving nutrition knowledge and thus food behaviour andlifestylepractice of the subjects.

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