

The Six Caribbean Food Groups Curriculum: An Evaluation of Different Teaching Methods at Primary Schools in Trinidad and Tobago

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Abstract

Background: Nutrition education plays a significant role in the lives of individuals. Poor nutrition education can be associated with various chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and some cancer. The aims of this study was to compare the effectiveness of traditional face-to-face teaching method coupled with the aid of an instructional video with that of the traditional face-to-face method in teaching the Six Caribbean Food Groups (CFG).

Methods: A randomized design was used to select primary school children between the ages of 6 and 10 years old in Trinidad and Tobago. Permission was received from seven school principals and parents (5 schools in Trinidad and 2 schools in Tobago). Children who participated in the study were enrolled in standards 1 and 2. Eligible students were randomly assigned into two groups. Group A was assigned the traditional face –to –face teaching method with an instructional DVD. Group B was assigned to face-to-face method only. A pre and post-test was administered and the data were analysed using SPSS version 21 for means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages for continuous and categorical outcomes.

Results: Three hundred and forty-two (n = 342) students (144 males and 198 females) were followed for seven months. In Group A, there was a greater percentage change in knowledge from 45% at the pre-test to 89% at post-test. Group B showed a lesser percentage change (65% to 85%) in knowledge gained after the intervention.

Conclusion: The study suggests that teaching with the aid of instructional DVDs may play a greater role in nutrition knowledge retention over time.

Key words: Caribbean Food Groups, Teaching Strategy, Nutrition Education, Primary School Children, Trinidad and Tobago