Research Paper Education

Dietary Habits as A Determinant of Physical, Mental and Spiritual Health of Higher Secondary Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate dietary habits as a determinant of Physical, Mental and Spiritual health of higher secondary students. For this purpose, a total sample of 100 students (including both vegetarian and non- vegetarian) was drawn from purposively selected school at Agra. Researcher used C.M.I. Health questionnaire, Mental Health Inventory, Spiritual well-being scale as a tool for data collection. Result showed that value of critical ratio for physical health, mental health and spiritual health of vegetarian and non-vegetarian students were 2.56, 2.62 and 2.01, respectively at .05 level of significance. This C. R. value exhibited a significant difference between vegetarian and non-vegetarian students in respect to Physical, Mental and Spiritual health. Thus, it can be concluded that dietary habits of vegetarian students is significantly better than non-vegetarians in overall health dimensions i.e. Physical health, Mental health and Spiritual health.

KEYWORDS Dietary Habits, Physical health, Mental health, Spiritual health, Higher Secondary Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Health is an invaluable part of a human being's life and widely recognized as foundation for a healthy adult life because habits formed in childhood have a long term impact on health. There is a popular saying in Sanskrit "ArogyamParamoLabah" means, health is the greatest blessing of all. Formerly, health was considered to be the exact opposite of illness. The absence of illness or disease, particularly physical disease, was a sign of good health. Nowadays, Health is a dynamic state of well-being characterized by a physical and mental potential, which satisfies the demands of life commensurate with age, culture, and personal responsibility [1]. Dietary habits and choices play significant role in health and morality as it is indispensable to Good health. At the present, a healthy person is who is physically strong, emotionally balanced, mentally sound and spiritually awakened. Our nutritional status, health, physical and mental faculties depend on the food we eat and how we eat it i.e. our dietary habits. This clearly describes that dietary habits also have impact on human spiritual and moral behavior. An old proverb "We are what we eat" also justify it. Several studies shows that vegetarian diet is much healthier than meat based diet such as The British Medical Association (1986) stated that vegetarians have lower rates of obesity than meat eaters [2]. In the present research, the effect of dietary habits on health i.e Physical health, Mental health and Spiritual health is investigated.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i. To study the Physical health of vegetarian higher secondary students.
ii. To study the Physical health of non- vegetarian higher secondary students.
iii. To study the Mental health of vegetarian higher secondary students.
iv. To study the Mental health of non-vegetarian higher secondary students.
v. To study the Spiritual health of vegetarian higher secondary students.
vi. To study the Spiritual health of non-vegetarian higher secondary students.
vii. To study the significance of difference among Physical, Mental and Spiritual health of vegetarian and non -vegetarian students.

III. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

i. There will be no significant difference between Physical health of vegetarian and non- vegetarian students.
ii. There will be no significant difference between Mental health of vegetarian and non- vegetarian students.
iii. There will be no significant difference between Spiritual health of vegetarian and non- vegetarian students.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY The descriptive survey method was employed in the present study.

A) Sample Selection:Purposive sampling and random sampling were used for the selection of institution and students, respectively.

B)Tools used:

i. C.M.I. Health questionnaire constructed by N.N Wig, D.Prashad and S.K. Verma. [3]
ii. Mental Health Inventory constructed by Dr.Jagdish and Dr. A. K. Srivastav. [4]
iii. Spiritual well-being scale constructed by Eillson and Paloutzain. [5]

C) Statistical Analysis:The collected data was coded, classified for data analysis. Mean, S.D. and t-test was used for drawing valid conclusion.

V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study are systematically arranged in accordance with the variables of the study:

The C.R. value of physical health for vegetarians and non-vegetarians student was 2.56 (at 0.05 level) and showed a significant difference betweenPhysical health of vegetarian and non-vegetarian students [Table-1]. The C.R. value for Mental health scores of vegetarians and non-vegetarians was found 2.62 (at 0.05 level). It showeda significant difference between mental health of vegetarian and non-vegetarian students [Ta-

ble-1]. The C .R value of Spiritual health scores of vegetarian and non-vegetarian students was found 2.01 (at 0.05 level) and also showeda significant difference between Spiritual health of vegetarian and non-vegetarian students [Table 1]. It is also supported by spiritual research foundation (2000) in vegetarian verses non-vegetarian article [6].

Table 1: exhibiting the comparison of physical health, mental health and spiritual health of vegetarian and non-vegetarian student

Variable	Category	Mean	S. D.	C .R.	df	Signi. Level
Physical health	Vegetarian	20.30	13.00	2.56	98	0.05
	Non-vegetarian	27.28	14.13			
Mental Health	Vegetarian	159.3	21.19	2.62	98	0.05
	Non-vegetarian	148.66	19.27			
Spiritual health	Vegetarian	78.04	19.51	2.01	98	0.05
	Nonvegetarian	70.36	18.79			

VI. CONCLUSION

This can be concluded from results that vegetarian students are healthier than non-vegetarian students in respect to Physical health, Mental health and Spiritual health. Thus, the present study can be considered significant as result of this study created general awareness among public. It can be helpful for school administration, government and policy makers in making nutritional policies. It can also be helpful to guide parents for giving healthy food to their children for all over development. The result of present study was significant in global scenario as it promote to interchange non- vegetarian dietary habit with the vegetarian one.

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