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Health Hygiene and Nutrition Practices Through the Psycho-Educational Group Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to provide exposure to hygiene management and healthy eating practices among primary school students. This study is a case study using a psycho-educational approach with 4 cohort counseling sessions. The cohort sample consisted of 13 primary school students aged 7 to 9. They are 1st grade boys and girls in a transit center (tahfiz) in Bandar Baru Bangi. The findings show that group members have a sense of responsibility for personal hygiene and environment as well as knowledge of healthy and clean eating practices for daily living. The findings of the study also found that the psycho-educational approach to group counseling is very effective in helping students improve their awareness of hygiene and healthy eating. The application of good hygiene elements and nutrition practices should be taken into account in order for the child's physical growth to thrive and to achieve academic success while minimizing health problems. The importance of hygiene and healthy eating through psycho education has implications for students, teachers in tahfiz centers and parents. They play a role in educating children on personal hygiene, environment and healthy eating habits as a very effective measure to prevent the risk of attacking diseases that impede children's development.



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Introduction

The practice of maintaining good hygiene and nutrition are two components highlighted in the Education and Physical Education Level 1 syllabus by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE, 2016). This is supported by a Circular Letter issued by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) on hygiene practices in schools. Primary school students were found to be less aware of physical and environmental hygiene. One way to teach these children about good hygiene management and nutrition is through a psycho-educational approach to group counseling.

Educational psycho groups are an approach to educating and informing group members about basic life skills with the help of established sessions. (Sipon, 2015). In addition, it can also help improve children's developmental stages more effectively both physically and mentally. There are various definitions of cleanliness understood in the context of society. These include knowledge, attitudes and proactive measures to care for, prevent disease risk and protect against disease Hasyim, H., Widjajanti, H., & Febry, F., (2014) . Additionally, children who grow up with healthy nutrition can reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity and more (Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, 2016).

Previous studies such as Al-Bashtawy, M. (2015) have found that personal hygiene, environment and healthy eating for children are considered to be important elements in reducing the risk of infectious diseases affecting children's growth and development. Then, school hygiene is an extension of early exposure to cleanliness that begins at home and is reinforced in schools in the hope that it will become a daily life practice (Parayre, S, 2017).

Furthermore, when children maintain their personal hygiene and environment, they are able to reduce their attendance at school and improve their academic achievement by opting for optimal learning sessions Al-Bashtawy, M. (2015) A clean and comfortable environment can also prevent children from experiencing minor or serious accidents such as slipping and being exposed to sharp objects if not placed in a safe place Saman, N., Ali, M., & Zakaria, E., (2017) In fact, if the child does not maintain hygiene and eat unclean food it may result in children being exposed to diseases such as food poisoning, vomiting and diarrhea Al-Bashtawy, M. (2015).

The risk of exposure to disease for children 7 to 9 is very high. This is because, the level of the immune system in the middle of the child is still weaker than that of adults (Yeong, 2015). In addition, children's cognitive development at this stage is at the level of concrete operation. They can understand a concept when accompanied by strong evidence and readily accept new information and apply the information gained as a reinforcement of their understanding of a learning (Piaget, 1952). Therefore, good hygiene management and nutrition practices are especially suitable for children 7 to 9 years old.

As such, this educational group focused on hygiene and healthy eating practices is expected to help children, teachers, school staff and parents in improving student hygiene, environment and controlling unhealthy nutrition for children. Therefore, this educational psycho-group aims to help children learn about physical hygiene, identify ways to keep the environment clean and to know what is clean and healthy.

Method

The method used to expose students to hygiene and healthy eating practices is psycho-educational in group counseling. It aims to help students understand the importance of maintaining a good hygiene, environment and choosing healthy and clean foods to eat in order for them to grow physically and mentally. Researchers selected the study participants consisting of 13 students aged 7 to 9 in a transit center (tahfiz) located in Bandar Baru Bangi. They consist of 6 boys and 7 girls

There are only 3 classes at the transit center. The first class is the student who is in the early stages of the child, the second class is the student who is in the middle stages of the child and the third class is the student who is in the final stages of the child. As a result, teachers' observation found that participants from second-grade students aged 7 to 9 had less responsibility for personal hygiene, environment and unhealthy eating habits in transit centers (tahfiz).

Researchers divided 13 students into three small groups and each group was run by a group leader to share information they knew about good hygiene and nutrition. Each group has 4 to 5 members. The group leader conducts 4 counseling sessions for 1 hour for each session. Furthermore, while conducting the group session, there was little activity included to strengthen the group members' understanding of good hygiene and nutrition. The procedure for running a group counseling session is divided into 4 sessions:

First session

In the first session, the researchers held a group psycho education starting with an energizer exercise to get the students excited for group sessions. Next, they introduce themselves to the students so that they can build good relationships with the students. Next, they divide the students into smaller groups. Three groups were formed: two groups consisting of 4 group members while one group consisting of 5 group members.

After that, each group leader leads the group members and introduces them to the smaller group members. Group members introduce themselves by telling a little bit about their family background. Every member of the group is excited to tell them about themselves. Group leaders give group members the opportunity to tell their individual stories.

Then, the group leader explains what physical cleanliness should be known to the group members. Among the 10 body parts that need to be cleaned are hair, eyes, nose, ears, mouth and teeth, fingers and nails, toes and nails, body parts and sexual organs. Group leaders provide activities for group members. The activity was that one of them had to be a model and the rest of the group had to paste a piece of paper that had been cut by using the tack-it on the model. The group members left 10 papers containing the names of the limbs that needed to be cleaned up in the model

Second session

Prior to the start of the second session, the group leader asked the group members to form a large group of 13 people to do energizer activities. The energizer activity was conducted to keep them excited for the second session. The second session was themed "Love Your Environment". Each student is asked to enter their own group to continue the second session.

The group leader explained that environmental cleanliness is very important for them to be comfortable, to learn in a conducive environment and to be fully engaged in their learning. The group leader then distributed the papers to each group member on environmental hygiene measures in the center of the shrine (tahfiz). After the group members formulate the proper sequence of environmental hygiene, the group members continue to practice the sequence in the paper at the center (tahfiz).

Third session

The third session was held on different days but at the same time as the first and second sessions. Prior to the start of the third group session, the students performed an energizer with the three group leaders. After that, the group experts enter the same group as the first and second session groups. Next, the group leader addressed the group members before starting the group session that day. Group leaders ask each member of the group whether they are comfortable or not. Each member of the group was comfortable and their faces looked excited to start the group session that day.

Next, the group leader organizes activities by giving each group two categories of healthy and unhealthy foods. Healthy foods include bread, milk and biscuits while unhealthy foods include instant mee, chewing gum and carbonated water. Group members need to categorize foods according to their respective categories.

Fourth session

Prior to the fourth session, each group was grouped into large groups for energizer activity. This activity aims to increase the students' attention during the fourth group session. The fourth group session continues as each group enters their own group. The fourth group session was followed by the theme of know your food.

Prior to that, the group leader explained about clean and safe foods to eat. The group leader shared with the group members that if they saw food that had been consumed by the fly, the food was not clean and safe to eat. One of the group members shared with others his experience of seeing food sold at a stall near the transit center (tahfiz) was not completely closed.

Next, the group leader held an activity with the group members, distributing papers containing pictures of food that were clean and not clean to eat. Each group member is asked to mark (✓) only clean and safe foods.

Results and Discussions

The study findings are divided into 4 sessions:

First session

The first session began with a customization session and an energizer. Students are seen to be in a good mood and ready to start the session. They look active and friendly with the group members. Next, this session will focus on measuring students' knowledge of physical fitness of the body. Clients can relate to their daily routine of hygiene such as waking up from their toothbrush, bathing, hair shampoo and body soap. They also managed to attach 10 labels to the body parts that needed to be cleaned.

However, there are some group members who do not regularly clean their teeth and nails. As a result, students can raise awareness about the importance of cleaning their body parts especially mouth and teeth at least twice daily in the morning and before bedtime.

Second session

The second session emphasized on measures to keep the environment clean. Students can complete 5 steps of environmental hygiene in the proper order of taking plastic waste to shelves, putting plastic waste in trash, collecting waste seen in your environment, inviting friends to collect garbage together and washing hands after collecting garbage in a 7-step wash. In addition, students are seen to be more effective at disposing of garbage in the event of scattered or abandoned waste around the transit center area. In addition, they diligently wash their hands after eating or holding something dirty. As a result, they found that a clean environment can give them more peace and focus as they recite the Quran.

Third session

In the third session, students were able to distinguish and classify healthy and unhealthy foods. Healthy foods like bread, biscuits and milk are placed on the right while unhealthy foods like maggi, rubber sugar and carbonated water are placed on the left. They can express the effects of eating unhealthy foods. Among them are the sudden increase in weight gain and the resulting unhealthy brain growth. As every member of the group is in the process of memorizing the Quran so nutritious nutrition needs to be tested. As a result, they also no longer buy unhealthy foods such as maggi, gas water and rubber sugar and are aware of the importance of eating healthy foods to ensure that our bodies have sufficient protein, carbohydrates and calcium.

Fourth session

The fourth session aims to provide students with information about clean foods. Students can mark (/) a clean meal and determine the reason why it is not. Among them are food on the fly, workers do not wear masks during coughing, food is not covered properly, food is messy and food is not packaged after meals. As a result, students are more cautious when buying food that is sold at street stalls.

The psycho-educational approach in this group gives students a different impact and benefit in each session. At this stage, children learn about general hygiene, environment and healthy eating habits. However, they lack the awareness to apply the knowledge they learn. The needs of children's personal hygiene have changed dramatically during the middle ages, from what supervisors do for their children to what children learn to do on their own (Oswalt, A., MSW, Reiss. NS, Dombeck .,M., tt).

Initially, the first session and the second session indicated that students were less responsible for personal hygiene and environmental hygiene. Activities that provide students with awareness of personal hygiene and environmental hygiene are important to prevent the threat of infectious diseases. This is reinforced by the study of Al-Bashtawy, M., (2015), who found that personal hygiene and environmental hygiene in children are considered to be an important element in reducing the risk of infectious diseases affecting the growth and development of children.

The third session and the fourth session showed that students did not emphasize healthy eating. As a result of this activity, students will be able to distinguish between clean and healthy food as well as students being alert to buy food sold in stalls near the transit center (tahfiz). In addition, healthy eating and clean eating can improve their immune system. Students can prevent themselves from the risk of diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. This is reinforced by the study of Lu, Y,M, (2015). , who says that the risk of disease threatening for children 7 to 9 years is very high. This is because the level of the immune system in the middle of the child is still weaker than that of adults.

In addition, by promoting good personal hygiene habits and healthy eating and hygiene for children, it can assist in the process of child development and enhance academic excellence and children's physical and mental well-being Al-Bashtawy, M. (2015). Overall, the educational psychology group held together with the students at the pulpit center (tahfiz) has achieved its objectives. Students can raise awareness about their responsibility to personal hygiene, environmental hygiene and healthy eating practices. They can reinforce their understanding of the importance of keeping clean and healthy food clean and healthy so that the learning and memorization of the Quran can be maintained and maintained.

Conclusions

The results of this study make it clear that psycho-educational counseling groups are effective in helping increase students' awareness and responsibility for personal hygiene, environment and the importance of eating healthy and clean foods. Good hygiene and eating habits are crucial in the process of growth and development of middle-aged children. All of these elements of hygiene and nutrition also help maintain physical and mental health. This clearly demonstrates the importance of counseling and psychoeducational education in helping to improve students' knowledge while helping them to avoid disease attacks and improve academic performance.

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