Effectiveness of a Social Media–Based Nutrition Education Program in Promoting Awareness of Low Glycemic Index Foods among Urban Working Women in Sri Lanka

J.P.C.V.T. Jayasinghe*, G.M. Somaratne[1], U. Walallawita[2] and D. Gunasekara[3]

Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture
University of Peradeniya
Sri Lanka

[4]*Department of Research and Development, CIC Dairies, Dambulla, Sri Lanka* Low glycemic index (GI) carbohydrate-based foods help regulate blood glucose level and reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases, particularly diabetes. However, urban educated working women in Sri Lanka lack awareness and consistent use of these foods. This study assessed their knowledge, attitudes, and dietary practices regarding low GI carbohydrate-based foods, and evaluated the effectiveness of a social media-based nutrition education program. In the first phase, a descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted among 758 educated working women across major urban areas using stratified sampling. Validated questionnaires were shared through WhatsApp, email, and Facebook. The findings showed low knowledge (mean:5.33/10) and poor dietary practices (mean:25.99/48), but attitudes were generally positive (mean:66.26/80). Statistical analysis revealed a moderate positive relationship between knowledge and attitudes, and a weaker but significant relationship between knowledge and practices. Higher knowledge was associated with younger women and those with postgraduate qualifications. Similarly, better attitudes and practices were linked to higher education and income levels. In the second phase, a three-month educational program was launched through YouTube and Facebook, featuring videos, infographics, and interactive posts. Post-intervention evaluation among 50 participants showed significant improvements in knowledge (mean:9.94), attitudes (mean:78.74), and practices (mean:46.46). Participants rated the content as clear, relevant and high in quality. These findings suggest that well- structured social media-based education is an effective and scalable approach to promote healthy eating habits and lower the risk of diet-related chronic diseases in urban populations.

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*Corresponding author: thamashijayasinghe123@gmail.com
[1]Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
[2]Research Operations, Massey University, New Zealand