The Satter Model of Eating Competence (eSatter) is an intra-individual approach to eating and food-related attitudes and behaviors that entails positive biopsychosocial outcomes. (1) According to eSatter, eating competence (EC) consists of four basic components: (a) eating attitudes, (b) food acceptance, (c) internal regulation of food intake, and (d) eating context. Competent eaters are positive, flexible and relaxed about eating with an intrinsic motivation to eat a variety of food, maintain energy balance by attending to hunger, and satisfy appetite sensations and prioritize and structure meals. They give themselves permission to eat the "adequate amounts of preferred food at predictable times" but have the discipline to maintain meal and snack time structure and pay attention while eating. (1) eSatter is an unconventional approach to dietary guidelines, but competent eaters exhibit desired goals in that they have less emotional eating and fewer disordered eating traits (e.g., less drive for thinness, body dissatisfaction, bulimia, and immature eating traits). (2-3)

Competent eaters have a more healthful cardiovascular profile, including lower blood pressure, (4) and self-report greater physical activity. (2-3) In addition, higher dietary quality, (5) including greater adherence to a Mediterranean diet in Spanish elderly, (6) heightens interest in this model that does not advocate for specific foods, food groups, or portion sizes. Nutrition education using eSatter emphasizes an interpersonal, learner-driven approach rather than an information-imparting (7). Early research about EC suggested males have greater EC, however subsequent research has focused on females and none of the EC research in low-income adults has included males. Analysis of NHANES data from 1999-2004 revealed less healthy eaters more likely to be male (8) and targeting nutrition education to males has been suggested (9).

The purpose of this study was to examine EC in a sample of low-income males as a preamble to designing a nutrition education program for low-income males.

Eating competence tended to be associated with use of technology. Facebook often (compared to never) had higher EC scores (P=0.025) and tended to indicate an interest in learning about physical activity (Chi Sq 6.0, P=.05) with 56% denoting interest. Among those with post-high school education, Facebook often (compared to never) had higher EC scores (P=0.025) and tended to indicate an interest in learning about physical activity (Chi Sq 6.0, P=.05) with 56% denoting interest. Among those with post-high school education, Facebook users had a higher ecSI/LI score (P=0.02) than those who had never used Facebook (22.7 ± 2.3 vs. 27.4 ± 6.0).

Conclusions

References


Funding

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW) through the PENNSYLVANIA NUTRITION EDUCATION TRACKS, as part of USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Social Science Research Institute of the Pennsylvania State University.

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Participants and Recruitment

• The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare provided a list of males participating in the Pennsylvania Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
• A professional service telephone solicited subjects with 10-digit phone numbers who were selected from the list using a randomization protocol that stratified by proportion of SNAP participants per county. This ensured representation of SNAP-dense areas, but facilitated state-wide distribution.
• Eligibility criteria included ability to speak and understand English and involvement to any degree as a caregiver of children (either their own or others) under the age of 18.
• Telephone calls were made until a goal of 100 surveys were completed.

Instruments


Data Analysis

• SPSS version 19.0 (IBM, Armonk, NY); ANOVA, t-tests, Chi Square.