Chapter VI

Summary and Conclusion
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Adolescence to young adulthood is a transitional period of development and where many skills and habits get crystallized. It is a very fertile phase of life to introduce positive life skill processes. The study was conceptualized to understand the psychological correlates of Eating Behaviour and to provide psycho-education to enhance the Eating Behaviours among young adults.

The study was conducted in two phases. In order to understand the psychological predictors of Eating Behaviours, a cross-sectional descriptive design was used for phase-1 of the study and “Before and after” experimental research design was used for phase-2 intervention part of the study which evaluated the impact of psycho-educational programme on Eating Behaviours and its predictors such as eating attitudes, dieting beliefs, body awareness, self-esteem, depression, daily hassles and social support among young adults.

In the first phase of the research 412 young adults of both male and female from different educational and socio-economic background participated in this Study. The subjects were administered standardized psychological measures which included Three Factor Eating Questionnaire (TFQ-R-18), Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26), Body Awareness Questionnaire (BAQ), Dieting Beliefs Scale (DBS), Self-Esteem Scale (SES), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MPSS), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and Survey of Recent Life Experiences (SRLE). The data collected on this sample were analyzed descriptively and Hierarchical Multiple Regression was carried out to infer the psychological predictors of Eating Behaviours.

In the second phase of the research two groups of college students were selected who were matched for their age, gender and socio economic background. A group of 65 college students constituted the experimental group who received 15 sessions of psycho educational programme. A sample of 65 college students constituted the control group who did not receive any training. Both the groups were assessed at base line, post training and at follow up. All the assessments were done at 3 months intervals. The data obtained on these samples at different phases were analyzed using Hierarchical Regression and
Repeated Measure ANOVA. The following conclusions were drawn from the evidence gathered based on the phase one and two of the study.

CONCLUSIONS

Eating attitude, Daily hassles, Depression were significantly positively related with unhealthy Eating Behaviours.

Self-esteem, Social support, Dieting belief were significantly negatively related with unhealthy Eating Behaviours.

Daily Hassles, Self-Esteem, Dieting Belief and Eating attitude emerged as significant predictors of Eating Behaviour whereas the Body awareness, Depression and social support did not predict Eating Behaviours.

The Eating Behaviours of the groups who received the psycho educational programme were found to be enhanced when compared to the untrained group. Psycho educational programme had a significant positive impact on the Eating Behaviours in the experimental group compared to the control group. The Experimental groups showed significant improvement in cognitive restraint and significant reduction in Uncontrolled and Emotional Eating.

The psycho educational programme was found to be effective in changing the Dieting belief of the individuals. The Experimental groups showed significant improvement in External weight locus of control.

The psycho educational programme was found to be effective in enhancing Body Awareness and Self Esteem in the experimental group

Psycho educational programme had a significant positive impact on the perceived Social Support in the trained groups indicating the effectiveness of psycho educational programme.

The psycho educational programme was found to be effective in achieving emotional stability in terms of reduction in daily hassles and depression. The psycho educational programme was found to be effective in reducing Daily Hassles and Depression in the experimental group compared to the control group indicating impact of Psycho Education in trained subjects.
Overall the psycho educational programme has been found to be effective in enhancing Eating Behaviours, Body Awareness, Self-Esteem, Social Support and in reducing Daily Hassles and Depression. The intervention also was found to be effective in changing the Dieting belief of the individuals. However, the training was found to be not effective in changing the eating attitudes of the subjects.

To understand the training impact on specific variables needs time, the changes do not surface immediately after intervention. It is observed that on some specific Eating Behaviours related outcomes, the latency period of 6 months was essential to notice a significant change.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The samples were not randomly assigned to the treatment condition. So it is not a randomized experimental control design. Even though groups were matched for age, gender and socio economic back ground, there were some variables where they were heterogeneous. This limitation restricts the inference on effectiveness of training. The results of the study can be attributed to all the components of training and the researcher cannot identify the effectiveness of each component of training.

The study has focused on college students who are relatively healthy; hence the effectiveness of the training is at the minimal level which may be termed as “ceiling effect” or “saturation”. If the same intervention is provided to a clinical or a risk group the effectiveness can be much evident.

IMPLICATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Within the above mentioned limitation, the study has a significant contribution in understanding the role of psycho educational programme on Eating Behaviours and its predictors in young adults. Till date health education has been focused on adult sample and also on different clinical groups. This study applies the psychological principles to promote the Eating Behaviours among young adults. Generally, the training has been specific to single risk factor or psychological ill health factors. However, this study has incorporated all the components of health promotion using psychological, social inputs into the training. Therefore, this is a comprehensive, holistic approach to health promotion.
Thus it addresses holistically, the psychosocial aspect of health in young adults. Generally, health researchers so far have focused on identifying diseases, negative trait, and ill health components for interventions. This study emphasis on positive approach to enhancing healthy Eating Behaviours both in identifying the factors related to Eating Behaviours as well as its promotion. The response to psycho education varies depending upon the characteristics of the receiver, ambience of the training and the context of the training. The future research in this direction should focus on long term randomized group design across various age groups to evaluate the impact of psycho educational programme.