

Original Article

Association between sports participation status and awareness regarding eating behavior in Japanese primary school children and parents' awareness of dietary education for children

Takako NISHIMURA ^{*1, *2}, Hideaki KUMAHARA ^{*3}, Kazuhiro MORIMURA ^{*4},
Takako YAMATO ^{*3}, Shuji NAKANO ^{*3}, Hiroaki TANAKA ^{*5}

^{*1} Graduate School of Health and Nutrition Sciences, Nakamura Gakuen University Graduate School

^{*2} Fukuoka College of Resort & Sport

^{*3} Faculty of Nutritional Sciences, Nakamura Gakuen University

^{*4} Faculty of Education, Shujitsu University

^{*5} Faculty of Sports and Health Science, Fukuoka University

ABSTRACT

【Aim】

This study investigated the association between the sports participation status, including the duration of activity, and awareness related to dieting behaviors in primary school children and parents' awareness of dietary education for children.

【Methods】

This study included 400 fourth-grade to sixth-grade school children and their parents. Awareness related to dieting behaviors/education and breakfast habits were assessed using a questionnaire. The participants were classified into sports (SG) and non-sports groups (Non-SG) according to whether each child belonged to a sports club. The SG was further divided into high-level (High-SG) and low-level (Low-SG) categories based on whether they performed sports-related activities for ≥ 7 h/week.

【Results】

SG children, particularly those in the High-SG category, had significantly higher percentages of positive answers for "eat three meals a day" than Non-SG children. Significantly more SG children had breakfast daily. Similar results were observed only for boys when the data were analyzed according to sex. The parents of the High-SG children had a significantly greater educational awareness regarding "eating as much food as possible" and "considering a well-balanced diet" than the parents in the other groups. Significant differences in the percentage of positive responses regarding a part of dietary awareness were observed between the children and their parents.

【Conclusion】

The present results indicate that a sports participation status of children may be partly associated with awareness of dietary behaviors among children as well as an awareness of dietary education for children among their parents. A gap between the children's and their parent's awareness of eating behaviors was also highlighted.

Keywords: primary school children, dietary habits, exercise duration, exercise habits