

Designating and Evaluating a Healthy Eating Model at the Workplace: A Practical Strategy for Preventing Non-Communicable Diseases in Aging

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Abstract : Introduction: The aging process has been linked to a wide range of non-communicable diseases that cause a loss of health-related quality of life. This process can be worsened if an active and healthy lifestyle is not followed by adults, especially in the workplace. This setting not only may create a sedentary lifestyle but will lead to obesity and overweight in the long term and create unhealthy and inactive aging. In addition, eating habits are always known to be associated with active aging. Therefore, it is very valuable to know the eating patterns of people at work in order to detect and prevent diseases in the coming years. This study aimed to design and test a model to improve eating habits among employees at an industrial complex as a practical strategy. Material and method: The present research was a mixed-method study with a subsequent exploratory design which was carried out in two phases, qualitative and quantitative, in 2018 year. In the first step, participants were selected by purposive sampling (n=34) to ensure representation of different job roles; hours worked, gender, grade, and age groups, and semi-structured interviews were used. All interviews were conducted in the workplace and were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using the Strauss and Corbin approach. The interview question was, "what were their experiences of eating at work, and how could these nutritional habits affect their health in old age." Finally, a total of 1500 basic codes were oriented at the open coding step, and they were merged together to create the 17 classes, and six concepts and a conceptual model were designed. The second phase of the study was conducted in the form of a cross-sectional study. After verification of the research tool, the developed questionnaire was examined in a group of employees. In order to test the conceptual model of the study, a total of 500 subjects were included in psychometry. Findings: Six main concepts have been known, including 1. undesirable control of stress, 2. lack of eating knowledge, 3. effect of the social network, 4. lack of motivation for healthy habits, 5. environmental-organizational intensifier, 6. unhealthy eating behaviors. The core concept was "Motivation Loss to do preventive behavior." The main constructs of the motivational-based model for the promotion of eating habits are "modification and promote of eating habits," increase of knowledge and competency, convey of healthy nutrition behavior culture and effecting of behavioral model especially in older age, desirable of control stress. Conclusion: A key factor for unhealthy eating behavior at the workplace is a lack of motivation, which can be an obstacle to conduct preventive behaviors at work that can affect the healthy aging process in the long term. The motivational-based model could be considered an effective conceptual framework and instrument for designing interventions for the promotion to create healthy and active aging.

Keywords : aging, eating habits, older age, workplace

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