

Christina Germann
Emily Ramsey
Stephanie Trettenero
Kim Jacobson
NFSC 460
15 October 2010

Chico State Freshmen: Eating Out

Introduction:

Our target audience is CSU, Chico freshmen, both male and female, who live in the residence halls. We know that college freshmen who live in the residence halls tend to acquire their meals from on-campus eateries and local restaurants. We also know college freshmen base their food choices on convenience and how much time they have available for meals. If they are not getting the nutrients they need from the foods they are consuming, their susceptibility to nutrient deficiencies is going to be increased compared to those who have access and a higher education level.

A study conducted by Haberman and Luffy states “consuming a healthful diet is known to help prevent chronic diseases, such as coronary heart disease, non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, some types of cancers, strokes, and osteoporosis.” This same study found that out of 302 students, 76% consumed the same foods day after day. Most of these students lived on-campus. We took these facts into consideration while we searched for a nutrition intervention that would be appropriate for our target audience. Haberman and Luffy concluded, “campus health services could also promote off-campus dining facilities or specialized food markets that offer healthy food choices by highlighting those establishments in newsletters or Web sites.” We have decided to add into our nutrition intervention a short segment on a variety of local healthy eating establishments. An additional study, conducted by Musingo and Wang, indicates students

have misconceptions regarding the impact of proper diet and eating habits on health. This concludes that there is a real need for improving the student's knowledge that consuming a variety of food is good for health. We have included a section in both our presentation and our booklet that explains the importance of choosing a variety of foods to complete a balanced diet. We hope that this information will help the freshman understand that there is a wide range of foods that are beneficial to health. Eating healthy is not limited to eating just salads, fruits and vegetables. By modifying a small component of what is typically consumed, one can continue to eat what they enjoy while consuming a balanced diet that is beneficial to health.

Analyze Needs and Behaviors:

A needs assessment survey was distributed to, and filled out by, twenty-one Chico State freshmen in the courtyard of the residence halls. We analyzed the survey results and found there were a few common themes. They were location, type of cuisine, perception of healthy options, food labels, and what the freshmen wanted to know about healthy eating when dining out.

Of the twenty-one college freshmen we surveyed, 11 reported location as an important factor when deciding where to eat and what to order compared to price, taste, health, and influence of their peers. This is indicative of the local eateries college freshmen frequent the most. These restaurants include Madison Bear Garden ("The Bear"), Celestino's, and Franky's. We researched the distance between the CSU, Chico campus and these restaurants using MapQuest.com. The Bear is 0.08 miles, Celestino's is 0.06 miles, and Franky's is 0.53 miles from campus. There are also many Mexican restaurants located within the same vicinity that freshmen eat at frequently.

When asked what type of food they order, the freshmen indicated burgers, Mexican, and pizza as the top three choices. This data shows a relationship between the close proximity of restaurants and the type of food the freshmen choose to eat. It seems clear that freshmen choose food based on location and convenience.

A high percentage of the students in our study perceived that there are healthy food options when dining out. However, these students only sometimes choose these healthy options. While it is not clear if the freshmen understand how to read nutrition labels, most of them indicated they do not consider these labels when making food choices. When asked what they thought was “healthy,” students stated vegetables, salad, foods that are not fried, and fruit. We can conclude from this data that freshmen have misconceptions about what foods are healthy and how to make healthy food choices.

The last question in our survey asked, “What would you like to learn about when it comes to making healthy food choices when eating out?” Freshmen wanted to know what foods are actually good for them and what places they can eat at that have healthy options.

One limitation to our study was participants’ responses to the questions were conflicting. They responded that they knew how to choose healthy foods but then stated they wanted to know how to eat healthy. Another limitation would be the freshmen felt obligated to take our survey. They also might have had time constraints when filling out the survey. Therefore, some answers might have been rushed and not fully stated.

Participants also may not have fully read the questions before answering, which would lead to confusion amongst our participants and answers that do not make sense.

We realized from these results that college freshmen have a narrow view of healthy foods. We also noticed the foods that these freshmen are consuming are not nutritionally dense. For example, the burgers and pizza are high in total fat and saturated fat, and low in fiber. They are also not consuming a balanced diet with an adequate amount of fruits and vegetables.

Theory, Philosophy, and Components:

The theory we chose to base our study on is the Social Cognitive Theory. We chose this theory because it was more relevant to the results of our needs assessment compared to the other two theories.

The first construct of the Social Cognitive Theory is Reciprocal Determinism. This is the dynamic interaction of the person, the behavior, and the environment. The second construct is Observational Learning. This is defined as behavioral acquisition that occurs by watching the actions and outcomes of another person's behavior. The third construct is Reinforcements. These are responses to a person's behavior that increase or decrease the likelihood of reoccurrence. The fourth construct is Behavioral Capability. This is knowledge and skill to perform a given behavior and to promote mastery learning through skills training. The fifth construct is Expectations. This is anticipatory outcomes of a behavior (perceived benefits and barriers). The sixth construct is Expectancies. This is defined as the values the person places on a given outcome.

The constructs we chose to use in our intervention include reciprocal determinism, self-efficacy, behavioral capability, and expectations.

| Theory Construct | Definition | General Objective | Specific Learning Objective |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| Reciprocal determinism | The dynamic interaction of the person, the behavior, and the environment. | Increase knowledge of healthier food establishments that offer more variety in their environment | Participants will be able to identify 3 healthy eating establishments in which they can dine. |
| Self-efficacy | The person's confidence in performing a particular behavior. | Demonstrate self-efficacy in choosing healthy foods at restaurants | Participants will be able to determine healthy foods from a menu. |
| Behavioral Capability | Knowledge and skill to perform a given behavior; promote mastery learning through skills training. | Demonstrate knowledge of food items that are considered healthy. | Participants will be able to list at least 5 healthy food options. |
| Expectations | Anticipatory outcomes of a behavior (perceived barriers and perceived benefits). | Demonstrate the benefits of choosing a variety of foods when eating out, including healthy foods. | Participants will be able to list at least 3 benefits of choosing healthy foods, or a variety of foods. |

Educational Objectives:

The goal of our program is to be able to help freshmen develop the knowledge to make healthier choices when eating out. We will do this by following the objectives that we have created. The first general objective is for the participants to be able to increase their knowledge of healthier food establishments that offer a variety of food choices, including healthy ones. The second is for the participants to be able to demonstrate self-efficacy in choosing healthy foods at restaurants. The third general objective is for the

participants to be able to demonstrate knowledge of which food items are considered healthy. Our fourth general objective is for the participants to be able to demonstrate the benefits of choosing healthy foods, or a variety of foods, when eating out.

We have also established five specific learning objectives (SLO) that correspond with our four general objectives. The students should be able to accomplish these specific objectives by the end of our presentation. The first SLO is the participants will be able to identify three local, healthy eating establishments. The second SLO is the participants will be able to identify healthy foods from less healthy options on a menu. Our third SLO indicates that the participants will be able to list at least five healthy food options they can add to their order when eating out at a restaurant. The fourth SLO requires the participants to be able to list at least three benefits of choosing healthy foods, or adding a variety of foods to their diet.

Theory-based Educational Strategies:

We created our thirty-minute presentation based on our Social Cognitive Theory constructs and the specific learning objectives. We started our outline with a strong introduction. During the presentation, we will introduce ourselves and tell the audience who we are. We will also inform them of why we are there and try to make the audience feel comfortable. After our introduction, we will present our nutrition education material, which is a booklet for the participants to take home.

We will then transition to the heart of our presentation. The first main topic we will discuss is the locations of local restaurants in Chico. We will use a map of the downtown and highlight the location of each restaurant. We want the students to feel included, so we will ask them which food establishments they eat at downtown. We will

then ask them to brainstorm about healthier eating establishments that they can go to and that are nearby. This will meet the requirements of our first specific learning objective.

Next, we will move on to the second main topic of our presentation, which is variety. We will explain the importance of consuming a variety of food in the diet. We will tell the freshmen how they can do this. We will encourage them to choose from a variety of foods and colors when dining at eating establishments. We will also encourage the freshmen to balance their meals with different food groups. We will be meeting our fourth specific learning objective by having the students list some benefits of including a variety in their diet.

In the next portion of our presentation, we will demonstrate how to use Pita Pit's online menu tool to create a balanced meal. This will lead to a class activity. This activity will have the students break up into three groups. Each group will have a different menu from a different Chico restaurant. Using the menu, they will have to create a balanced meal. By doing this activity, we are hoping that the students will improve their self-efficacy of choosing healthy items from menus. After approximately five minutes, we will ask the three groups to share the meals that they created.

Towards the end of our presentation, we will do a quick review of our main points. We will also reinforce the use of the booklet in their future eating endeavors. Then we will thank them for their time and ask if they have any questions. After this, we will let them know they can locate our information on the back of the booklet if they have any questions in the future.

Works Cited

- Haberman, Shirley, and Deborah Luffey. "Weighing in College Students' Diet and Exercise Behaviors." *Journal of American College Health*. 46.4 (1998): 189-191. Print.
- Musingo, Mitwe N., and Lihong Wang. "Analysis of Eating Habits According to Socio-Demographic." *Pakistan Journal of Nutrition*. 8.10 (2009): 1575-1580. Print.