Danish University Colleges

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Promoting 11 – 13 year old children’s food literacy through a community of practice - case studies from an experiential sensory-based theme course on fish in a school setting

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Introduction

32% of the Danes spend less than 15 minutes on cooking the evening meal, 47% use convenience products as a part of the food preparation, and 18% judge themselves lacking cooking competences2. The interest in children’s formal food education has increased as a result of concerns with loss of knowledge of food and nutrition, loss of food competences, and an increase in child obesity1, 2.

Methods

Study population

Students aged 11-13 years from 5th - 6th grade. The students came from different public schools on Zealand, Denmark.

Study design

The case studies were part of an interdisciplinary quasi-experimental intervention with a main group (MG) and a control group (CG). A mixed methods research strategy was applied in the form of baseline and follow up participant observations (3 schools, 3 classes from MG, n = 58), questionnaires from MG and CG total respectively, and teacher interviews at follow up (5 schools, n = 5).

In Danish public schools Family and consumer sciences (FCS) is mandatory for one year in either 4th, 5th, or 6th grade, which makes the school an unique setting for promoting food literacy. The aim of this study was to explore the construction of community of practice in a school cooking class setting (FCS) as a way of promoting 11-13 year old children’s food literacy.

Results & Discussion

The school is a social setting and FCS is founded on experiential learning and group activities. The school is a social setting and FCS is founded on experiential learning and group activities.

In MG at follow up a significant increase in cooking skill was found (p = 0.001), no significant difference was found in the ability to talk about food.

In MG at follow up by the girls, but they are overtaken at follow up by the boys.

References


