

Abstract

Background : Children's food habits are particularly important and should consist of healthy and nutritionally balanced food to achieve a "life-long" healthy diet. This study aims to validate a food literacy measurement and investigates the association between parent's food literacy with undesirable ultra-processed OYATSU given to their children.

Methods : A total of 210 parents were recruited from M kindergarten and online and they participated to the survey about OYATSU given to their children. The survey results were analyzed, through regression analysis, to understand the most factors that were associated with ultra-processed OYATSU habits.

Results : The sub-scales of food literacy were validated by factor analysis and showed reliable internal consistency. High food literacy was associated with reduced use of ultra-processed OYATSU, and lower food literacy was significantly inversely proportional to the numbers of ultra-processed OYATSU. The most influential factor among the sub-scale of food literacy was "Food Label" that is a representation of proactive action to obtain food information. It had a significant association with less giving of ultra-processed OYATSU.

Conclusion : This study validated a food literacy measurement scale with reliable internal consistency. It should be meaningful for parents to recognize their current circumstance and hopefully gain motivation to improve their literacy that may support their children's life-long dietary habits. Consequently, the interpretation of food labels and the utilization of the knowledge to change dietary habits is rather important. In order to enhance the food literacy, further studies are needed to include some new components of food literacy, such as cooking skill and resistance of undesirable processed food. Also, consideration should be given to finding more determinants, such as the influence of using convenience stores.

Keywords: food literacy, OYATSU, child health, processed food, Japan