

„Hip-Hop & Food“

A participatory approach to informal nutrition education in the youth center setting within the IN FORM project KlimaFood¹

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Abstract

Dietary patterns of young people with educational disadvantage often deviate from a healthy and climate-friendly diet. In the scientific project KlimaFood, hip-hop and nutrition education are therefore interlinked. Observations during a pilot project in the form of a workshop show, among other things, opportunities for expanding competence and increasing interest in cooking.

Keywords: nutrition education, plant-based nutrition, sustainability, climate, participatory approach, children and youth, living environments, hip-hop

Background

Dietary patterns of children and adolescents with lower socioeconomic status and from educationally deprived milieus often differ from a health-promoting, climate-friendly and thus plant-based diet [1, 2]. At the same time this group has a higher risk for diet-related diseases [3]. New potential of nutrition education for target groups is offered by the use of recreational environments as a place of learning [4, 5] as well as the pedagogical use of hip-hop². Through the use of hip-hop competencies such as creative self-expression and political-social awareness can be promoted on the one hand and on the other hand trust and relationship between the young people or children and pedagogues can be built up. Hip-hop is understood here as the 'language of the youth', through which marginalized and discriminated young people can be reached. In the educational context hip-hop songs are used as a didactic tool for the transfer of knowledge. On the one hand the hip-hop learning tools are based on the principle of the mnemonic, thus a memory-supporting technique ("mnemonic bridges"), with the help of which the memorability of lesson contents is facilitated by rhymed sentences. On the other hand, the use is based on the psychological dimensions of emotions and holism [6-10].

Citation

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² Hip-hop is traditionally considered to be a street and youth culture that emerged in the USA in the 1970s, which consists of the four elements DJing, rap, graffiti and breakdance. Today rap, i.e. the spoken word song, is usually synonymous with hip-hop.

Within the KlimaFood³ project – scientifically accompanied – these different approaches are interlinked. The aim is to develop a concept for communicating health-promoting and sustainable nutrition in the context of open child and youth work, in which hip-hop is successfully used as a medium for nutritional education. In this paper the implementation of a first pilot workshop is described.

Methods

"Hip-Hop & Food" Workshop

Based on the design-based research approach [11, 12], a 4-day workshop was conducted in a youth center in Schleswig-Holstein. The workshop was attended by seven 11- to 13-year-olds with a tendency towards low socioeconomic status, educational disadvantage and low literacy, three of whom had international life stories. The participants were made aware of the workshop in advance by the staff of the youth center. During the workshop the participants were taught:

- a) basic knowledge of hip-hop and songwriting, as well as
- b) climate-friendly and healthy nutrition knowledge (♦ Figure 1), focusing in the sense of the Planetary Health Diet [13] on a largely plant-based and more legume-rich diet.

The knowledge imparted was

- c) deepened by the participants through independent writing of a rap song and by shooting a music video to go with it (♦ Figure 2). Furthermore
- d) their own nutritional behavior was reflected through shopping, cooking and eating together (♦ Figure 3).

In the context of a video premiere

- e) the finished music video was ceremoniously presented to friends and family members at the youth center (QR-Code to the music video on YouTube).

Evaluation

The pilot implementation was carried out in the sense of field research by means of participant observations, daily guided interviews with the facilitators, a Q&A session with the participants at the end of the workshop and a research diary. The focus was mainly on field descriptions, actions of the target group, events during the implementation, evaluations and reflections by the participants as well as the implementers. Furthermore, possibilities and improvement of the concept were identified. The evaluation of the data was based on the qualitative content analysis according to Mayring [14].

Ergebnisse

"I eat healthy and show respect to our earth/ Its meat and fat, didn't get it/ Keep it up, eat your pig/ But as a fast-food-gang you have no nice rhyme!" (Lyrics from the finished song "Rap Food Stars – Treat Yourself!")

Initial results show, among other things, opportunities for competence enhancement through the independent processing of what has been learned in the song text, for the acquisition of practical kitchen skills, and to increase the interest in cooking. ("And above all, [the participants] did not necessarily sign up because of the cooking, but also because of this hip-hop story", Interview Monday). In addition, it was possible to partially an accepting attitude towards vegetarian dishes (workshop leader: "How did the food taste?" The participants answer "good". Workshop leader asks "Would you have thought so?". Almost all participants say "No", one says "Yes". Observations Tuesday). Observable effects were further, that for the transfer of nutritional knowledge the joint activities, e.g. video shooting in the vegetable market, cooking and informal discussions, were put to good use ("Particularly a lot could be achieved today in the informal part. Because of the long period of time and the growing relationships, there were many moments to talk about food, to explain, to show", research diary). The youth center was only involved in the workshop to a limited extent. The existing structures and offers were partly contradictory to the contents conveyed in the workshop ("In the facility today there were sausages and half chickens for the other kids", Interview Thursday).

Discussion

The promising concept offers possibilities for low-threshold target group outreach and the development of nutritional and literacy skills. The implementation must, however, be made more practicable, the complex methodological approach should be simplified so that the concept can be taken up by multipliers in the future in the setting and can be implemented in an uncomplicated way. This requires, among other things, the refinement of processes as well as well-founded training for workshop leaders and facilities, especially with regard to

³ The three-year IN FORM project "KlimaFood" develops practical and real-life approaches to encourage health-promoting and climate-friendly nutritional competencies. The focus is primarily on vulnerable groups of the population, who have rarely benefit from nutrition education. Further information at: www.uni-flensburg.de/evb/forschung/klimafood



Fig. 1: The workshop leader explains the safe handling of the knife in the kitchen.



Fig. 2: A workshop participant raps his lyrics in the mobile music studio.



Fig. 3: As part of the music video shooting the workshop leader introduces different vegetables.

the content of nutrition education, and learning materials for the participants. Special chances are seen in opportunities for participation, in the use of hip-hop as a language for the target group, as well as in the involvement of multipliers, who are role models in hip-hop and therefore more likely to be accepted as role models for a healthy plant-based diet. The workshop format offers young people the opportunity to deal with health-promoting and climate-friendly nutrition in their language and in practical action. Through writing their very own song and participating in a matching music video, they take on the role of experts and share their nutritional knowledge with friends, classmates and family. In this way, the concept raises service-learning aspects as well. It should be noted that the pedagogical use of hip-hop is to be regarded quite critically. The main point of criticism is that the pedagogical instrumentalization of hip-hop leads to an appropriation of youth cultural practices by adults [15, 16]. Further points of criticism are on the one hand the content of hip-hop songs that is often harmful to children and young people [16] and, on the other hand, that the addressing of hip-hop pedagogical approaches to young people with international life histories happens from a deficit-oriented perspective [17]. In order to counteract the criticism, a reflexive basic attitude as well as an understanding of the hip-hop culture is essential.

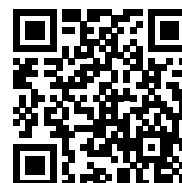
Outlook

In the context of the practical research the “Hip-Hop & Food”-workshop should be developed, tested and transferred into practice as a multiplier concept, based on the research concept of the Design-Based-Research-Approach. Further testing, investigations and iteration cycles of strategies for the involvement of the respective institution and integration of the workshop contents into their structures are necessary. The research project is to

generate practical knowledge, which will ultimately benefit actors, addressees and clients of the open child and youth work as well as the nutritional education.

QR-Code to the music video on YouTube

→ https://youtu.be/xhSzOdhW_3M



All persons depicted in this article and, if applicable, their legal guardians, have given their consent for the reproduction of the images in printed and digital form.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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