AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EATING BEHAVIOR AMONG MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SEOUL.

Kim J.H.*, Lee M.J., Choi J.H., Moon S.J. Dept. of Food and Nutrition, Yonsei University, Seoul 120-749, Korea.

This study was to evaluate the eating behavior and to analyze the various factors to affecting eating behavior among middle school students. The subjects consisted of 212 middle school students(male: 106, female: 106), 13~14 year old residing in Seoul.

A questionnaire was used as the instrument tool and the questionnaire considered of 4 parts: the socio-demographic characteristics of the subjects, value toward food and nutrition, diet diversity(the number of food items) and eating behavior.

Fifty three point five percent of males and fifty seven percent of females skipped breakfast. The main reason for skipping breakfast was shortage of time. Fifty five percent of the total number of subjects stated that they had more than two pleasant meals a day. The number of food items was significantly higher in males than in females. In only sixteen point four percent of total number of subjects(18.5% of male and 14.2% of female), the primary pursue in having meals was not to satisfy hunger but to consider nutrition and health. The eating behavior of the adolescents showed that 65% of the subjects had a 'good' eating behavior score and 17.4% had scores of 'excellent' and 'poor' respectively. The existence of parents, the economic level of the family, valuation and concern of health and nutrition affected the eating behavior score. The less the subjects skipped breakfast, the greater they placed a value toward food and nutrition. Value toward food and nutrition had a significant influence on their eating behavior. Those who placed a value toward food and nutrition had a higher eating behavior score than the other groups. The more the number of food items, the better their eating behavior. As a result of the multiple regression analysis, the factors affect eating behavior were 'pleasant meal', 'the value toward food and nutrition' and 'the numbers of food items' in order(R^2=0.2984).