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## The Comparisons of Elementary School Children's Food Purchasing and Consumer Competency for a Healthier Diet by Their Attitude toward the Meal Management

### 초등학생의 식생활관리 태도에 따른 식품구매 행동 및 식생활 소비자능력 비교

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### Abstract

In this study elementary school children's food purchasing and consumer competency for a healthier diet were compared by their attitude toward the meal management. The subjects were 779 sixth grade elementary school children (417 boys and 362 girls) in Busan. They were classified into three groups: 'High' was composed of 226 subjects who had more than the mean  $+1/2$  SD of attitude toward the meal management; 'Medium' was composed of 343 subjects who had the mean  $\pm 1/2$ SD; and 'Low' was composed of 210 subjects who had the less than the mean  $-1/2$  SD. The results were as follows. The high group had less pocket money than the low group, and thought that their allowances were adequate to their needs. They also had a habit of entering amounts into an account book. The children in the low group purchased mostly snacks without making or practicing a budget. The high group purchased yogurt, fruit, or bread as snacks more frequently than the low group. More children checked the nutrient facts on the package in high group than in the low group. There were no significant differences in the consumer's knowledge of a healthy diet among the groups; but there were significant differences in the consumer's skill, and the consumer's attitude toward a healthy diet among the groups. The high group had higher skills and more positive attitudes than the low group. This research suggests that education can elevate interest and can help develop more positive attitudes toward healthy diets among children. The education can help them to develop planned food purchasing habits, and improve their consumer competency for a healthy diet.

### Keywords

elementary school children; food purchasing; consumer competency; attitude toward meal management



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Inuence of family on the child's attitude to food and nutritional ha-bits is based on multiple sources. It includes genetic factors, personality characteristics of parents, their interests, parents' educational methods, the inuence of siblings, family economic situation, its cultural and social backgrounds. Adults ca n inuence children's relationship to food in different ways: a) verbally at the time of meals or other times, b) non-verbally presenting offered dishes to taste or allowing to observe food pre-paration, c) through their own nutritional behaviour d) using food for other than nutriti... Knowledge about proper nutrition allows children to evaluate their own current diet compared with the views and recommendations of experts and to assess the risks of inappropriate eating. Children develop food dislikes and likes very early on in life, and introducing them to healthy foods when they are small can help determine their eating habits. Sometimes, children will rebel and eat unhealthily when they reach their teens and have a bit more control over their diet, but studies show hat people who ate healthily as children more often than not revert back to those habits as adults. Show them how it is done. Make it easy for your child en to eat healthy snacks by having them available at all times. Keep fruit in a bowl that they can reach easily and allow them to pick out pieces whenever hey feel hungry. Show them all the different colours and textures of foods, and ask them for their meal ideas so they feel as though they are in charge.