

DIETARY HABITS OF ADOLESCENTS IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

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Abstract

Adolescence represents life period in which experimentation is part of growing up, acquainting oneself, others and the environment. This period is also extremely important for adopting healthy living habits, including nutrition. The aim of this study is to gain insights into possible differences in dietary habits of adolescents in the urban and rural areas and also to compare the habits and knowledge in nutrition of children in fifth and sixth grade in relation to the children in seventh and eighth grade of elementary school.

The research was conducted in 2018 through surveys in two primary schools: Ludbreg (town) and Veliki Bukovec (rural area) with the approval of the school director and ethics committee and included 293 fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students (from eleven to fourteen years). 144 of them attend the 5th and 6th grade and 149 attend the 7th and 8th grade of the Ludbreg Elementary School and the Veliki Bukovec Elementary School. For result analysis computerized program for descriptive statistics was used.

Obtained results are showing that 55% (93) of students in the Ludbreg elementary school have breakfast at home while in the elementary school V. Bukovec 56% (70) of children do not have breakfast at home, although in both schools the largest number of children consider breakfast as the most important meal in the day. In both schools, the largest number of respondents 38% (112) consumed only three meals a day of which 34% (49) of 5th and 6th grade students and 42% (63) in the 7th and 8th grade. Also, the results show that 56% (164) of the students consider breakfast as the most important meal in the day still it is not consumed daily by 47% (67) of children in 5th and 6th grade and 46% (60) children of 7th and 8th grade. Although 48% (72) of children, especially in higher grades, consider food served in school as regular/healthy there is clear decrease in consumption of food in school.

The survey shows that students are willing to learn more about proper nutrition, which gives us the obligation to introduce some form of continuous nutrition education.

Key words: Adolescent nutrition, School menus, Adolescence, Education.