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The prevalence of eating disturbances at elite private middle and high schools in Korea

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Disturbed eating behavior (DEB) might be easily proceeded to pathological eating disorder such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia in adolescents. It has been emphasized to manage DEB during adolescence. The DEBs of students with high academic achievement and high social economic status were scarcely evaluated in Korea. Thus, this study was performed to assess the prevalence of eating disturbances at elite private middle and high schools in Korea. Data were collected under the teacher's control at elite private middle and high schools (EPS) in Gyeonggi-do, Korea. The total number of participants in middle and high schools was 247 (girls: 64.8%). Only one class of high school was included. Subjects who marked skewed answers such as "double responding" were excluded (n=12). EAT-26 Korean version was used for diagnosis of DEB. DEB was defined as scores of 20 or more on the EAT-26. SPSS version 18 was used for statistical analyses. Further statistical analyses were not able to perform due to the lack of sample distribution on DEB. As the results, in terms of sleep time per day, they slept 5.9 hours on average (boys: 6.5 hours, girls: 5.7 hours) and the total percentage of responding "often" and "very often" in the item "skipping meals in order to save time for studying" was 50.9% (boys: 41.8%, girls: 55.5%). The mean score of EAT-26 was 6.83 in total, 6.16 in boys and 7.09 in girls. The number of DEB was too low to perform further statistical analyses compared with Korean nationwide adolescents' DEB (EPS boys: 1.3%, girls: 3.0% vs., nationwide boys: 10.5%, girls: 14.8%). Further study regarding eating behaviors for elite private school adolescents is required.

Biography

Hae-Jeung Lee is a Professor at Gachon University in the Republic of Korea. She was graduated and received her PhD from Seoul National University. She has worked as a Research Fellow at Harvard Medical School and Harvard Public Health School. She has carried out projects using various national nutrition surveys and health promotion programs and policies upon request from various Korean Governmental Agencies including the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW), Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) and the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS). She has conducted numerous randomized clinical trials as well.

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