

CHAPTER 5



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

In China, along with the economic reform by 20 years, there is plenty of improvement in each aspect of socioeconomic development. This kind of change also takes place in evaluation of nutritional status and food consumption pattern for people. Not only in urban area it also in rural area. Certainly, with the varied situation, some new problems are emerging with the positive changes.

In this study, we adopted cross-sectional data which from CFNSS and SSB. It involved the growth performance of preschool children and food consumption data in household level. By descriptive analysis and multivariate regression analysis, we know that:

- 1) As a whole assessing, a great improvement of nutritional status has already be achieved for the urban population even to the lowest income groups. The consumption on food from animal product should be controlled and be adjusted in the future. With the increment of household income and the lessening of household size, under-nutrition and inadequate food consumption were not primary problem in urban area. Instead, over-nutrition and obesity became quite serious problems in urban areas. In long-term, without any intervention, it should be a fatal causation in the fall of population quality and increasing the burden of chronic diseases.

- 2) Up to now, urban household had enough money on food consumption to satisfy their need. Certainly, with the improvement of economic and the increment of household income, normally, people would like to choose much more high quality food to satisfy their crescent need on food consumption. Household income was a significant factor in nutritional analysis from negative side. It means that, people in urban area spent much more money in some specific food consumption, such as pork consumption, which came to unhealthy level simply. This situation should be paid more attention.
- 3) In rural area, poverty resulting in under-nutrition was still a significant problem, especially in low-income groups. Even for relative high-income groups, the food consumption pattern was imbalance obviously. At the same time, some traditional concepts of people should be changed by nutritional education. Special attention should be given to the nutritional inequity of the rural population, particularly the nutrition and health of the children of low-income families, which is the consequence inequitable economic development. As a special consumer group, they should be protected in market economy. In the meantime, the prices for some major foods should be remained in acceptable level to rural people, such as egg price.
- 4) As scientific decisions and policy-making depend on reliable information about people's food consumption behavior, changes in life style, income, and responses to the readjustments of policies. Aim at the change of current situation, the system of information collection and analysis should also take corresponding alteration to fit the new situation. These data will of course be complemented by other relative information. This is particularly important at local levels where it is essential that the relevance of national findings are substantiated by information from local research and experience.

5.2 Recommendation

According to different situation we faced in urban and rural, the emphasis of nutritional intervention should be different.

For urban household, with the increment of household income and the food market getting more plentiful, people have enough money in food consumption with their smaller household size. As the policy maker the department of public health, they should spend a lot of energy in publicizing nutritional knowledge to public by multiple media and modes, such as newspaper, TV, Internet and so on. To guide people spend their money with a right way in food consumption. On the other hand, one of the functions of government is to intervene the market with regulation and the policy of price even for market economy. They could take more incentive in the production and sale for some healthy food by subsidy and tax policy, such as poultry, legume and its product.

At the same time, policy approaches should be adopted to maintain the basic principle of the traditional diet and control the excessive intake of fat. To increase the share of poultry and aquatic products in the total consumption of meat, and to limit the amount of pork consumed.

For rural household, especially the low-income population should be the target for nutritional improvement. Nutrition is not only an outcome of socioeconomic development, it is also a major factor influencing and contributing resources to socioeconomic development. Thus, it is of great importance to involve nutritional considerations in national development plans in rural area. As suggestion, some nutritional indicators, such as dietary energy intake, DDP and other indicators of nutritional status be included in the criteria for socioeconomic development.

In long-term, the most important thing is to increase the household income for whole people in rural area in order to stimulate the consumption on high quality food in rural food market. To help them catch up the step of that in urban area. At the same time, uninterrupted nutritional education should be taken in rural as a long-lasting intervention with the socioeconomic development. It would be expected to assist the transition of people's food consumption conception. In short-term, taking into account these other input such as fostering household food production in terms of family gardening and husbandry, encouraging housewives participation. Nutritional education activities will result in a better cost-benefit ration for comprehensive plans into the overall poverty relief.

For the low-income households, efforts should be made to increase oil consumption to promote dietary fat intake and density of the diet. It was very important for children also. Along with the income increase on economic development, cereal food consumption should be discouraged. Otherwise, it would affect the national food security for grain. It illustrates the economical importance of guiding people's rational food consumption pattern in rural area.

5.3 Limitation of the Study

This pilot study attempted to combine economic theory and nutritional knowledge to assess nutritional status and food consumption in household level of China. There are several limitations we had to face in conducting this study:

1. Since the data set was used in this study was cross-sectional data, only in 1998. Even it could cover the whole China and was collected by CFNSS and SSB, but in fact, the nutrition is a long-term research. Some of accurate

figure was very difficult to be collected or had to spend a lot of time to follow up the sample in sampling survey. If we can combine the data in other survey year, we could obtain better result.

2. Unfortunately, because of some impersonal reason, we had to adopt different data set in analysis of preschool children growth and food consumption. Although the survey year and county were same, the household was totally different, that means it difficult to find the sound correlation between the growth of preschool children and nutritional evaluation in household level or in county level.
3. This study only took a evaluation of nutritional status in national level for different income groups. Actually, China is a quite big country which have a huge population and a lot of groups. For different regions, they have different cultural background and custom in food consumption. In China, the situation on food consumption is more complicated than that in other country. If we have enough time to analyze the data in province level or in county level, we could find some more suitable result to the real situation.
4. To apply economic theory in nutritional research was a recent method not only in China, also in worldwide. It was not easy to meet articles and research reports that are more exact to enrich our study. In addition, because of the inadequate time and the limitation in knowledge and experience, we can not make the analysis in depth, maybe we don't know that we have missed some important factors in this study. Anyway we will continue our research in the future and we believe that we should make it better via this study.