Abstract

Nutrition Situation Analysis in the UAE: A Review Study

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This review study aimed to assess the nutrition situation in the UAE using published data from 2010 to 2022. It highlights the gaps and challenges that prevail in addressing the nutrition-related problems in the UAE and the opportunities that have been overlooked. The available literature indicates that the UAE is burdened with more than one form of nutrition-related problems, including being underweight, being overweight, obesity, micronutrient deficiencies, and nutrition-related chronic diseases. It is clear that data on micronutrient deficiencies, protein-energy malnutrition, obesity, diabetes, and other nutrition-related diseases among the UAE population are extremely scarce. The UAE has a high prevalence of obesity and diabetes; however, limited studies have been conducted to document this nutritional phenomenon. Few examples of published data are available assessing the burden of stunting, wasting, and being underweight among children under five years of age. Despite the importance of protein-energy malnutrition, no recent publications analyze its prevalence within the UAE population. Therefore, future studies must be conducted, focusing on malnutrition. Based on the literature, and bearing in mind the magnitude of the health issues due to the UAE population's nutrition negligence, there is an urgent need to assess the population's nutrient behaviors, to aid policy decision-makers in developing and implementing effective health policies and strategies.

Keywords: UAE; nutritional status; malnutrition; overweight; obesity; exclusive breastfeeding; stunting; wasting; anemia; food consumption pattern