World's Malnutrition Paradox; Gaps in Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Kutwah Moses Amram Bsc.[1]

[1]Registered Public Health Nutritionist
[2] kutwahmoses@gmail.com

Key words; undernutrition, overnutrition, overweight, obesity, diet, physical activity, non-communicable diseases.

Abstract

Objective; This paper examines paradigms in the double burden of malnutrition. It explores the speed of nutrition transition, summarizes the drifts and trends in prevalence rates between under nutrition and overnutrition.

Design; Review of outcomes that focuses on large scale surveys, national and global representative studies on diet, physical activity, obesogenic environment and obesity among children, adolescents and adults.

Measurements; The WHO guidelines for classifying and defining overweight and obesity are used for children and adolescents and the body mass index of $\geq 25kg/m^2$ and $30kg/m^2$ are used for adult's overweight and obesity respectively.

Results; The nutrition transition shifts are examined from the 20th century to the current century. Paradoxically, the two forms of malnutrition exist. Dubiously, undernutrition is observed to be decreasing whereas overnutrition is increasing rampantly. The problem is cutting across all classes of people whether rich or poor and the magnitude is becoming a health burden especially in developing countries. The shifts has dominated to overweight, obesity and diet related comorbidities such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and some cancers. Limited data on the global malnutrition situation helps us provide a sense of trend in the shifts. The burden of obesity and diet related non-communicable diseases are derailing both social and economic developments of countries and the impending costs of this calamity is greater than that of under nutrition. This paper observes trends in shifts in Europe. China, USA and the low and middle income countries of Africa, Asia and Middle East.

Conclusion; This work shows that the two forms of malnutrition exists but overweight and obesity is encroaching at a very pronounced speed with increased susceptibility to diet related NCDs, the leading global causes of mortality, yet they can be significantly reduced. The trends remains stark and there is a likelihood that in the absence of urgent action, burdens will reach levels beyond the capacity to manage in the coming years with massive expenditure on the health sector.

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Biography

Mr. Kutwah Moses Amram completed his BSc at the age of 25 years from Meru University of Science and Technology and is enrolled for Msc. Food Nutrition and Dietetics at Kenyatta University, Nairobi – Kenya. He is the Ass. Examinations Officer at Kenya Nutritionist and Dieticians Institute, a regulatory body of nutritionists and dieticians in Kenya. He has done 3 nutrition projects at different regions in Kenya and a review paper which are yet to be published. He is one of the young upcoming scientists at the frontline to lead Kenya in bridging food and nutrition security; big four agenda of the Kenyan Government.

Presenting Author Details



Full Name: **Mr. Kutwah Moses Amram**
Contact number: **+254 707 129 980**
https://twitter.com/KutwahMoses
linkedin.com/in/kutwahmoses-gmail-com

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