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Nutrient intakes and adequacy among preschooler children under blockade in Gaza, Palestine

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The 12-years blockade and three major escalations of hostilities over the last years since 2008 have increased frustrations and exacerbated the vulnerability of the 2 million Palestinians living in the Gaza strip. According to recent national surveys, 4 Palestinians are facing a double burden of malnutrition, a high level of micronutrient deficiencies along side growing overweight and obesity. This cross-sectional, community-based, household survey was carried out in Gaza city, Palestine during the first half of 2018 to study the nutrient intakes adequacy of Palestinian preschool children aged 2-5 years in Gaza. The actual sample size was 176 of pre-schooler children comprising 126 from urban area, 30 from rural and 20 from refugee camp. The nutrients deficient below the 75% RDA level of dietary intake, the study showed the following findings. The energy was the highest (90%) deficient in the diet among the studied preschool children below RDA level of dietary intake. Also, a high prevalence of deficiency was in vitamin A intake (87%) and about three quarters (73.3%) of studied children consumed calcium below the RDA level of dietary intake. About half (47.2%) of studied children consumed iron below the RDA level of dietary intake, where about one fifth (20%) of studied children consumed carbohydrates and 17% consumed zinc below the RDA level of dietary intake, respectively. A few percent of studied children (4.5%) have protein deficient diets and the plants sources were the main and majority consumption. Deterioration of the nutritional status among Gazan preschool children and the malnutrition indicators shows the worst for several decades. It is reasonable to assume that the deterioration in nutrient intake in the Gaza strip was political in nature and man-made.

Biography

Samir Mohammad Radi has completed his PhD in Public Health and Nutrition from High Institute of Public Health, Alexandria University, Egypt. He is the Director of Health Information Center, Ministry of Health Gaza, Palestine and Assistance Prof. Public Health and Nutrition in Al-Azhar University, Gaza. He has published more than 14 papers in reputed journals including reports and books.

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