

Nutritional knowledge and dietary habits among residents and non-residents of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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In recent decades, the diet has changed significantly in a rapidly growing Middle East country such as Saudi Arabia. This change has major implications for evolving patterns of food consumption, lifestyle and health status. Perhaps the most prominent of the reasons is the invasion of the western diet of the Arab markets besides the weakness of knowledge of people's food and the use of erroneous routines. These causes have led to an alarming increase in the number of overweight and undernourished people in Saudi Arabia. It is well documented that lifestyle is strongly linked to food, health; however, many health problems related to dietary habits remain in the Kingdom, which making the research on these causes interesting. In the present research, the nutritional knowledge and dietary habits among the residents and non-residents of the Saudi Arabian population were evaluated to assess whether this knowledge translated into healthier food choices and consumption across the various demographic and ethnic groups. Hence, to find out the effect of increasing the knowledge of people, especially after the western diet replaced the traditional Arab diet. The results from 841 responses of Saudi Arabia citizens living in or outside Saudi Arabia show that the nutritional knowledge of non-residents are appearing higher than the nutritional knowledge of Saudi Arabia residents on average. It was also observed that the nutritional knowledge, healthy food choice knowledge, and dietary habits knowledge are all correlated with each other. Food habits and behaviours among the people of Saudi Arabia rely more on taste and desires than on the real nutritional values of healthy foods. These research findings suggest the need for strategies designed to improve nutrition and dietary knowledge of the Saudi Arabia population.

Biography

Wafa Alrashedi has her expertise in improving the food safety, nutrition and healthy life-style. She is a graduate student working in her research to improve the health of her local population by identifying the reasons for poor knowledge of food and healthy nutrition, which will greatly benefit from avoiding many food diseases and improving dietary habits.

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