

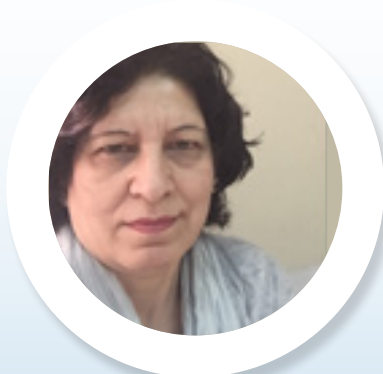
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Picky Eating Behavior during Infancy and Weight Status among Preschool Children in Kuwait

Picky eating behavior is a common phenomenon during childhood. Pickiness in eating may interfere with the child's food intake and thus physical growth, it is essential to identify the factors leading towards the picky eating behavior. This study was planned to investigate the prevalence of picky eating among the preschool children, its possible association with early feeding practices, including type of feeding used during infancy, introduction of solid food and weaning age as well as other social or behavioral factors. Picky eaters were identified among children, ages of 2-6 years (n=385) through filling a validated questionnaire by the mothers voluntarily. The participant kids' weight and height were taken and evaluated through UK-WHO growth charts. Data was collected by trained dietitians in the pediatric nutrition clinics in 5 major governmental hospitals in Kuwait. Our results indicated about 37% prevalence of picky eating among preschool children in Kuwait. Picky eating was significantly associated with weaning age ($\chi^2=9.10$, $DF=2$, $p=0.011$) and had a positive association with negative parental attitudes/actions towards their children's eating behaviors ($\chi^2=46.99$, $DF=1$, $p=0.00$). No association, however, was recorded with the type of feeding or with the age of introducing solid food. Picky eating was also positively associated with low Body Mass Index (BMI). Among children who were underweight, 64% were recognized picky eaters. This study confirmed more than third of the preschool children as picky eaters. We strongly urge to further investigate this behavior and its short- and long-term health outcomes on children.



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Biography

Tasleem A. Zafar, Associate Professor, earned her Ph.D. degree in Foods and Nutrition at Purdue University, USA. She obtained a substantial research experience as Research Associate at Purdue, and University of Toronto, Canada. She has a vast experience of more than 30 years of teaching graduate and undergraduate students and guiding research. Her focal research interests concentrate on to explore a breakthrough for the epidemics of obesity and diabetes through functional food ingredients. She has published more than 25 original research articles in peer-reviewed journals and contributed chapters to four scholarly books published by Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Co., New York, USA and by IGI Global, USA. She has given invited talks, oral presentations and chaired several sessions at international conferences. She is an honorary editor of the Paki Journal of Home-Economics (PJHE) and has served as an honorary reviewer for many prestigious journals

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