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ABSTRACT

Association between Iron Deficiency among School Students Aged 6-12 y and Their Learning Abilities in Rafah and Beit Lahiya Cities in Palestine.

Amal Khalifa¹ and Kafa Ghaben¹
University of Palestine¹

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Zinc deficiency is believed to be widespread, especially in low income countries like Palestine. Approximately, 80% of school age children have zinc deficiency. It is reported that micronutrient deficiencies further debilitate health and learning by shunting growth and impairing intellectual development that may significantly reduce learning abilities. The exact burden of zinc deficiency among primary school children and its impacts on learning abilities is not known. Thus, there is an ultimate need to figure out the association between zinc deficiency and impaired intellectual development causing reduced learning abilities. Therefore, this study aims to determine the prevalence of zinc deficiency among primary school children in urban settings in North and South of Gaza Strip, to find an association with learning abilities, and to identify other possible contributing factors. A case-control study will be conducted in which 120 school-aged children will be recruited. Furthermore, they will be divided into a case group of subjects characterized by low zinc serum levels and a control group characterized by normal zinc serum levels. Data on anthropometrics measurements, biochemical analysis of zinc serum levels, and the learning abilities via school exams scores will be collected. All obtained data will be analyzed via SPSS version 22.