

Evaluate the Dietary Practices and Body Mass Index among University Students— Narrative Review

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Abstract: Health is imperative and central in our day-to-day living. It is influenced by events and beliefs, as well as cultural, social, and external factors. Health and well-being are a delicate balance of the mind, body, and soul, varying for everyone. A variety of dietary needs are established in childhood, but as people transition into adolescence, they mature in their ability to self-regulate dietary responsibilities. It is therefore plausible to consider that the act of living independently through the college years becomes a critical event in this journey.

➤ **Aim:**

This study intends to evaluate the dietary practices and body mass index among university students. The findings will aid the researcher in planning and implementing an awareness program targeting overweight and underweight individuals.

➤ **Methods:**

A quantitative research design was implemented in the present study. Four hundred samples were gathered based on a purposive sampling method that was used in the survey.

➤ **Results:**

The study shows a significant association between dietary pattern and BMI ($r = 0.018$; $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, dietary practices were found to be associated with a few demographic variables, such as the field of study and marital status. Hence, the null hypotheses H01 and H02 were rejected by the researcher. Finally, we must spread the message on how to maintain a healthy weight. Moreover, further surveys may help students to understand the importance of appropriate weight maintenance. The higher education and health care sectors should disseminate information about healthy weight management.

Keywords: *Body Mass Index, Food Habits.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of health to humans is incomparable. Longevity is promoted by living a health-aware way of life. A person's basal index of metabolism will be enhanced because of proper eating. Holding a healthy lifestyle and a proper weight is a duty for all. An unhealthy lifestyle would be bad for one's holistic growth. The world has changed the way it lives: in industry, in cities, in the movement of capital, and the opening of markets. This lifestyle change has brought about changes in dietary practices that require an increased dietary consumption of fat, sweet, and non-nutritive foods, together with a reduction of healthier eating practices.^{1,2}

The life of a university student is so different; for some, it means leading an unhealthy life due to the hours of lectures and assignments. A healthy diet is, of course, important for ensuring health and protection against disease.^{3,4} For university students, what they eat (or can eat) is guided by what is offered on or near campus and what times of teacher lectures allow for meals. The rapid growth of roadside foods, outlets, and the few food courts is making many college students worry about snacking, skipping meals, and the absence of food diversity.⁵

Sara Talep and Leila Itani conducted a cross-sectional study that included 189 (14–19 years) from four private schools in Tripoli, Lebanon (68 overweight & obese and 121 normal weight). The NLAI and the AFHC were included in a

self-administered questionnaire. Anthropometrics were gauged by standards. Chi-squared tests for independence and Poisson regression analysis, as appropriate, were used to examine the relationships between nutrition literacy, dietary behaviors, and BMI. 3. Results No association was observed between the five components of nutrition literacy and BMI categories. The Adolescent Food Habits Checklist showed no association with medium or high overweight and obesity BMI (RR = 0.947, 95%CI: 0.629–1.426) ($p = 0.796$). The one exception was a negative association between macronutrient literacy and dietary behavior. Except for macro-nutrient literacy, none of the nutrition literacy components were associated with body mass index or eating behaviors.⁶

Romero-Blanco et al. investigated the influence of eating habits on body weight, quality of sleep, adherence to Mediterranean diet, physical activity, tobacco/alcohol consumption, and health status in university students. A total of 536 nursing undergraduates answered the Yale Food Addiction Scale online questionnaire. The FA rate reached 6.4%. ORs [for sleep quality, anxiety/depression, BMI, and sedentary lifestyle] were statistically significant (OR = 4.8, 95% CI: 1.9–12.1). The study results in ROC curve AUC are 0.84 (95%CI:0.77–0.91). A prediction model was selected using binary logistic regression. FA students had higher BMI, along with significantly worse sleep, anxiety, depression, and sedentary time.⁷

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

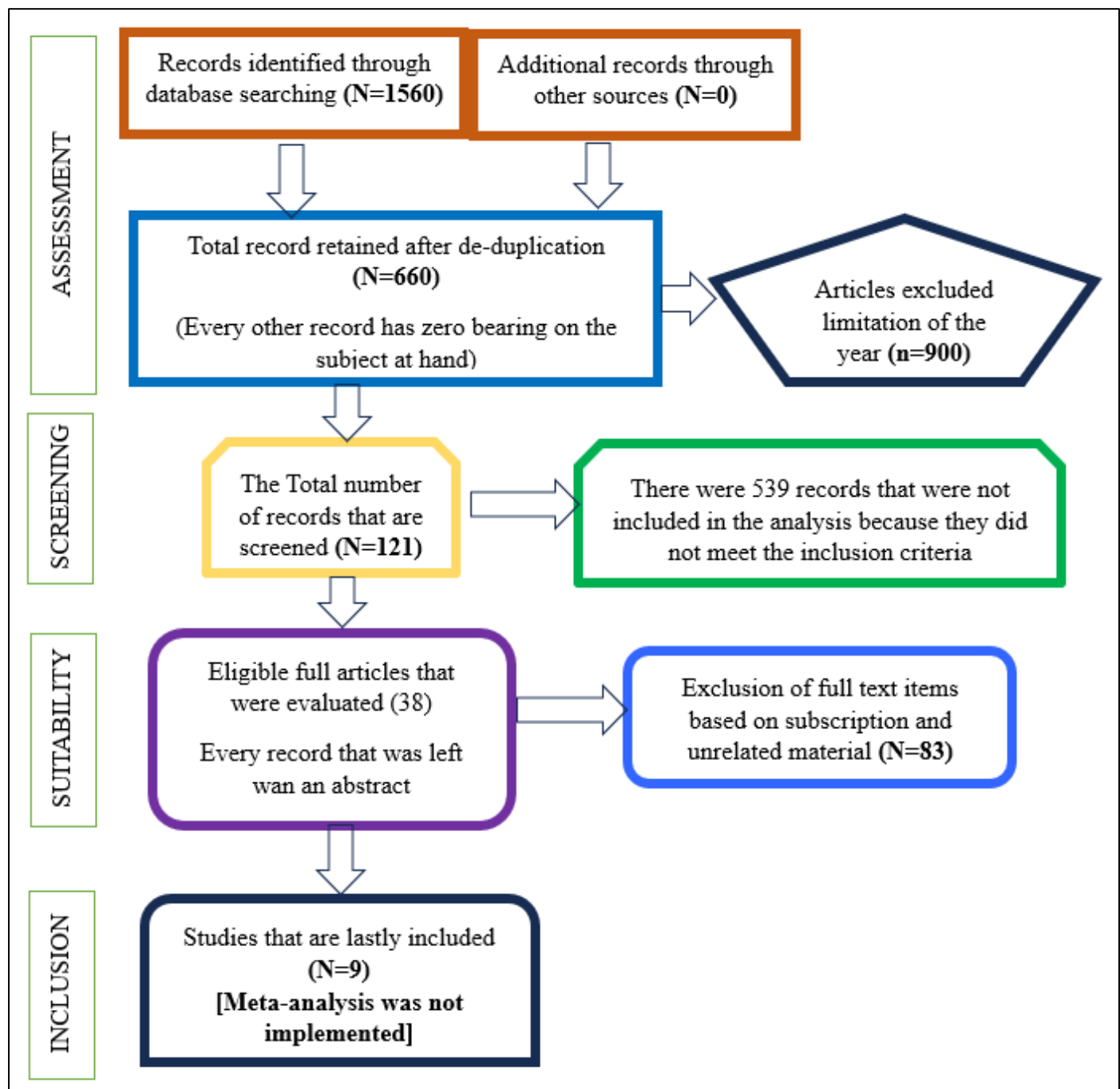


Fig 1 Narrative Review Process Flow Diagram (PRISMA)

III. FINDINGS

A sensitive search was performed by combining the phrase according to the database. In addition, manual research of PUBMED and Google Scholar was conducted based on keywords and search synonyms published before. Ten additional articles were present in the database. The first search yielded 1600 items; 660 of these needed to be manually selected. The 539 rejected articles were due to duplication in the database. A total of 121 records were screened for inclusion after removing duplicates. Of these, only 38 passed the eligibility check and the remaining 83 were excluded because they were inaccessible full texts, they were irrelevant, or we did not have connected subscriptions. Based on that, nine papers were reviewed.

IV. DISCUSSION

The results of the present study revealed that no significant correlation was found between eating habits with age, sex, religion, education, family types, and residence. There was, however, an association between the marital status and course at $p < 0.05$. Also, a review of another investigation on prevalence and predictors of depression, anxiety, and stress among nursing students of the faculty of nursing, Benha University, Egypt, conducted by Manal, Hammed Mohammed, revealed parallelism with the current findings. Among 125 students in the second year of nursing, females showed a normal body weight in 62.70% and males 54.80%. The information shows there is no statistically significant difference in BMI by sex, and 25 per cent of all children were classed as overweight, with the others underweight. Besides, 73.8% of men and 83% of women reported eating neutrally.⁸

The results also indicated that the relationship between dietary patterns and BMI was not significant ($r = 0.018$, $\alpha = 0.05$). The present study was planned as a small pilot study by Benazeera and Umarani J, before starting the research at other schools in Mangalore. 30.7% of the adolescents practiced unhealthy dietary and 69.3% of them practiced healthy dietary. BMI indicated 10.66%, 21.44% and 34% were overweight, obese, and normal weight/ underweight, respectively. A similar result is recorded between dietary habits and BMI ($r = 0.085$; $P < 0.05$).⁹

INFERENCE

Certainly, for college students, sound bodies and minds, and all that—keeping healthy, weight-wise, that is why forming good food habits is so important. Key to this is to achieve regular eating patterns, to choose healthy foods which are low in sugar and fat, and to eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats. You must eat healthy foods, and you need to be mindful about what and when you eat. You must keep hydrated and steer clear of late-night eating. Most students are stressed and often poor, which makes it even more important to inform and educate them about what they eat. Schools play a key role by promoting nutrition and avoiding lifestyle-related health adversities for young people.

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• *Transparency in Ethics*

- ✓ The Sharda University Internal Ethics Committee provided prior approval for conducting the research.
- ✓ The participants in the research gave their informed permission, and the study's goals were kept private and anonymous.

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