



Department: **Special Education**

When Teachers And Parents Meet On Nutrition: Exploring Moderation Effect Of Knowledge Of Policy And Training On Food Literacy For Children With Disabilities

Main presenter: **Thara Hamad Mosabbah Alkhateri**

Supervisor: **Dr. Ashraf Moustafa**

Co-presenters: **Aishah Obaid Ali Alkhal Alsuwaidi Wadima Mohammed Ali Al Dhaheri**

Abstract: In the UAE, the government has launched a nutritional policy to ensure that all children have access to required nutrients. Unfortunately, the extent to which stakeholders are aware of this policy is undocumented. Similarly, the extent to which stakeholders are being trained to ensure that children with disabilities have access to appropriate nutritional levels is unknown. In this study, attempts were made to understand whether knowledge of policy and training will moderate the relationship between stakeholders and food literacy. The revised 32-item food and literacy scale was used to collect data from 149 teachers and parents of children with disabilities across the UAE. The data was analysed using SPSS AMOSS using participant type as independent variable, awareness of policy and training as moderation variable and the sub-scales (understanding, functional, interactive and food choice) as outcome variable. For instance, on the moderation effect of knowledge of policy on participant type and measures, it was found that participant type had effect on participant type and interaction about food. The study concludes on the need for education of stakeholders to enable them engage others when it comes to improving healthy eating habits among children with disabilities in UAE.



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Parental Involvement and Student's Productivity: Investigating the influence of Parents' Background and Habits on the Students' Academic Productivity.

Main presenter: **Noora Abdulrazzaq Abdullah Anwahi**

Supervisor: **Dr. Hind Alghfeli**

Co-presenters:

Abstract: Productivity is a complex concept, and there is a need for more research investigating the educational aspects of productivity. In contrast to traditional GPA scales, this research will look into the factors influencing students' growth based on habits that define the mindset they use to solve their problems. The input that students require in order to produce effective outcomes involves a bundle of soft skills, a stable home environment, challenging learning goals, and an encouraging school community.

Based on the literature, parents' involvement is crucial and proven to have a significant impact on their children's education. This study aims to investigate parents' background and habits and their influence on their children's productivity at school. The survey was conducted through "Google Forms" online platform. Then, the results were analyzed as pie graphs. A table of all the responses was created to compare and correlate items. The key results showed a significant relationship between parenting style and students' engagement in constructive hobbies in developing time-management skills and a healthy life-work balance.



Department: **Special Education**

Assessing Psychometric Properties And Validity Of Food And Nutrition Literacy Scale Adopted To Measure Assess Awareness Of Nutritional Needs Of Children With Disabilities In The Uae

Main presenter: **Noora Anwahi**

Supervisor: **Dr. Maxwell Opoku**

Co-presenters: **Fatima Alkatheeri Anwar Alameri**

Abstract: The efforts towards promoting the well-being of individuals with disabilities have featured in national and international policies. While children with disabilities especially those living and diagnosed with developmental disabilities are susceptible to health problems, their nutritional needs have received less attention in the literature. In the UAE, in 2019, a new nutrition policy was developed by the government to guide food access and optimize the development of all. Although this is an important step to improve the well-being of children, the extent to which such policies is being implemented to enhance the living conditions of children with disabilities is unknown and unresearched. It is against this backdrop that we assess the validity of Food and Nutritional Literacy to determine whether it could be used to assess the stakeholders' knowledge about nutritional needs of children with disabilities. A total of 149 teachers and parents with children with disabilities completed the scale which was subjected to factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. While the initial scale reported 42-items, in this study the results confirmed the retention of 32 items. The factor loadings confirmed the four-factor structure (understanding; n=9, food choice; n=7, interactive; n = 6, functional: n= 10) which is difference from the initial six-factor structure. However, confirmatory

*factor analysis confirmed the appropriateness of the scale as a measure of knowledge towards the nutritional needs of children with disabilities in the UAE.
The implications of the study for future research is discussed.*



Department: **Special Education**

Parental And Teachers' Perspectives On Promoting Healthy Eating Habit Among Children With Autism In UAE

Main presenter: **Haseena Hassan Shah**

Supervisor: **Dr. Maxwell Opoku**

Co-presenters: **Salma Rashed Ali Aldhaheri Aysha Khalfan Salem Almeqbaali**

Abstract: Obesity and poor healthy lifestyles among children with autism is beginning to gain scholarly attention. There are ongoing discussions on the need for practitioners and parents to pay attention to the nutritional needs and promoting the health and well-being of children with autism. While this discussion is beginning to gain attention, in the United Arab Emirates, the government has taken step by developing a national nutrition policy. The purpose of this policy is to promote better eating habits and quality of health of children across the country. However, to our best of knowledge, discussions on whether stakeholders supporting children with autism are aware and deliberate on the nutritional needs of children with autism is yet to be documented. Thus, the purpose of this study was to document the collaborative effort of parents toward promoting healthy eating lifestyles among children with autism. Eighteen participants made up of six parents with children with autism and 12 special education teachers were interviewed on joint effort towards promoting healthy eating habits. The data were subjected to thematic analysis which showed lack of awareness among stakeholders and limited discussion between on ways to satisfy the nutritional needs of the children. The implication of the study findings for policymaking in the UAE is discussed in detail.