

Understanding Community's Perception and Willingness to Accept Fortified Foods: An Exploratory Mixed-Method Study in Sudan

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Abstract : Micronutrient malnutrition is a persistent health issue in Sudan, where food fortification has the potential to improve nutritional intake. However, community acceptance and understanding are critical to the success of fortification programs. This study aimed to explore community perspectives on food fortification in Sudan, assessing knowledge, acceptability, and misconceptions. Using a mixed-methods design, an online survey was conducted through social media, gathering responses from 1,118 participants from various demographic backgrounds. Approximately half of the respondents were not aware of what food fortification entails and there were prevalent misconceptions about food fortification, perceived health benefits, and acceptance influenced by individual beliefs and circumstances. The results highlight a considerable gap in understanding the purpose and benefits of food fortification, despite general awareness. This study underscores the need for targeted educational campaigns to address misconceptions and promote acceptance, with attention to gender and age-specific perspectives. Furthermore, the findings provide valuable insights for policymakers aiming to implement effective, culturally-sensitive food fortification initiatives and awareness campaigns in Sudan.

Keywords : food fortification, malnutrition, micronutrients, Sudan

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