OPEN ACCESS Freely available online

ISSN: 2157-7110
Journal of Food Processing & Technology

Commentary

Classical Food Fortification: Prevalence of Undernutrition and Micronutrient Deficiencies

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DESCRIPTION

Malnutrition, a serious public health issue is frequently caused by micronutrient deficiencies, especially in underdeveloped nations. Indeed, they cause a number of diseases that are either infectious or chronic, which affects both the morbidity and mortality rates of the population as well as the quality of life. As a result, this kind of malnutrition more frequently affects children and women who are in reproductive age, which increases the risk of premature death, disability, and diminished labour capability. The most effective preventive strategy against malnutrition brought on by micronutrient deficiencies is thought to be food fortification. Food fortification has long been employed as a low-cost strategy to stop micronutrient deficiency. In depth research has been done to develop food fortification in underdeveloped nations. Therefore, a cogent analysis of the efficiency of food fortification measures to improve nutritional status is required Large databases are needed to analyse the various forms of fortification in order to assess the most significant historical patterns and worldwide trends. In fact, information about the origins, effects, and difficulties of food fortification is dispersed throughout the literature, and the reviews that already exist focus on a small number of nations.

Therefore, despite the fact that information on the successes and failures of food fortification may be challenging to evaluate and compare, it is necessary to pinpoint the major contributing factors to success or failure of interventions in order to provide policymakers with useful information and aid nations in developing and implementing effective fortification programmes. The current review: (a) outlines the evolution of knowledge and expertise from traditional food fortification to food-to-food fortification; (b) evaluates the difficulties associated with food fortification; and (c) details best practises and advantages of food-to-food fortification. Malnutrition is a physiological condition marked by a low or high amount of macronutrients, micronutrients, or both, in a person's body. It also includes over nutrition, undernutrition, and micronutrient deficiencies. Many cases of obesity and overweight caused by overeating are currently being reported worldwide. In the meantime, persistent undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies have a deleterious impact on the general public's health. According to countries, undernutrition is much more or less common. Rural residents of developing nations are the ones that suffer from undernourishment the most. Micronutrient deficits are, in fact, frequently linked to low income and limited availability to nourishing foods, both of which are common in rural areas. Recent estimates place the number of persons with micronutrient deficiencies at around two billion. Around 7.3% of the world's illness burden is caused by micronutrient deficiencies among the top 15 causes of sickness around the world are iron and vitamin A deficiency. Animal products are valuable providers of minerals such iron, zinc, vitamin A, and vitamin B12 as well as protein. Sadly, most individuals in developing nations cannot afford to include these foods in their daily diets.

They consequently experience nutritional deficits. Although less well known, folic acid, vitamin D, selenium, and zinc deficits are significant as well. Particularly in developing nations, a lack of such micronutrients poses a serious threat to the health and development of the population. Nutritional deficits impact the physical and mental development of many children around the world and increase their vulnerability to infections. However, every illness, including the measles and malaria, is made worse by undernutrition. More children under the age of five die from undernutrition (53%) than from diarrhoea (61%), malaria (57%), pneumonia (52%), or measles (45%). The main groups affected by the effects of micronutrient deficiencies, such as poor pregnancy outcomes and children's stunted mental and physical development, are women and children. Undernutrition (foetal growth restriction, inadequate breastfeeding, stunting, wasting, vitamin A, iodine, zinc, iron, vitamin D deficiency, rickets, osteomalacia, and thyroid deficiency) causes up to 3.1 million-3.5 million children under the age of five and women of reproductive age living in low- and middle-income countries to perish every year. A risk factor for zinc deficiency, which has negative long-term implications on growth, immunity.

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Received: 02-Jan-2023, Manuscript No. JFPT-23-20345; **Editor assigned:** 05-Jan-2023, PreQC No. JFPT-23-20345 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 19-Jan-2023, QC No. JFPT-23-20345; **Revised:** 26-Jan-2023, Manuscript No. JFPT-23-20345 (R); **Published:** 02-Feb-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2157-7110.23.14.979

Citation: Nago F (2023) Classical Food Fortification: Prevalence of Undernutrition and Micronutrient Deficiencies. J Food Process Technol. 14:979.

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