

FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SAFETY IN THE REFUGEE CONTEXT: INTEGRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract: Introduction. In the context of international conflicts, with an emphasis on the refugee crisis in Europe, America is a possibility in a dimension of non-voluntary migration, and a welcome with protection, for many families who have lost their homes and rights as individuals belonging to a society. ***Objective.*** The objective of this study is to analyze how food and nutritional security is described in the context of the refuge, in the scientific literature, from 2011 to 2017. ***Method.*** It is an Integrative Review of the literature, a broad method of review research, which includes experimental and non-experimental research, combining data from the empirical and theoretical literature. For the search and selection of articles, the following databases were used: Scientific Electronic Library online (SciELO), Pubmed Central (PMC) and Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE). We also searched for original references in the articles identified in the November 2017 survey. ***Results.*** From the presentation of the review / synthesis of the knowledge of the available evidence, of the selected articles, emerged the themes that were organized in the categories: nutritional insecurity in the context of the refuge and factors for food insecurity. ***Conclusion.*** This research originated from the need to analyze the scientific knowledge produced on the food and nutritional security of the refugees, object of the study, in order to understand the implications of forced immigration to the state of health of the population.

Palabras clave: public health, food and nutrition security, refugees, Nutrition

INTRODUCTION

In the context of international conflicts, with an emphasis on the refugee crisis in Europe, America is a possibility in a dimension of non-voluntary migration, and a welcome with protection, for many families who have lost their homes and rights as individuals belonging to a society ².

The refugee crisis in Europe led to the search for new destinations in search of shelter, protection, escape from wars and, above all, hunger. According to UNHCR's Global Trends Report (2017), in 2016 Brazil had approximately 9,689 refugees and 35,464 pending asylum applications, ie a country with a high demand for refugee applications ³.

In addition to protection, refugee issues emerge, such as issues related to income, work, food, nutrition, and access to health services. All of these issues are directly related to Food and Nutrition Security. In 2006, the Brazilian government instituted the Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security (Law No. 11.346 / 06), which aims to seek permanent and intersectoral actions and public policies, based on the principles of food sovereignty and the human right to food ⁴. The objective of this study is to analyze how food and nutritional security is described in the context of the refuge, in the scientific literature, from 2011 to 2017.

METHOD

It is an Integrative Review of the literature, a broad method of review research, which includes experimental and non-experimental research, combining data from the empirical and theoretical literature. According to Galvão et al. (2004), "an important resource of practice based on evidence" ⁵ In order to conduct the integrative review, the following questions were raised: "How is access to safe food and nutrition for refugees given?" And "Do food and nutrition policies ensure food security for refugees?"

For the search and selection of articles, the following databases were used: Scientific Electronic Library online (SciELO), Pubmed Central (PMC) and Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE). We also searched for original references in the articles identified in the November 2017 survey.

The following descriptors were used in the review process: "food and nutrition security", "refugees" and "Nutrition", for the tracking of key words according to the base, DECs, Mesh and Titles respectively. In order to combine the descriptors, in the different search strategies, initially the OR operator was used, which increased the search without obtaining the expected result, articles that portrayed the actuation / insertion of the obstetric nurse in the delivery scenario. In this way, the AND operator was chosen to combine the descriptors. The inclusion criteria of the selected publications, established for the present review were: articles published in Portuguese and English, made available in full in the databases between 2011 and 2017. It should be noted that in 2011 the Syrian Civil War broke out , which continues to the present day, leading to a large population migration, according to the latest United Nations Trends Report (2017). ⁴. The main theme is the food and nutrition of refugees. The exclusion criteria established were: theses, dissertations, monographs, editorials, manuals, books, book chapters, or articles that did not make the content fully available. 40 articles were found, of which only 4 met the established inclusion criteria.

RESULTS

Tabla 1 Synthesis of publications included in the integrative review, according to the article title, methods, level of evidence, main results and conclusions

Paper	Country	Idiom	Level of evidence	Year of publication
Conflict and health	Estados Unidos	Inglês	II	2016
1. Title	Nutritional situation among Syrian refugees hosted in Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon: cross sectional surveys			
Professional category	Nutricionistas			
Method	Representative cross-sectional surveys of Syrian refugees were conducted between October 2 and November 30, 2013 in Lebanon, April 12 and May 1, 2014 in Jordan, and May 20 and 31, 2013 in Iraq. For all surveys, ENA for SMART software 2011 (Version: Aug. 4, 2014) [28] was used to generate standardized zscores based on the 2006 WHO Growth Standards and analyze anthropometry data [24]. Additional variables were analyzed with EPI INFO 3.5.3 software, SPSS version 17.0, and STATA/IC 13.1. Ninety-five percent confidence intervals were calculated adjusting for the complex survey design. Significance was tested adjusting for clustering using the procedure described by Donner et al. [29] A p-value <0.05 was considered statistically significant.			
Results	The prevalence of global acute malnutrition among children 6 to 59 months of age was less than 5 % in all samples (range 0.3–4.4 %). Prevalence of acute malnutrition among women 15 to 49 years of age, defined as mid-upper arm circumference less than 23.0 cm, was also relatively low in all surveys (range 3.5–6.5 %). For both children and non-pregnant women, anemia prevalence was highest in Za’atri camp in Jordan (48.4 % and 44.8 %, respectively). Most anemia was mild or moderate; prevalence of severe anemia was less than or equal to 1.1 % in all samples of children and women.			
Recommendations / conclusions	Despite the ongoing conflict, results from all surveys indicate that global acute malnutrition is relatively low in the assessed Syrian refugee populations. However, prevalence of anemia suggests a serious public health problem among women and children, especially in Za’atri camp. Based on these findings, nutrition partners in the region have reprioritized response interventions, focusing on activities to address micronutrient deficiencies such as food fortification.			
Paper journal Immigrant Minority Health	Country Canadá	Idiom Inglês	Level of evidence IV	Year of publication 2013
2. Title	Acculturation and Nutritional Health of Immigrants in Canada: A Scoping Review			
Professional	Nutricionista			

category				
Method	Scoping review to identify knowledge gaps and research priorities related to immigrant nutritional health.			
Results	A total of 49 articles were retrieved and reviewed using electronic databases and a stakeholder consultation was undertaken to consolidate findings. Overall, research tends to confirm the Healthy Immigrant Effect and suggests that significant knowledge gaps in nutritional health persist, thereby creating a barrier to the advancement of health promotion and the achievement of maximum health equity			
Recommendations / conclusions	Five research priorities were identified including (1) risks and benefits associated with traditional/ethnic foods; (2) access and outreach to immigrants; (3) mechanisms and coping strategies for food security; (4) mechanisms of food choice in immigrant families; and (5) health promotion strategies that work for immigrant populations.			
Paper	Country	Idiom	Level of evidence	Year of Publication
Aust N Z J Public Health	Austrália	Inglês	IV	2015
3. Title	Food security among asylum seekers in Melbourne			
Professional category	Serviço Social			
Method	Structured person- assisted questionnaires were conducted with 56 asylum seekers. The questionnaires examined issues around access to food, cultural appropriateness of available food, transport issues, use of the ASRC Foodbank and questions about general health.			
Results	Findings suggest that: 1) almost all asylum seekers in this study were food insecure; 2) most of the asylum seekers using the ASRC Foodbank have no access to food other than that provided at the centre; and 3) the reason that most asylum seekers are food insecure is related to structural problems associated with limitations imposed by different visas.			
Recommendations / conclusions	The ability of asylum seekers to achieve food security is limited by their restricted access to welfare and government or work- related income. Given that the current policy situation is likely to continue, providers such as the ASRC will find continuing demands on their services and increasing pressures to provide more than a 'supplemental' food supply.			
Paper	Country	Idiom	Level of evidence	Year of Publication
Nutrition Research and practice	Korea	Inglês	II	2017
4. Title	Changes in body weight and food security of adult North Korean refugees living in South Korea			

Professional category	Nutritionist
Method	This study analyzed data on 149 adult NKR from a North Korean refugee health in SK cohort at four time points (leaving North Korea, entering SK, first examination, and second examination). Body weight was self-reported at the two earlier time points and directly measured at the two later time points. Food security, diet-related behaviors (dietary habits and food consumption), and sociodemographic information were obtained using a self-administered questionnaire. Nutrient intake information was obtained by one-day 24-hour recall. Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS ver 23.0.
Results	Body weight increased during relocation by an average of 4 kg, although diversified patterns were observed during the settlement period in SK. Approximately 39.6% of subjects maintained their body weight between the first and second examinations, whereas 38.6% gained and 22.1% lost at least 3% of their body weight at the first examination by the second examination. Food security status improved from 12.1% food secure proportion to 61.7%. NKR showed generally good food and nutrient consumption (index of nutrient quality: 0.77-1.93). The body weight loss group showed the most irregular meal consumption pattern ($P < 0.05$), and eating-out was infrequent in all three groups. Consumption frequencies of food groups did not differ by group, except in the fish group ($P = 0.036$).
Recommendations / conclusions	This study observed considerable body weight adjustment during the settlement period in SK after initial weight gain, whereas food security consistently improved. More detailed understanding of this process is needed to assist healthy settlement for NKR in SK.

The presentation of the data and discussion of the results was done in a descriptive and comparative manner, based on pertinent literature of the subject aiming to meet the objective of the study. Regarding the professional category of the authors, it should be noted that 75% of the selected publications were authored by Nutritionists. Regarding the language of the articles, all were English-speaking. The diversity of the authors' origins leads to a worldwide concern with the issue of refugees. From the presentation of the review / synthesis of the knowledge of the available evidence, of the selected articles, emerged the themes that were organized in the categories: **nutritional insecurity in the context of the refuge and factors for food insecurity**.

Nutritional insecurity in the context of the Refuge: Two articles ^{6,9} present results from population studies, where the nutritional state of the individuals shows food insecurity, either by the increase in weight gain and consequently in the increase of the body mass index category. Be it for the presentation of diseases related to malnutrition, such as anemia in refugee children.

Factors for food insecurity

Two articles ^{7,8} present the predisposing factors to food insecurity, one through literature review and the other through semi-structured interviews with refugees. According to both articles, among the factors that lead to food insecurity and lack of health promotion are: (1) risks and benefits related to traditional / ethnic foods; (2) access and offer to immigrants; (3) coping mechanisms and strategies for food security; (4) food choice mechanisms in immigrant families; and (5) health promotion strategies that work for immigrant populations.

CONCLUSIONS

This research originated from the need to analyze the scientific knowledge produced on the food and nutritional security of the refugees, object of the study, in order to understand the implications of forced immigration to the state of health of the population. The exodus of the Syrian population alarmed for a fragility in the nations: how to guarantee a structure to accept refugees. Several concentration camps were established in such a diaspora. However, the right to food and safe nutrition is one of the main questions about refugees. In this way the research met the established objective, finding as a limitation the scarcity of national and international studies on the subject.

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