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Entitled

*THE PREVALENCE, PREDICTORS, ATTITUDE, AND KNOWLEDGE OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENT USE
AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES*

by

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Abstract

An adequate diet, with proper nutrients, is key to a healthy life. However, managing an adequate diet with a proper intake of nutrients is difficult. Therefore, dietary supplements (DS) represent an important source of essential nutrients which often help maintain a healthy intake of required nutrients. However, there is limited knowledge about supplement usage among the younger generation. The main objective of this research study was to analyze the usage, knowledge, and attitude toward dietary supplementation among university students in the United Arab Emirates. The current research adopted a cross-sectional design. Participants completed a valid and reliable online questionnaire (Cronbach's alpha = 0.797). A self-completed questionnaire was obtained from 685 participants (568 female), the questionnaire was composed of 4 sections, that included questions about demographics, knowledge, attitude, and practice in relation to the use of dietary supplements. The findings showed that 67.7% of participants were DS users, 92.3% knew what DS is, and only 41.9 % consumed DS based on a doctor's prescription. Also, the majority of participants had good knowledge (50.2%), neutral attitudes (46.1%), and moderate-risk for practices (61.0%). Females showed a higher level of knowledge. The findings also showed that Vitamin D was the most used supplement (73.7%). Findings from regression analysis showed that female participants were 2.008 times more likely to use DS, and athletes were 2.432 times more likely to use DS. The findings of the study concluded that university students' usage of dietary supplements is not related to their knowledge and attitudes toward dietary supplements. The results suggest that nutrition education is required to improve awareness of DSs and to promote safe practices.

Keywords: Dietary Supplement, Wellbeing, Knowledge, Undergraduate Students