



## **TITLE: STUDY OF FOOD PROFILE AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN IN THE PERI-URBAN AREA OF CASABLANCA, MOROCCO**

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### **ABSTRACT (upto 300 words)**

Childhood stunting is a major public health concern in both developed and developing countries. It is the consequence of malnutrition during the first years of life and the preconception period. It represents a socio-medical problem, it can present the first sign of a pathology and which can jeopardize a vital and functional prognosis of the child, also it can even become complicated with a small height in adulthood. This study focuses on the impact of eating behaviors, habits, and lifestyle on the stunting of 219 children aged 7 to 12 in the peri-urban area of Casablanca, Morocco. The sampling involved 219 children aged 7 to 12 from the region of Tit mellil "peri-urban area of Casablanca, Morocco. All participants completed a CAP Scoring Assessment Questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: food groups, eating behaviour and lifestyle. The height measurement was carried out by a vertical measuring rod, the weight and the BMI using an impedance meter (krada scan). Body status was assessed by comparing BMI to WHO 2008 reference standards. The study involved 219 children (including 125 girls and 94 boys), the mean age was  $9.53 \pm 1.48$ , The prevalence of different height per age classes according to sex showed that the prevalence of growth normal and stunting is respectively 96% and 4% according to WHO (2008). The prevalence of stunting is very high in girls than boys, representing 3% and 1%

Respectively. While the distribution according to age shows a high prevalence of stunting with percentages of 0.9% and in children aged 9 and 12 years. Several characteristics differentiate children with a stunting and normal growth child:). Children with a stunting are less likely than normal growth children to eat breakfast often (1.83% versus 37.9% without reaching significance). 0.91% never take it, also 1.83% of children with stunting drink 6 to 8 glasses of water per day ( $p=0.009$ ). In Morocco stunting prevalence is variable, with prevalence of 16.02% according to WHO standards in children aged less than 5 years (Sellam et al., 2015). The stunting estimated at 4% according to the 2008 WHO references, hence the interest of implementing a preventive strategy in order to slow the progression of this problem is necessary. Accordingly, the promotion of a healthy diet.

### **BIOGRAPHY (upto 200 words)**

Dr. MAKHLOUKI Houria studied Biology and Health at Ben M'Sik Faculty of Science, Hassan II University, Morocco, she had her Master's Degree in 2014. She then joined the research group of Prof. DEROUICHE Abdelfettah at Nutrition Research Unit, Laboratory of Biology and Health, at the same University. She received her PhD degree in 2023 at the same institution. She has published more than 8 research articles in SCI(E) journals. and more than 60 national and international communication.



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