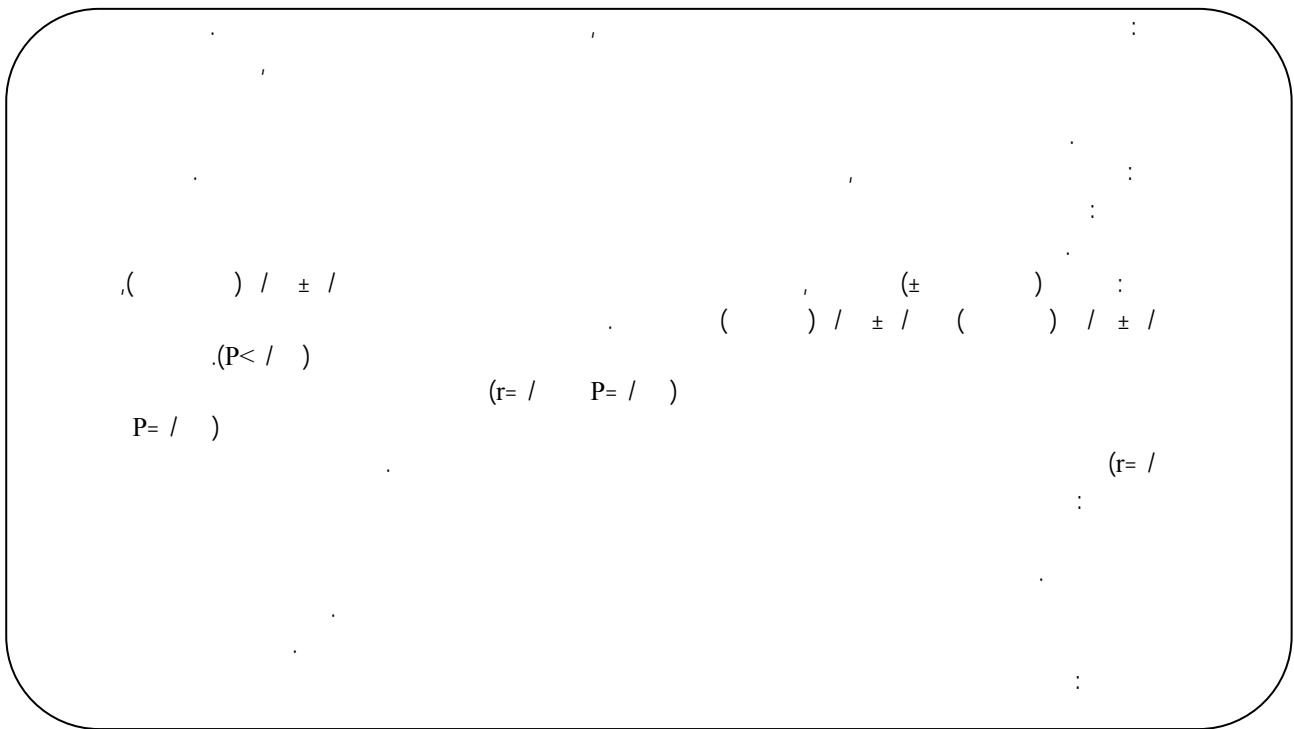


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A Survey on knowledge, attitude and practice of interns regarding nutrition in Kerman Medical University

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Background: Inappropriate nutrition has an important role in many pathological conditions, including such common diseases as diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular diseases. Despite the recognition that physicians are often called upon to provide counseling in nutritional aspects of diseases, nutrition does not hold the place it deserves in medical schools' curricula, especially in clinical and case-based teaching.

Objective: The aim of this study was to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice of interns in Kerman Medical University regarding the nutrition.

Methods: Self-administered questionnaires, including 29 questions and in a cross-sectional study were completed by 105 interns.

Results: The mean knowledge, attitude and practice scores were 6.93 ± 1.89 (out of 14), 15.50 ± 3.54 (out of 40) and 1.48 ± 1.58 (out of 7), respectively. There were no significant differences in knowledge and practice scores between males and females, but male interns had higher score in attitude ($P < 0.05$). We detected a statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge and attitude ($r = 0.22$, $P = 0.023$), so that the higher knowledge level, the higher attitude score.

A significant negative relationship was observed between interns' attitudes and their practices ($r = -0.33$, $P = 0.001$). Despite good attitude concerning nutrition principles, their practice scores were undesirable.

Conclusion: The results of this study indicate that there are serious defects in the knowledge of the interns concerning the principles of nutrition. Furthermore, their attitudes and practices about nutrition are undesirable. Considering the importance of proper nutrition for good health and treatment and prevention of disease, there is a need for improvement of nutritional knowledge in future doctors. This requires careful planning and curricula changes to include the principles and practice of nutrition. In other words, nutrition needs to be re-evaluated and properly integrated into the medical school's curriculum.

Key words: Nutrition, knowledge, attitude, practice, intern, medical education

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