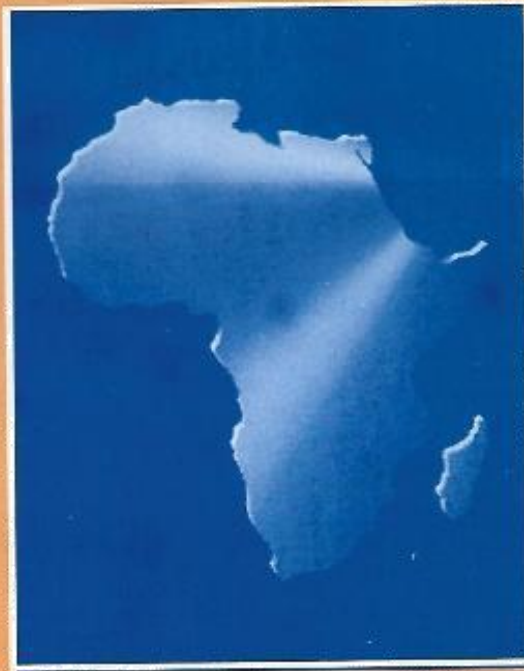


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OBESITY AND ITS ASSOCIATED PROBLEM ON HEALTH: A CASE STUDY OF IKA METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on obesity and its associated problems for health. The study was carried out in Ika Metropolis, Delta State, Nigeria. The sample consisted of one hundred adults. Purposive sampling was used. The study was guided by two research questions. The instrument for collecting the data was a structured 15 questionnaires data as analysed using the mean rating. Based on the findings of the study, six recommendations were made, among which are: (1) Nutritional education should be made compulsory in primary and secondary schools to enable pupils and students to modify their eating habits and teach all members of their household so as to avoid the health problems of obesity. (2) Since vigorous exercise helps the body burn more calories, it should be adopted to keep physically active. There should be public awareness about the importance of balancing calorie intake with expenditure. (4) The public should be enlightened about the various types of health problems associated with obesity.

Keywords: obesity, associated problems, health, case study, metropolis.

INTRODUCTION

Obesity is a major public health issue, contributing substantially to the total mortality rate. Obesity is different from other serious diseases. It occurs as a result of unhealthy eating. The World Health Organization (1992) defined obesity as the accumulation of excessive fat in the adipose tissues. It is a form of malnutrition that can lead to serious health problems, such as cardiovascular disease. The University of Maryland Medical Center sees obesity as having an abnormally high proportion of body fat. It occurs

when there is an imbalance between energy intake and expenditure. According to Ogowewe (1996), obesity is caused by excessive food intake, which results when more joules are taken in from food than work (basal metabolism). Obesity occurs when the amount of food consumed each day provides more units of energy than energy expended to maintain the body's mechanisms, and in the general activities of the day and the demands of muscular activity in work and sport, a proportion of the surplus energy in the diet is stored as fat (Lsenalumhe, 2007). Eating plenty of food that contains a lot of calories, such as fat, is likely to bring about rapid weight gain. The fact is that any food type—protein, carbohydrates, or fat—that is consumed more than what the body requires is changed to glucose or body sugar for use as energy or changed to fat for storage if more than needed for energy. Any food, irrespective of the type, that is eaten in excess of what the body needs or eaten late at night before going to bed without exercising will lead to weight gain or obesity, so there is nothing like weight gain without eating. Anyone who does not want to gain weight or really wants to lose weight should eliminate snacks as a first step, then avoid the habit of drinking soda and other soft drinks. The average bottle of mineral or soft drink contains over 200 calories. Alcohol is another source of weight gain. While carbohydrates and protein deliver about four calories per gram, alcohol provides over seven calories per gram, next to fat that provides over nine calories. Isenalumhe (2007). Awake (2004) stated that an obese person weighs at least 70 percent more than the desirable weight for his or her height. Overweight implies that an extra burden is then placed on the working capability of the various organic systems in the body, and thus the coping ability of the cardiovascular system, renal system, and muscle-skeletal system is reduced. Akinrogunde (2008) stated that there is a lower risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers in people with Body Mass Index (BMI) values of 21 to 25. The risks increase slightly when BMI values are between 25 and 27. They are significant in BMI between 27 and 30, and are dramatic over 30. Awake (2004) sees BMI as a height-to-weight ratio that can help to define whether a person is overweight or is already obese. If one's BMI is between 25 and 29.9, then he or she is overweight. Anything over a BMI of 30 is considered obese. Health risks from excess weight begin when the BMI exceeds 25 (National Centre for Chronic Disease, Prevention, and Health Promotion, 2005). Anykoha (1991) stated that when one is sufficiently overweight, he feels tired and breathless, and it also diminishes a person's personality and reduces fitness as well as vitality. According to Akinrogunde (2008), obesity is a risk factor for heart disease, high blood

pressure, coronary artery disease, diabetes, stroke, gallbladder disease, and osteoarthritis. Respiratory disorders and certain types of cancer. People who are obese have almost three times the risk for heart disease as people with a normal weight. The weight that is concentrated around the abdomen and in the upper part of the body poses a higher health risk than the fat that settles in a pear shape around the hips and flanks. Fat cells in the upper part of the body appear to have different qualities from those found in the lower parts: Isenalumhe (2007). Obese people with high blood pressure are also at increased risk for enlargement of the left heart chamber, a major risk factor for heart failure. The risk for stone formation is however also high in obese women and men. When one is obese, every additional pound gain is a step closer to coronary heart disease and eventually a heart attack. If one does not balance energy input and output and becomes obese. So if you do not want to develop coronary heart disease, you must avoid being overweight or you will have an attack sooner or later. In order not to be obese, one has to eat moderately, no matter the food type. Beside the fact that alcohol, soda, or soft drinks provide only calories and no other nutrients to the body, their intake should be minimal or totally avoided on a weight-control diet in order to avoid becoming obese.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to find out food habits and the associated problems of obesity in the Agbor metropolis. Specifically, the study was designed to examine:

1. the causes of obesity; and
2. the health problems that are associated with obesity

METHODOLOGY

Population for the Study

The area of the study is Agbor metropolis, which is made up of Ika South Local Government Area and Ika North East Local Government Area in Delta State. The study was carried out in Ika South and Ika North East urban towns. The population of the study comprised all adults within the two local government areas.

A Sample of the Study

A purposive sampling technique was used to select 100 subjects from the two local government areas.

Instrument

A questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents. The questionnaire was in two sections. Section A contains the demographic information concerning the respondents, while Section B contains items structured so that the respondents expressed their opinion on a 5-point Likert scale of strongly agreed (SA). Agreed (A). Undecided (UD), Disagreed (D), or Strongly Disagreed (SD) The instrument was developed and duly validated. The reliability of the instrument was obtained using Crombach Alpha, which yields a coefficient of 68.6.

Data Collection Techniques and Analysis

100 copies of the instrument were personally administered to the respondents by the researchers with the help of research assistants. All the questionnaires were filled out and collected on the spot. The 100 copies of the questionnaires administered were also collected, giving a return rate of 100%. Methods were used to determine the level of agreement on the items in relation to the two research questions. The nominal values assigned to the levels of agreements are as follows: the respondents by the researcher and with the

Research Question 1

What are the causes of obesity?

Table 1: Respondent means rating on the causes of obesity

S/N	Item	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
1	Does one's life style lead to obesity	3.07	1.16	A
2	Does lack of exercise cause obesity?	4.30	1.41	A
3	Is obesity genetic?	3.92	1.03	A

4	Fruit drinks aid digestion, so excessive consumption of fruits should be encouraged	4.65	1.64	A
5	Consumption of soda or soft drinks daily or days interval is good because it is refreshing	4.42	.69	A
6	The consumption of alcoholic drinks should be encourage because it makes one feel high and less worry	4.47	.89	A
7	Heavy consumption of carbohydrate foods should be encourage because it makes one's more energetic	4.11	1.12	A
8	Heavy consumption of proteinous food should encourage because it build and repair body tissue	3.54	1.12	A
9	Consumption of fast food including snacks should be encourage because they are convenient food	4.47	1.25	A
10	Dinner should be eaten from 6p.m because it is the ideal time to get all family member	3.19	0.64	A

Table 1 showed that all the items had means scores above 3.5 which was the criterion level for acceptance. It showed that obesity is caused due to ignorance, one's life-style, genetics and lack of exercise

Research Question 2

What are the health problems that are associated with obesity?

Table 2:

S/N	Item	\bar{x}	SD	Remark
1	Obese are more liable to high blood pressure	4.65	1.64	A
2	Obese are more likely to develop arthritis	4.51	1.49	A
3	Obese have more risk for hear disease	4.17	1.19	A
5	Is diabetes a health problem of obesity?	4.61	64	A
6	Obese are more likely to have sleep apnea and breathing problem.	4.38	50	A

Table II showed that all the items had mean scores above 3.5, which was the criterion level of acceptance, showing that the problems listed were all identified by the respondents as problems associated with obesity.

Discussion of the findings

The findings of the study showed that obesity is caused by ignorance in food consumption (a poor diet), one's life-style, genetics, and lack of exercise. So to avoid being obese, one has to balance energy input and output by adopting healthy eating habits, doing regular exercise, and modifying one's lifestyle. One has to eat moderately, no matter the food type, because any food, irrespective of type, that is eaten in excess of what the body needs will lead to obesity or weight gain. According to Ogowewe (1996), obesity is caused by excessive food intake, which results when more joules are taken in from food than work. basal metabolism Isenalumhe (2007) stated that to avoid being obese, one should eliminate snacks as a first step, then avoid the habitual drinking of soda and other soft drinks since the average bottle of mineral or soft drink contains over 200 calories. He said that alcohol is another source of weight gain. While carbohydrates and protein deliver about four calories per gram, alcohol provides over seven calories per gram, next to fat, which provides over nine calories. Besides, there should be a balance between energy intake and energy expenditure by exercising the body, especially the sedentary worker who does very little outdoor activity; they hop from their cars into the office, and as a result, they become obese because energy intake is not balanced with energy output. The results in Table 2 revealed that obesity is associated with so many health problems. This is in line with Akinrogunce (2008), who stated that obesity is a risk factor for heart disease and high blood pressure. Coronary artery disease, diabetes, stroke, and certain types of cancer People who are obese have almost three times the risk for heart disease as people with a normal weight. Anyakoha (1991) also stated that when one is obese, one feels tired and breathless, and it also diminishes the person's personality and reduces fitness as well as vitality. Since obesity is associated with so many health problems and there is nothing like gaining weight without eating, one has to adopt healthy eating habits and regularly exercise in order to balance energy intake.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed the causes and health problems associated with obesity in the urban town of Agbor Metropolis, which are due to their life-style, genetics, ignorance in the food consumption, and lack of exercise. So there is a need for choosing a healthful diet and eating in moderation no matter the food types, making appropriate food selections, and adopting a regular exercise regimen since exercise helps the heart to work more vigorously and reduces deposition of fat in the arteries. In addition to a diet and exercise programme and social support from friends and family, it is also important to obtain appropriate professional guidance for any dietary and exercise regimen (especially early on) as it will ensure that weight is lost safely and in a controlled manner. When the above is done, one will reap the wonderful benefits of being healthier and happier.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. First and foremost, nutrition education should be made compulsory in secondary and primary schools to enable students and pupils to modify their eating habits and also teach all members of their household so as to avoid the health problem of obesity.
2. Nutrition education should be extended to the communities through various mosques, churches, mass media, newspapers, etc. to encourage individuals to eat a healthy diet.
3. There should be public awareness about individuals weighing themselves regularly (try to do it once a week, at the same time, and on the same scale) in order to know when there is any slight increase in weight.
4. Since vigorous exercise helps the body burn more calories, it should be adopted to keep physically active.
5. The public should be informed about the various types of health problems associated with obesity.
6. There should be public awareness about the importance of balancing calorie intake with expenditure.

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