

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING OBESITY AMONG ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN SELECTED SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

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ABSTRACT

*Obesity in teenagers is a growing problem that has worsened in recent times. Adolescent obesity also known as, "New World Syndrome" is a global health challenge of the 21st century. **Objectives:** The present study was conducted to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding obesity among adolescent students of selected senior secondary schools. **Methods:** This was a descriptive cross sectional study conducted among adolescent students of classes 11th and 12th in Govt. Senior Sec. School, Amritsar in July 2015. In total, there were 100 students. A pretested self-administered questionnaire and Likert scale was used to collect data. **Results:** 24 % of adolescents had below average knowledge on obesity, 73% had average knowledge, and remaining 3% had good knowledge regarding obesity. 53% of adolescents have negative attitude while 47 % had positive attitude towards obesity. There was significant association of knowledge with diet and attitude with residence among adolescents. **Conclusion:** The present study revealed that majority of the adolescent students had average knowledge and negative attitude, so there is a need for targeted activities to improve the knowledge and attitude of the students towards obesity.*

Key words: Knowledge, Attitude, Adolescent students, Obesity.

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INTRODUCTION

Obesity and overweight have in the last decade become a global problem - according to the World Health Organization (WHO) back in 2005 approximately 1.6 billion adults over the age of 15+ were overweight, at least 400 million adults were obese and at least 20 million children under the age of 5 years were overweight. Experts believe if the current trends continue by 2015 approximately 2.3 billion adults will be overweight and more than 700 million will be obese. The scale of the obesity problem has a number of serious consequences for individuals and government health systems.¹

Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health. Body mass index (BMI) is a simple index of weight-for-height that is commonly used to classify overweight and obesity in adults. It is defined as a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of his height in meters. For adults, WHO defines overweight as a BMI greater than or equal to 25; and obesity as a BMI greater than or equal to 30. BMI provides the most useful population-level measure of overweight and obesity as it is the same for both sexes and for all ages of adults. However, it should be considered a rough guide because it may not correspond to the same degree of fatness in different individuals. The prevalence of overweight and obesity among children and adolescents aged 5-19 has risen dramatically from just 4% in 1975 to just over 18% in 2016. The rise has occurred similarly among both boys and girls: in 2016, 18% of girls and 19% of boys were overweight.²

Obesity is associated with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease in adolescents. The prevalence of fatty liver is estimated to be 38% in obese children and adolescents (2–19 years), with the highest risk noted in Hispanic youths followed by Asian, white, and black youth. Because nonalcoholic fatty liver disease is associated with insulin resistance, dyslipidemia, and hypertension, adolescents with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease should be evaluated for each of these conditions. The natural history of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease in adolescents is not well-described, although it may lead to fibrosis, cirrhosis, and liver failure in some cases.³

Need of the Study: Many factors contribute to the development of obesity. These include diet, genetic predisposition, physical activities, physiological and behavioral factors. It is a major risk factor for type 2 diabetes mellitus, hypertension, stroke, coronary heart diseases, gall bladder diseases, arthritis, colon cancer, psychological problems and so on. Adolescents having more choices or taste towards the junk foods, when compared to healthy foods being unaware of the ill-health of those yummy items they choose. Hence the gap in knowledge is growing risks that necessitate the need to systematically investigate the knowledge of obesity among adolescent. Based on the findings health education programmes can be conducted in different settings like schools and colleges. This challenged the researcher to explore the importance of knowledge and attitudes of adolescent regarding obesity, and to impart the knowledge regarding obesity and its consequences. It is also anticipated that this study may increase awareness among adolescent regarding obesity.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge of adolescents students regarding obesity.
2. To assess the attitude of adolescents students regarding obesity.
3. To determine the relationship between knowledge and attitude of adolescents students regarding obesity.
4. To find out the association among knowledge and attitude of Adolescents students with selected socio-demographic variables.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

"A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING OBESITY AMONG ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN SELECTED SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF AMRITSAR, PUNJAB."

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research approach: For the present study, the non-experimental research approach was used.

Research Design: For the present study, descriptive research design is utilized to achieve the objectives of study.

Setting of the study: The study was conducted in S.B. senior secondary school, Chheharta Amritsar.

Population: All adolescent students who were studying in 10+1 and 10+2 class in S.B. senior secondary school during data collection time.

Sample Size: Sample size is 100.

Sample Technique: Convenient sampling.

Development of tool: Based on objectives, a structured questionnaire was prepared to assess the knowledge of adolescents regarding obesity and 5 point Likert scale for attitude towards obesity among adolescents with a view to develop an information booklet in selected school of Amritsar, Punjab.

The steps are selected for preparing the tools:

- Review of related literature.
- Preparation of the blue print.
- Consultation with guide
- Preparation of final drafts
- Translation of the tool.

PROCEDURE:

The investigator selected 100 subjects who are studying in S.B. senior secondary school Chheharta, Amritsar district of Punjab. The simple random sampling was utilized for selecting the samples. After obtaining permission from Principal and taking informed consent from subjects, data collection was done in the month of July 2015 using self-structured questionnaire and 5 point Likert scale distributed to all subjects. A good rapport was established with the subjects. The time taken by the each respondent for filling the tool was average 20-25 minutes. The sample subjects were actively participated.

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Sample Characteristics**N = 100**

S. No	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age (In years)		
	14-15	20	20
	16-17	64	64
	18-19	16	16
2.	Class		
	10+1	50	50
	10+2	50	50
3.	Diet		
	Vegetarian	60	60
	Non-vegetarian	40	40
4.	Place of Living		
	Rural	28	28
	Urban	72	72
5.	Type of Family		
	Nuclear	54	54
	Joint	46	46
6.	Family income (Rs/month)		
	Below 5000	52	52
	5001- 20000	34	34
	Above 20001	14	14
7.	Source of information		
	Internet/TV/Radio	60	60
	Health personnel	24	24
	Newspaper/	16	16

FINDINGS:**Description of sample characteristics**

Table showed that most of the samples (64%) were in the age group of 16-17. Half of the samples (50%) was from 10+1 and other half (50%) was from 10+2 class. Highest percentage (52%) of samples had family income below 5000. Majority (72%) of samples were from the urban areas. Majority (56%) of samples were from the Nuclear family. Majority (60%) of samples were vegetarian.

Frequency, Percentage and mean of level of knowledge scores of adolescents on obesity.**N=100**

Level of Knowledge	n	%	Mean	SD
Good Knowledge (>75%)	3	3		
Average Knowledge (50-74%)	73	73	16.95	4.108
Below Average Knowledge (<50%)	24	24		

Table depicts that out of 100 adolescents, majority (73%) samples are having average knowledge, (24%) samples are having below average knowledge and (3%) are having good knowledge on obesity.

Frequency, Percentage and mean of attitude of adolescents regarding obesity.

N=100

Attitude	n	%	Mean	SD
Favorable Attitude	47	47		
Unfavorable Attitude	53	53	70.66	8.56

Table shows that (53%) samples are having Unfavourable attitude and (47%) are having adequately favourable attitude regarding obesity.

Correlation between Knowledge and Attitude regarding obesity among adolescents.

N=100

Variables	Mean	SD	Coefficient of correlation (r)
Knowledge	16.95	4.11	
Attitude	70.66	8.59	0.165 ^{NS}

Table represents the co-relation between knowledge and attitude regarding obesity among adolescents were not correlated to each other. The co-efficient of correlation was calculated 0.165 which was statistically non-significant at p value >0.05.

Limitations and Recommendations:

The study is limited to adolescents in selected schools.

1. The study is limited to 100 samples.
2. The study recommendations are the following:

A similar study may be conducted on larger samples at different areas for generalize findings. An experimental study can be undertaken with control group. An experimental study can be undertaken with control group to analyses the effectiveness of structured teaching program towards obesity among the adolescents. A comparative study can be conducted by comparing the knowledge and Attitude of adolescence and adulthood people towards obesity. A comparative study can be conducted by comparing the knowledge and Attitude among male and female adolescents towards obesity.

DISCUSSIONS:

This study is conducted to determine knowledge and attitude regarding obesity among adolescents. The correlations between knowledge and attitude results show that the calculated correlation coefficient (r) was 0.165 with P Value 0.500, which shows that there was no correlation between knowledge and attitude. The research findings were supported by Ranjit Kaur, Samuel (2014) who conducted a study to assess determines knowledge and attitude regarding obesity among adolescents. It was found that the correlation between knowledge and attitude results show that there was moderately negative. The associations between the knowledge level and socio demographic variables are found to be significant with diet habits. Further the findings of the study also reveal that association between the knowledge level and age, family income, type of family are found to be statistically non-significant. The associations between the attitude level and socio demographic variables are found to be significant with respect to area of residence. Further the findings of the study also reveal that association between the attitude level and age, class, family income, dietary habits are found to be statistically non-significant. The research findings were inconsistent by Titi Xavier Mangalathi (2015) who conducted a study to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding obesity among adolescents of Sikar, Rajasthan. It was found that there is significant association between level of knowledge with regard to their age, gender, area of residence and family income.

CONCLUSION:

The study revealed that majority of adolescents had average knowledge, so it is important to increase the knowledge of adolescents to prevent obesity.

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