



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE REGARDING UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND OBESITY AMONG STUDENTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

A study to assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid-19 pandemic in Kerala. The objectives of the study were to: a) to assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle among students during covid-19 pandemic in Kerala. b) to assess the knowledge regarding obesity among students during covid-19 pandemic in Kerala. c) to find out the association between knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle with selected demographic variables. d) to find out the association between knowledge regarding obesity with selected demographic variables. A quantitative approach was used with descriptive research design. Purposive sampling technique was used. Sample size was 100. The investigator assessed sample's knowledge using structured questionnaire regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students. The finding of the study suggests that the knowledge questionnaire was effective in increasing the knowledge of students regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge, Unhealthy lifestyle, Obesity, Students, Covid-19 pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

Obesity is a health condition that occurs when a person carries excess weight or body fat, which has been associated with the increased risk of many chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

The global prevalence of overweight and obesity has been more than 1.9 billion in adults, 38 million in children under the age of five, and over 340 million in children and adolescents aged 5-19. To curb the obesity epidemic globally, access to healthy environments has been promoted by multiple stakeholders in the past, in order to encourage the healthy lifestyles.^[2]

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has had far-reaching health, social, and economic implications. Among them is the abrupt cessation of school programs for children and adolescents in Italy who by mandate had to remain in their homes during the "lockdown" aimed at containing and mitigating spread of COVID-19. There are reasons to be concerned about housebound children and adolescents who have overweight and obesity; previous studies have supported the hypothesis that these youths will fare worse on weight-control lifestyle programs while at home

compared with when they are engaged in their usual school curriculum.^[3]

The higher consumption of processed foods with higher caloric content, high in saturated fats, sugars, and refined carbohydrates, greater durability, easier access and use, especially in children, can contribute to increase the prevalence of obesity in the times of COVID-19. Still, staying home can be a great opportunity to promote healthy eating and prevent obesity, when people are cooking more, buying more fresh and unpackaged foods than before the pandemic, and are more prone to change in eating habits. Some studies demonstrated that consuming homemade foods and having cooking skills are important to the ingestion of a healthy diet and the maintenance of proper nutritional status.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"A study to assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid 19 pandemic in Kerala."

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle among students during covid-19 pandemic in Kerala.
2. To assess the knowledge regarding obesity among students during Covid-19 pandemic in Kerala.

3. To find out the association between knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle with selected demographic variables.
4. To find out the association between knowledge regarding obesity with selected demographic variables.

Operational definition

1. **ASSESS:** In this study, the term assess refers to the knowledge regarding healthy lifestyle and overweight among students during covid-19 lockdown.
2. **KNOWLEDGE:** In this study, knowledge refers to the scores obtained by the students on knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity.
3. **UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE:** In this study, unhealthy lifestyle refers to school children engages in activities like eating too much or too fast, spending too many hours in front of the TV, lack of

exercises, eating unhealthy foods, and not maintaining a healthy weight.

4. **OBESITY:** In this study, obesity refers to state of being well above one's normal weight (body mass index more than 30).
5. **STUDENTS:-** In this study, students refers to the children between the age group of 10-15 years.
6. **COVID 19 PANDEMIC:-** It refers to an global pandemic of corona virus disease caused by SARS-CoV-2.

METHODOLOGY

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design adopted for this study was non experimental survey design. The present study was conducted in areas of Kerala. The sample consisted of 100 students between the age group of 10-15 years who have fulfilled the inclusion criteria for the study. Convenient sampling technique was used in this study.

Research approach	Quantitative approach
Research design	Non Experimental Survey design
Variables	➤ DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES Demographic variables comprised of sex, height, weight, source of information, weight gain ➤ DEPENDENT VARIABLES In this study dependent variables is the knowledge of students regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity.
Setting of the study	Virtual setting through Google form.
Population	100 students in Kerala.
Sample	100 students in Kerala.
Sample Size	100 students between the age group of 10-15 years in Kerala
Sampling Technique	Convenience sampling technique

RESULTS

The analysis of the data has been organized and presented under the following headings:

1. **Section 1:** Description of demographic data of students in Kerala.
2. **Section 2:** Assessing the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid -19 pandemic in Kerala
3. **Section 3:** Association between knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students with selected demographic variables.

Section 1: This section deals with description of demographic data of students in Kerala

This section deals with the analysis of demographic profile of 100 students between the age group of 10- 15 years.

Frequency and Percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of the subjects.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of sex.

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	24	24%
Female	76	76%

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of Height.

Height	Frequency	Percentage
138-144cm	24	24%
145-151cm	27	27%
152-158cm	33	33%
159-164cm	16	16%

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of Weight.

Weight	Frequency	Percentage
32-37kg	18	18%
38-43kg	34	34%
44-49kg	27	27%
50-55kg	21	21%

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of source of information.

Source of information	Frequency	Percentage
Newspaper, Magazines	8	8%
Television, radio, internet	21	21%
Relatives, friends	11	11%
All of the above	59	59%

Table 5: Frequency and Percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of weight gain during Covid-19 pandemic.

Weight gain	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5kg	42	42%
5kg-10kg	19	19%
Morethan 10 kg	2	2%
Remains Constant	37	37%

Section 2: Association between knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students with selected demographic variables.

Table 6: Chi-square value showing the association between the demographic variables and knowledge on unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students.

Sl no	Variables	Level of knowledge			X ²	df	Table Value	Level of Significance
		Good	Average.	Poor				
1.	Sex							
	male	2	14	8	1.2	2	5.99	NS
	female	12	36	28				
2.	Height							
	138-144cm	2	10	12				
	145-151cm	6	13	8	8.33	6	12.59	NS
	152-158cm	5	21	7				
	159-164cm	2	6	8				
3.	Weight							
	32-37kg	0	6	12				
	38-43kg	5	20	9	15.4	6	12.59	S
	44-49kg	5	14	8				
	50-55kg	4	10	7				
4.	Source of information							
	Newspaper, Magazines	0	3	5				
	Television, radio internet	3	8	11	21.1	6	12.59	S
	Relatives, friends	0	2	9				
	All of the above	12	35	12				
5.	Weight gain during covid-19 pandemic							
	Below 5kg	8	23	11				
	5kg-10kg	2	10	7	7.11	6	12.59	NS
	More than 10kg	0	1	1				
	Remains constant	4	16	17				
S – Significant								
NS – Non Significant								

DISCUSSION

This study was undertaken “to assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid 19 pandemic in Kollam.” The objectives of the study were to assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students and to find out the association between the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid 19 pandemic and selected demographic variables such as, sex, height, weight, source of information, weight gain during Covid-19 pandemic.

A descriptive research was adopted for this study. The sample comprised of 100 students who were 10-15 years. A quantitative research approach was adopted for this study. The tool used in this study was structured knowledge questionnaire. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The result showed that out of 100 samples, 14% of students had good knowledge, 48% of them had average knowledge and 38% of them had poor knowledge about unhealthy lifestyle and obesity during covid-19 pandemic.

The association was computed by using chi square test. It was inferred that, in the case of sex, the chi square value is 1.2 which is less than the table value (5.99) at 0.05 level of significance hence there was no significant association between sex and knowledge among students. In the case of height, the chi square value is 8.33 which is less than the table value (12.59) at 0.05 level of significance, hence there was no significant association between height and knowledge among students. In the case of weight, the chi square value is 15.4 which is greater than the table value (12.59) at 0.05 level of significance, hence there is a significant association between weight and knowledge among students. In the case of source of information, the chi square value is 21.1 which is greater than the table value (12.59) at 0.05 level of significance, hence there was a significant association between source of information and knowledge among students. In the case of weight gain during covid-19 pandemic, the chi square value is 7.11 which is less than the table value (12.59) at 0.05 level of significance, hence there was no significant association between weight gain and knowledge among students.

The findings of the study consistent with another study conducted to develop and validate a questionnaire to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on lifestyle-related behaviour related to eating, activity and sleep pattern on experts from different fields and general adult population. A self administered questionnaire was used in the study. Findings indicate that half of the participants (50.41%) reportedly had a stable weight followed by one-third participants (31.71%) experiencing weight gain during COVID-19. Half of the participants (50%) maintained a regular meal pattern and added healthier ingredients to their daily meals (48.39%).

The descriptive co-relation research study was conducted in selected schools at Mangalore. The samples comprised of 150 adolescents of 14-15 years who were selected using purposive sampling technique. Demographic proforma, self-administered rating scale on eating habits and formula for assessing BMI were used to collect the data. Majority (69.3%) of the adolescent had healthy eating habits and 30.7% were having unhealthy eating habits. As per the BMI assessment, it was found that 34% belonged to normal and underweight, 21.44% were obese and 10.66% were overweight. It was also found that there was no co-relation between BMI and eating habit ($r = -0.085$; $p < 0.05$).

CONCLUSION

The present study was aimed to assess the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid 19 pandemic in Kollam. A structured knowledge questionnaire was given to students under the age group of 10-15 years. The present study revealed that out of 100 samples, 14% of students had good knowledge, 48% of them had average knowledge and 38% of them had poor knowledge about unhealthy lifestyle and obesity during covid-19 pandemic.

The association between the knowledge regarding unhealthy lifestyle and obesity among students during Covid 19 pandemic and selected demographic variables was computed by chi-square test. The present study showed that there is no significant association between knowledge and the demographic variables such as sex, height, weight gain during Covid 19 pandemic among students at 0.05 level of significance and there is a significant association between knowledge and the demographic variables such as weight and source of information at 0.05 level of significance.

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