

A Study to Assess the Health-Related Quality of Life among Obese Adults

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The main purpose of this study is to assess the Health-Related Quality of Life among the obese adults and to associate the Health-Related Quality of Life with the selected demographic variables among the obese adults in selected areas of Puducherry.

Materials and methods: Descriptive research design was adopted for this study. A total of 30 samples who were obese and who met the inclusion criteria were selected using purposive sampling technique. The samples were initially screened for Obesity by using measurements such as height, weight and Body Mass Index (BMI) and then the selected samples were requested to complete the Quality of Life questionnaire by themselves.

Results and conclusion: The results predicted that most of the obese adults 16(53.3%) had good level of Health-Related Quality of Life, some of the obese adults 12(40%) had both poor nor good level of Health-Related Quality of Life, and only a few adults 2(6.7%) had very good level of Health-Related Quality of Life. The results also had shown that there was no association between the Health-Related Quality of Life and the selected demographic variables. The researcher concluded that Obesity is a worldwide public health concern and is associated with the Quality of Life of a person, hence it requires maximum attention and care.

Keywords: Obesity, health related Quality of Life, BMI, Non communicable diseases

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization has given that Obesity is an abnormal or excess fat accumulation that produces a risk to health. People with a BMI of 30 or more are considered as obese. ^[1] Overweight and Obesity are the two major risk factors for a number of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer. Once it was considered as a problem only in high income countries, whereas now, overweight and Obesity are increasing in low and middle-income countries, especially in urban areas.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQOL)* is an individual's or a group's perceived physical and mental health. ^[2] Obesity affects people's physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to the environment. Obesity can cause a variety of psychological, social, and medical problems that may have a negative impact on the Quality of Life. It's a chronic disease which affects numbers and numbers of children, teens and adults. About 17% of children aged between 2 to 19 are considered as obese, compared to over 35% of the obese adults. ^[3] The longer a person is obese, the more significant Obesity-related risk factors can arise.

Based on the systematic review conducted by Kroes M, et al. (2016),

overweight/Obesity is typically associated with poor Health-Related Quality of Life than normal weight people. [4] A systematic overview conducted by Amudha Poobalan and Lorna Aucott, (2016) among young adults in developing countries states that Obesity prevalence ranges from 2.3 to 12 %, and overweight is 28.8 %, mostly affecting females. [5]

Until recently, it has been perceived that Obesity mostly affects only middle-aged adults. However, there is a steady increase in the trend of Obesity among young adults, especially college and university students. Many young adults undergo significant lifestyle changes such as leaving their homes, going to university/college, starting a new work, developing certain relationships, marrying, potentially experiencing pregnancy and child rearing.

Surprisingly, these periods in the life course of people make them highly vulnerable to energy imbalance which may lead to weight gain. Developed countries are now only beginning to recognize 18–25-year old as a ‘vulnerable group’. In contrast, in some developing countries, Obesity among all the ages are not even considered as a public health problem until the early 1980–1990s and was considered as a problem of those developed countries. [5]

However, in the last few decades, most nutritional and socioeconomic transitions have changed the anthropometric measurements and health patterns of the people. Obesity is a global crisis that touches everyone in one way or other. The most important of all is that Obesity is preventable. According to the literature, there is a lack of data to show the relationship between Obesity and *Health-Related Quality of Life* among the early adult population. Hence, the researcher aims to assess the *Health-Related Quality of Life among the obese adults and to associate the Health-Related Quality of Life with the selected demographic variables among the obese adults*. Therefore, this research hopes to add this association to the literature.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Quantitative research approach and descriptive research design was adopted for this study. A total of 30 samples who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected from Kamaraj Nagar, Puducherry using purposive sampling technique. The study was conducted for a period of one week. A standardized tool, BREF scale developed by the World Health Organization was used to collect the data. The WHOQOL-BREF instrument consists of 26 items, and four broad domains such as physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment. The inclusion criteria for the study was adults who were between the age group of 20-40 years, having a BMI of more than 30, available at the time of data collection and who were willing to participate in the study. The adults who were having any other comorbidities were the exclusion criteria of the study. The ethical clearance was obtained from the researcher’s own institution. Prior to the data collection, permission was obtained from the concerned authorities and written informed consent was obtained from the subjects. The researcher selected 30 samples who fulfilled the inclusion criteria by adopting convenient sampling technique from adopted community area of the institution. The researcher gave an introduction and explained to the subjects about the purposes of the study and obtained an informed consent. The subjects were initially screened for obesity by using physical measurements such as height, weight and body mass index and then the subjects were asked to fill the World Health Organization’s Quality of Life questionnaire by themselves. The subjects took about 5-10 minutes to complete it. The collected data was then analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS

Health-related quality of life (HR-QoL) expected to be compromised in obese individuals, depending on their life style changes and the presence of other

complications. Obesity is not only increasing in prevalence and placing great burden over individuals and healthcare resources alike. Obesity management is very complex and elusive for many. Hence health related quality of life becomes important parameter to the modern health care system.

The results revealed that, out of the 30 adults who were interviewed, majority of the obese adults 10(33.3%) were in the age group of 31-35 years. In relation to gender, most of the obese adults 21(70%) were females. Regarding the educational status, most of the obese adults 17(56.6%) was educated up to college level. In case of marital status, majority of the obese adults 22(73.4%) were married. In relation to their health status, majority of the obese adults 22(73.3%) were not currently ill. Most of

the obese adults 23(76.7%) thought that if something happens to their health, it was an illness. Regarding BMI, majority of the obese adults 23(76.7%) came under obese I category.

The results showed that in the assessment of Health-Related Quality of Life, most of the obese adults 16(53.3%) had good level of *Health-Related Quality of Life*, some of the obese adults 12(40%) had both poor nor good level of Health-Related Quality of Life, and only a few adults 2(6.7%) had very good level of Health-Related Quality of Life (Figure No.1) and the mean health related quality of life was 82.73 with SD value of 11.29. Also, it has been shown that there was no statistically significant association between Quality of Life and selected demographic variables.

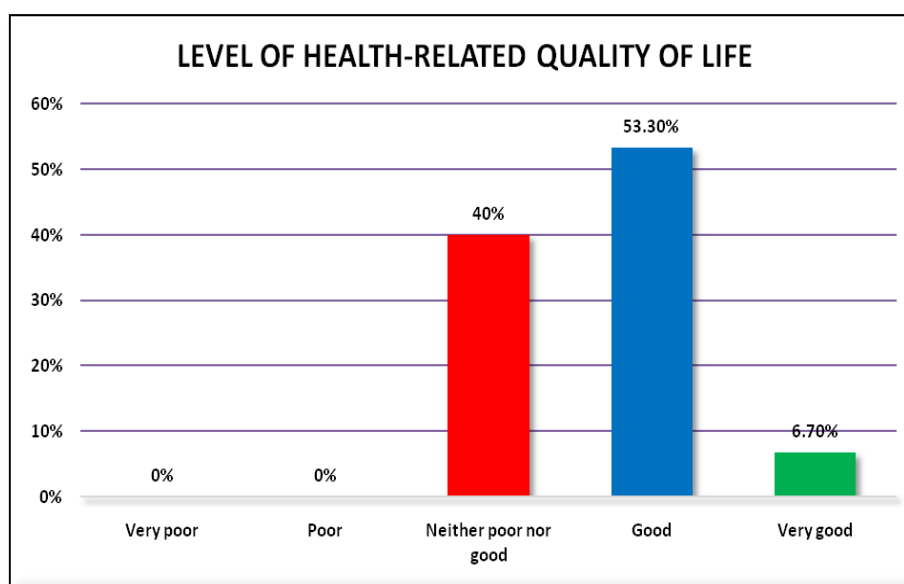


Fig.1: level of Health-Related Quality of Life among obese adults

DISCUSSION

The incidence of obesity is becoming pandemic of 21st century and it has reached very important proportions. Obesity alone doesn't affect quality of life and also increases risk of many non-communicable diseases. A recent study clearly picturized that there is an increased risk mortality for patients with high grade of obesity. ⁽⁶⁾

The discussion on the present study is based on the findings from the statistical

analysis of assessment of Health-Related Quality of Life among the obese adults. About 30 obese adults were selected for the study. The major findings of the study were a majority of the obese adults 10(33.3%) of study population were in the age group between 31-35 years and 23(76.7%) belong to obese category I. *These findings were supported by a study conducted by Yanbo Zhu, et al (2015) to assess the association between BMI and HRQL in Chinese adults and the results depicted that majority of the*

subjects were in the age group between 18-44 years. ⁽⁶⁾

The results of the present study highlighted that, most of the obese adults 16(53.3%) had good level of *Health-Related Quality of Life*, some of the obese adults 12(40%) had both poor nor good level of Health-Related Quality of Life, and only a few adults 2(6.7%) had very good level of *Health-Related Quality of Life*. These findings were supported by a study conducted by Park S (2017) to explore the potential mediators of the associations between Obesity and *Health-Related Quality of Life* and the results projected that obesity was negatively associated with *Health-Related Quality of Life*. ⁽⁸⁾ The results of the present study showed that there was no statistically significant association between *Health-Related Quality of Life and the demographic variables among obese adults living in selected areas*.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions drawn from the findings of the study were, majority of the obese adults had good Health-Related Quality of Life. Some of the obese adults had neither poor nor good level of Health-Related Quality of Life and only a few of the obese adults had very good level of Health-Related Quality of Life. Therefore, Obesity is a worldwide public health concern and is associated with the Quality of Life of a person, hence it requires maximum attention and care.

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