

# An Insight into Obesity and Overweight Frequency Secondary to Unhealthy Dietary Intake among Housewives in Pakistan

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of current review was to determine the occurrence of obesity and overweight among housewives consequently of a poor diet. Obesity has been related to diabetes, heart disease and osteoarthritis in the past. It has been estimated that 190 million overweight and obese people worldwide, obesity and overweight constitute a severe risk to human health. As a result, we looked into the impact of certain eating behaviors on weight among Pakistani housewives. We examined the link between the unhealthy dietary intake and their weight. Genetics, Screen time, sedentary lifestyle, eating speed, number of meals consumed on daily, and high-sugar diets were all found to be associated with obesity. Our findings show that increasing the number of meals per day, slowing down the rate of eating, and limiting high-sugar foods could help.

**Keywords:** obesity, sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy food intake, media

## INTRUDUCTION

**Obesity:** Obesity is a phrase that has been defined in a variety of ways to characterize fatness or an excess of adipose tissue. Obesity, on the other hand, is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as having a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or more. Individuals are classed as underweight if their BMI is less than 18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, normal if their BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, and overweight if their BMI is higher than 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

**Backdrop:** Obesity has become more prevalent in South Asian countries, including Pakistan. Obesity prevalence in Pakistan has reached up to 25%, according to the National Health Survey (1990-1994). This tendency is fast expanding, and a recent study by Khawaja and Kadir indicated that half of the study's participants were overweight, which is quite worrying. Obesity has a higher stigma for women than it does for men. It is a leading cause of illness and mortality, and it's linked to poor health-related quality of life, social functioning, and disability. Obesity leads to psychological stress, which increases appetite and reduces physical activity, resulting in weight gain. Obese women are more likely to suffer from body image issues and mental disorders.

As meal planners and role models for their children, housewives play a vital role in their households. Their parents' living patterns, attitudes, and actions have an impact on their children. Obesity among housewives has become a major public health concern. It is a hazard issue for serious diet-related chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, and Type II diabetes.

**Partaking Factors of Obesity among Housewives:** Obesity has been linked to a number of modifiable and a few non-modifiable risk factors. Physical inactivity is the most common, followed by sedentary behavior, inappropriate or unsanitary dietary habits, urbanization, high socioeconomic level and education, and low birth weight.

Measures	Numbers	Percentage (%age)
One time in a day	5.98	9.43
On each meal	1.12	1.76
After seven days	29.99	49.32
After thirty days	16.00	25.18
I don't eat	9.97	14.34

Sajjad et al., (2022)

**The science of genetics:** Obesity has a substantial hereditary component. Obesity is significantly more frequent in fat parents' children than in thin parents' children. It is true that obesity is

unavoidable. The foods you consume have a big impact on which genes are expressed and which aren't. When non-industrialized countries start eating a traditional Western diet, they gain weight quickly. Their DNA remained unaltered, but their environment and the signals they transmitted to their genes changed. Simply put, genetic factors influence your tendency to acquire weight. Extensive research on identical twins has confirmed this.

**Life Style factors:** Bad dietary habits, such as drinking cold drinks and eating fast food, skipping meals, eating too few fruits and vegetables, and eating away from home, contribute to obesity. Physical inactivity, a sedentary lifestyle (bad sleeping habits, increased screen time), and unhealthy eating patterns are all activities that have a direct impact on a child's body weight.

**Screen time and sedentary behavior:** Fung and investigated the link between physical activity and television viewing and obesity and cardiovascular disease biomarkers in plasma. Physical exercise is one of the environmental variables that contribute to overweight and obesity because it affects energy balance. Individuals that engage in more physical exercise in their spare time, such as jogging, aerobics, and swimming, have a BMI that is within acceptable limits.

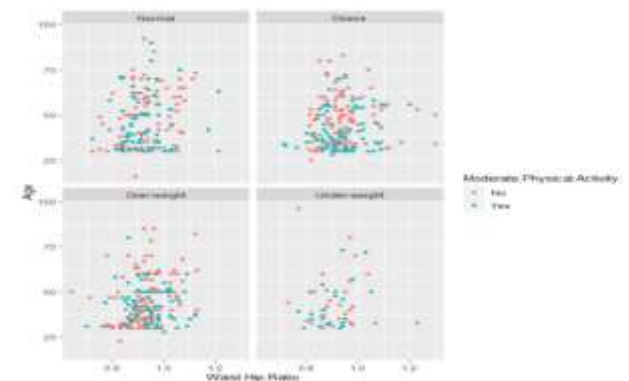


Figure 1: Relationship between various BMI categories and physical activity

Kazmi et al., (2022)

Housewives are more likely to participate in moderately intense tasks like housework. They are less likely to engage in regular physical activity in their spare time, such as jogging, exercise courses, or biking. It's not surprising, then, that they reported a low mean value for strenuous physical activity. Family

duties (child care and cooking time) and a lack of time are also factors in their inability to incorporate exercise into their routine. As a result, housewives' duty for household chores such as housekeeping and childcare may function as a deterrent to them participating in physical activity.

**Sleeping time:** Insufficient sleep time and quality committed to rest characterise sleep disorders. Obesity is linked to changes in sleeping patterns, both in terms of quality and duration, in the general population and, in particular, in housewives. When compared to being a farmer, worse sleep quality was linked to a lack of physical exercise, smoking, and being a housewife. As a result, it is critical to educate women about health-promoting activities, such as daily physical activity, which is linked to sleep quality.

**Unhealthy Eating Habits:** Fast food, fried potatoes, doughnuts/cakes, and sugary beverage consumption were divided into two categories: (a) eating vegetables, eating breakfast, drinking milk, juices, and many dairy products (b) unhealthy dietary habits such as fried and fast food, doughnuts, cakes, and several beverages.

Table 1: Participants' consumption of sweet meals such as mithai, halwa, and so on.

Measures	Numbers	Percentage (%age)
Chips	18.34	29
Pakora	19.67	30.64
Nimkos	13.11	20.9
Other bakery items	18.12	29.03
Cakes	15.67	29.43
I don't like snacks	24.12	38.08
Nuggets	1.00	1.61

Sajjad et al., (2022)

Obesity does not develop overnight. It develops over time as a result of poor dietary and lifestyle choices such as eating a lot of dry and fast food heavy in sugar and fat, and drinking too much alcohol.

Table 2: Participants' eating habits when it comes to junk food

Measures	Numbers	Percentage (%age)
Everyday	0.00	0.05
On alternate days	3.12	4.16
On week basis	19.11	26.83
On month basis	23.10	39.56
Don't use/never	20.21	33.19

**Companies Shape Our Physical and Social Environments:** It is commonly acknowledged that food advertising has a strong impact on our eating habits. Many new food items and behaviors become popular and supplant old ones, such as carbonated drinks replacing fresh beverages, infant formula replacing breast milk, and canned meals replacing fresh foods. Cooking preparation has changed as a result of advertisements for freezers, pressure cookers, mixers, and a variety of other food gadgets. According to Blizard (unpublished report), there is a strong link between the consumption of certain foods and advertising media.

In Pakistan, television reaches practically all socioeconomic groups in all sectors. Because there are few other recreational options, it takes up the majority of people's leisure time, notably that of women. Pakistani housewives are more constrained in their houses than their husbands or other family members. Because the majority of them are unemployed and responsible for household management, viewing television is their primary source of entertainment, and as a result, they are more vulnerable to television commercials.

**Comfort Eating:** Regardless of a woman's actual body size, body dissatisfaction is strongly linked to the expectations she sets for herself. Low self-esteem may result from some degree of body dissatisfaction. You may eat to feel better if you have low self-esteem or are depressed. Unhealthy eating habits are commonly passed down from generation to generation. You may pick up

unhealthy eating habits from your parents as a child and carry them into adulthood.

**Metabolic Syndrome:** Obesity has been linked to a slew of other conditions known together as metabolic syndrome. Elevated blood pressure, excessive blood sugar, and a bad blood lipid profile are a few examples. When compared to those of normal weight, those with metabolic syndrome have a considerably higher risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

**Genetically Modified Food:** Foods that have been heavily processed are often nothing more than refined components coupled with additives. These products are made to be inexpensive, survive a long time on the shelf, and taste so excellent that they are difficult to refuse. Food makers aim to improve sales by making foods as tasty as possible. They do, however, encourage overeating. The majority of processed foods now bear no resemblance to whole foods. These are highly engineered products, designed to get people hooked.

**Food Addiction:** Many sugar-sweetened, high-fat junk meals stimulate the reward centres of your brain. These foods are typically associated with commonly abused drugs such as alcohol, cocaine, nicotine, and cannabis. In individuals who are vulnerable, junk foods can lead to addiction. The people drop control of their eating habits in the similar ways as alcoholics lose control of their drinking habits. Addiction is a complicated issue with a high level of difficulty in resolving it. When you become addicted to something, you lose your freedom of choice and your brain's biochemistry takes over.

## CONCLUSION

Obesity is associated to low quality of life, which is worsened in morbidly obese people, notably in the physical and social domains, according to this study. To improve the treatment of obesity, resources should be targeted on low-cost primary care techniques such as assessing quality of life and including behavioral weight reduction therapy, as well as lifestyle and nutritional adjustments. To establish the benefit of integrating behavioral weight reduction therapy to improve the quality of life of obese females, further analysis is needed.

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