

Title: Perceived Barriers to Maintaining Healthy Body Weight among Saudi Women of Reproductive Age in Jeddah City

Name: Muneera Alharbi Alharbi

University of Maryland College Park, MD, USA

Abstract

Maintaining a healthy body weight is important for overall health and can help prevent and control many health conditions. However, healthy eating (HE) and physical activity (PA) barriers that affect body weight in Saudi women of reproductive age have not been a research priority. A cross-sectional study was conducted in 2014 using a stratified two-stage cluster sampling design comprising 408 Saudi women attending 12 Jeddah Primary Health Centers (JPHCCs), to explore personal, social, and physical environmental factors that act as barriers to maintaining a healthy weight and how these barriers vary by socio-demographic and weight status. Of the 408 women evaluated, 33.8% were obese (BMI≥30 kg/m^2), 25.1% were abdominally obese with WC≥88 cm, 24% had unhealthy EHs, and 31.2% were physically inactive. A high proportion of women faced significant barriers in maintaining their weight related to EHs or PA (49.2% vs. 50.7%). The most common barriers to HE and PA in the study group were lack of willpower, skills, knowledge, enjoyment, time, resources, and social influence. Social norms and hot weather had a great impact on the women's PA levels. There was a positive significant association between EHs and PA and between EHs and PA barriers, but no significant associations were found between barriers to maintaining healthy weight and either type of obesity. The personal and the social environmental barriers to HE had a significant negative association with EHs, while none of the examined barriers to PA were associated with PA. There were inversely significant associated between the HE barrier and age, and between PA barrier and income status. The study findings suggest there is a need to improve women's EHs and PA by eliminating the identified barriers. These findings can be used to develop appropriate and effective obesity prevention interventions for Jeddah women.

Biography

I completed a PhD in Nutrition and Food Science from the University of Maryland College Park, US, with an over fourteen years of excellent experience in the field of health and nutrition (counseling, and weight management). Right now, I am director of Asage Fitness Center - Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Presenting author details

Full name: Muneera Alharbi

Contact number: +966535556432

Category: (Oral presentation)