

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO OVERWEIGHT
AND OBESITY AMONGST SECONDARY
SCHOOL LEARNERS IN LWAMONDO VILLAGE
OF VHEMBE DISTRICT SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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IN LWAMONDO VILLAGE OF VHEMBE DISTRICT,
SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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ABSTRACT

Background: Evidence is emerging that the increased level of obesity is becoming a global problem, particularly in South Africa, yet the factors contributing to obesity remain controversial. In the state nation address of 14 February 2013, President Jacob Zuma of South Africa indicated that the incidence of diseases of life style is on an alarming increase. Therefore, there is a need to combat and lower the levels of smoking, harmful effects of alcohol and poor diets that are leading causes of obesity.

Purpose: To identify and describe factors that contribute to overweight and obesity amongst learners at secondary schools in Lwamondo village, Vhembe district, South Africa.

Method: The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive research design.

A structured questionnaire (research instrument) was used to collect data from participants. Pre-testing was done by administering the questionnaire to ten learners who did not participate in the main study. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, version 21.0).

Results: The study revealed that learners were eating food which contained high levels of fats and carbohydrates, that is, meat, eggs, pap (maize meal), rice and snacks.

Physical education was included in the curriculum of the learners, but majority of them indicated that there was little time allocated for it and they lacked motivation or were just indolent to participate in exercises. Family history was also regarded as a contributory and predisposing factor to obesity in most of the learners.

Conclusion: Parents and other stakeholders involved in the government feeding schemes should be guided how to prepare and promote a healthy diet for children. Physical education also needs to be emphasized and implemented at least once a week in all secondary schools.

Keywords: factors that contribute to overweight, obesity, secondary school learners