

JOINT EVENT

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Attitudes and practices of overweight and obese women towards weight reduction in World Bank area of Owerri West Local Government area, Imo State, Nigeria

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Obesity is fast becoming a public health issue not only in developed countries but in developing countries like Nigeria because of the associated health problems. While affluent countries are fighting hard to reduce the incidence, developing countries are being crippled by false beliefs and ignorance of majority of the affected. A randomized survey was carried out in the World Bank area of Owerri West Local Government area, Imo State, Nigeria to determine the attitudes and practices of overweight and obese women of child bearing age with different marital status and academic background towards weight reduction, between November and December 2017. Body mass index (BMI) was utilized to categorize 60 (8.6%) of the total 700 women who gave their consent for the study as either overweight or obese. Of the selected 60 women, 12 (20%) were obese while the rest 58 (80%) were overweight, eight (13.3%) were single, while 52 (86.7%) were married and all 60 (100%) had either secondary or tertiary education. Data collected further revealed that only 10 (16.6%) would want weight reduction and the desire for weight reduction was significantly ($P < 0.05$) dependent on marital status, as seven (70%) of those who wanted weight reduction were single ladies, while two (20%) who were married had no issues and only one (10%) wanted to reduce her weight because she saw obesity as a health risk. On the other hand, 10 (17.2%) of the overweight claimed they love their weight, five (0.9%), said they need the weight as long as child bearing lasts, while the rest did not see anything wrong with their weight. Of all, only six (10%) did some physical exercises to reduce weight, and four (0.7%) reduced consumption of energy dense food. Other 50 (88.3%), claimed that they had no time for exercises and do not need them, while a few said that they already have much stress in their jobs. Educational level was found to have no significant ($P > 0.05$) influence on either the attitude or practice towards weight reduction of overweight and obese women in this study. The need for more public enlightenment and health education in the area is highlighted.

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