

OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY AMONG MOI UNIVERSITY NAIROBI CAMPUS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS, KENYA

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Abstract

Aim: Overweight and obesity are growing public health concerns associated with the onset of chronic illness. A paucity of data exists on nutritional status of university students in Kenya and yet it is a dynamic and transitional stage in life characterized by the development of independence, decision making and the acquisition of habits for the future. The study aimed at screening Moi University Nairobi campus undergraduate students for overweight, obesity and abdominal obesity.

Materials and methods: A cross sectional survey conducted between October 2019 and March 2020 at the Moi University Nairobi Campus among all registered undergraduate students within five (5) schools. Weight, height and waist circumference (WC) were measured while Body Mass Index (BMI) and Waist to Height Ratio (WtHR) were calculated.

Results: A total of 1,496 undergraduate students were screened; 64.4% (964) were females and 35.6% (532) were males with a mean age of 24.29 ± 3.63 years. The prevalence of overweight, obesity was 25.7% and 14.3%, respectively and abdominal obesity was 25.4%. Waist to Height ratio identified 12.6% overweight and 13.7% obese students. The odds of females being overweight is 2.121 times higher than that of males (95% CI: 1.18-3.79, $P < 0.05$).

