

Abstract

Introduction: Obesity is often defined as a condition of abnormal and excessive fat accumulation in adipose tissue to the extent that health may be adversely affected (or having a BMI of 30.0 or more). The prevalence of obesity is increasing worldwide at an alarming rate in both developing and developed countries. It has become a serious epidemic health problem, estimated to be the fifth leading cause of mortality at global level. The risk factors for obesity include social environmental factors, psychological factors, and genetic factors. The rise in obesity can be explained by the following. First, the improvement of living standards has led to a large increase in the intake of high-fat foods. Excess weight is associated with morbidities such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, infertility, breast, endometrial, colon and prostate cancer. Consequently, obesity is a public health problem that requires timely attention and multispectral actions to improve prevention and control in the population. One of the lifestyles most associated with maintaining healthy body weight is physical activity.

Objectives

1. To evaluate the knowledge of nursing college students regarding obesity among college students.
2. In addition to that, the study aimed to determine the relation of the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants and this knowledge level.

Methodology : A cross-sectional study was conducted in College of Nursing – University of Babylon. November 2021 – June 2022. This study includes students from College of Nursing – University of Babylon.

A predesigned self-administered questionnaire was adopted to collect the data for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire prepared in a “google form” format and distributed via students’ social media study groups. It contains 2 sections, the first one was the demographic data sheet, it has been developed to collect specific demographic characteristic data including respondent’s age, gender, marital status, academic year, Weight, Height, physical exercise, Sleep time. The 2nd section includes 14 multiple choice and true false questions to assess the participants’ knowledge about obesity. Knowledge test questionnaire that was based on previous studies with modification. Then questionnaire was translated into Arabic (appendix 1).

The questionnaire includes 14 questions with total score of 14. Each correct answer one point was considered, and an incorrect answer was given zero.

Chi square test was used to determine the association between socio-demographics and knowledge of subjects. P value more than 0.001 was considered statistically

significant. The statistical analysis to the association study was performed using a commercially available software program (SPSS 18.0, SPSS Inc., Chicago, Illinois, USA)

Results : The results showed that, students in their 3rd and 4th academic year have a significantly higher knowledge score than 1st and 2nd academic year students ($p < 0.001$) . There are no significant statistical relations between the other demographic characteristics and knowledge score of the subjects.

Also, The results showed that, single students have normal BMI more than married ones, ($p < 0.001$) There are no significant statistical relations between the other demographic characteristics and BMI of the subjects.

Conclusion: Two third of the study participants have a satisfactory knowledge level, about obesity. In the current study, the majority (72%) of the study subjects fall Good level of knowledge was seen among 68% of the studied subjects while more than one third of them have poor knowledge (35%) Students in their 3rd and 4th academic year have a significantly higher knowledge score than 1st and 2nd academic year students. Single students have normal BMI more than married ones. Knowledge levels did not affect by age, gender, residence and marital status of students