

Parents attitudes on academic performance of Obese Teneagers

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ABSTRACT

The present study is based upon a sample of 160 teenager boys (N: 80) and girls (N: 80) in the age group of 13 to 19 years. The sample was drawn from purposely selected private schools of Ludhiana city of Punjab (India). The boy's sample of 80 comprised of 40 obese and 40 normal weight (non-obese) teenagers. And similarly girl's sample of 80 was distributed equally over 40 obese and 40 non-obese teenagers. The parents of both obese as well as normal weight teenagers were classified into three attitude categories on the basis of their overall attitude scores toward obesity. Statistically significant differences were found among obese and normal weight teenagers in academic performance as per parents' attitude categories. It could be concluded that parents' attitude toward obesity has significant impact on the academic performance of both obese and normal weight teenagers.

KEY WORDS : Parents attitudes, Obese, Teenagers, Academic performance

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INTRODUCTION

Good academic performance is directly related to university entrance and job opportunities and hence, it has always been a matter of concern for both parents as well as students (Kim *et al.*, 2003). Thus, an understanding of the relation between health and academic performance of a student has significant implications. Adolescent's health is on the decline because of increased pressures of competition to do the best so as to get the best in the job market. There is a radical change in the life style of the adolescents. They spend less time on physical activity and more on the digital screen. The time spent in front of the digital screen is also used in munching their favourite fast food items along with fizzy drinks. This has resulted into the current increase in the prevalence of childhood and adolescent obesity. Obesity has become one of the most important public health concerns all over the world today.

Obesity rarely causes immediate, serious health consequences in childhood, however, it has been associated with many risk factors for cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, dislipidemia, and impaired glucose tolerance resulting in type 2 diabetes. More immediate consequences of obesity and overweight in children and adolescents are psychological and social. There are a

number of studies which indicate that overweight and obese children are more likely to have low self-esteem and that they have higher rates of anxiety disorders, depression and other psychopathology (Zametkin *et al.*, 2004).

There are number of studies showing inverse relationship between obesity and academic performance (Taras and Potts-Datema, 2005). In this context, it is worthwhile to investigate the parents' attitudes toward obesity, the most relevant components of social environment of teenagers in relation to their academic performance.

The present study has been conducted in Ludhiana city of the state of Punjab, that abounds with affluence and as a result fatness has become symbolic of belonging to a well-to-do family. To the best of our knowledge, no empirical study has ever been taken to find whether parents' attitudes toward obesity bear any relationship with academic performance of their obese *vis-avis* normal weight teenage children? Or is there any association between attitudes of parents toward obesity and academic performance of their teenage children?

Review of literature :

Datar *et al.* (2006) studied on 11, 192 children to

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