

## Understanding Overweight and Obesity in Eastern Ethiopia

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### Description

Overweight and obesity lead to significant health challenges globally, ranking as the fifth leading cause of mortality and contributing to millions of adult deaths annually. Efforts to combat this epidemic have explored various interventions, including gamification strategies that enhance physical activity among overweight and obese individuals. However, the search for effective dietary approaches remains ongoing, considering factors such as safety, nutritional adequacy, effectiveness, and cost.

In sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Nigeria, the prevalence of adult overweight and obesity has reached alarming levels, with rates nearing 30% and 10%, respectively. This increase is driven by demographic shifts, urbanization, rising incomes, and unhealthy dietary practices characterized by the consumption of processed foods. Understanding the complex determinants of overweight and obesity requires a comprehensive investigation, integrating individual characteristics, behaviors, environmental influences, and policy factors within the socio-ecological model framework.

Despite the common association of overweight and obesity with high-income countries, these conditions are also escalating in middle- and low-income nations like Ethiopia, where research on urban population prevalence remains limited. Furthermore, individuals affected by overweight and obesity face increased risks of various diseases and accidents, underscoring the broader health implications. Unique patterns of obesity-related diseases have been observed among specific populations, such as adult Somalis in eastern Ethiopia, highlighting the need for tailored interventions.

The economic impact of overweight and obesity is substantial, resulting in significant losses in productivity and healthcare

expenditures globally despite these concerning trends, research focusing on the prevalence and determinants of overweight and obesity among working populations remains sparse, revealing a critical gap in our understanding of this issue. Therefore, this study aims to assess the prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults in Jigjiga Town, Somali Region, Eastern Ethiopia. It also seeks to explore associated factors such as socio-demographic variables and lifestyle factors.

This comprehensive approach aims to provide insights that can inform targeted interventions and policy measures to address this growing public health concern. Future research in this field should prioritize longitudinal studies to track the trajectory of overweight and obesity across diverse populations, including urban and rural areas, and various demographic and socioeconomic strata. Evaluating the effectiveness and scalability of interventions targeting modifiable risk factors such as dietary habits, physical activity levels, and environmental influences is key.

Collaboration among researchers, policymakers, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders is essential for developing culturally sensitive strategies to combat overweight and obesity and promote healthier lifestyles. Addressing the economic burden of overweight and obesity should involve rigorous cost-effectiveness analyses of preventive measures and investments in public health infrastructure and education.

In conclusion, tackling overweight and obesity in Eastern Ethiopia requires a multifaceted approach that integrates research, policy, and community engagement. By understanding the local determinants and implementing evidence-based interventions, we can work towards reducing the prevalence of overweight and obesity and improving the overall health and well-being of the population in this region.