Knowledge, dietary and physical activity practices regarding obesity among women aged 25 – 40 years in Limpopo Province, South Africa

Knowledge, diet and physical activity could be important determinants of overweight/obesity among women aged 25 to 40 years. The study was designed to determine knowledge, dietary and physical activity practices as well as anthropometric status of women aged 25-40 years of age at Ha-Mandiwana village. A descriptive study was conducted among 60 women aged 25-40 and snowball sampling was used to select participants. Participants were assessed through knowledge test questions, dietary and physical activity practices and anthropometric measurements. Up to 46.7% of the participants in this study had very good knowledge with 21.7% having excellent knowledge on obesity. Participants (48.3%) reported to eat three meals a day. In this study breakfast was reported to be consumed daily by 80% of the participants and it can be described as bread based meal for most because 68% of the participants reported that they use bread on their breakfast daily. In this study there is low consumption of both fruits and vegetables because only 18.3% reported that they eat fruits daily and only 25% reported that they eat vegetables daily. Participants were more physically active at home level because all the participants reported to be spending more hours in household activity such as preparing food and washing up, cleaning the house, doing laundry and ironing and taking care of kids this leaves the participants meeting the recommended time for being physical active (150 minutes per week). The prevalence of obesity was discovered to be very high in this study because 33.3% of the participants were overweight while 48.4% of the participants were obese. This concludes that participants in this study presented with good knowledge relating to obesity however they lacked knowledge on other aspects that are linked to obesity such as the relationship between genetics and obesity. Even though participants have good knowledge regarding obesity, participants reported very low consumption of fruits and vegetables and limited variety of foods as very few food items were reported to be the most consumed. Other than dietary practices participants showed to be physical active at home level but the prevalence of obesity is very high is in this village.

Keywords: Knowledge, dietary intake, physical activity, overweight/obesity, women

Biography
Ms Tshifhiwa Cynthia Mandiwana is a trained Nutritionist working as an academic at the University of Venda from 2009. She spent most of her time training students to become Nutritionist and Nutritionist managers. She holds a masters degree which she completed in 2009. Her research area focuses on child nutrition including growth monitoring and promotion, maternal nutrition and the role of indigenous knowledge in health and nutrition. Tshifhiwa enjoys working with students and in this regard she has been the supervisor of more than 15 undergraduate nutrition students, she has published two peer reviewed articles in both national and international journals. She has presented her research both undergraduate and postgraduate at national and international conferences. She has served in collaborative research and committees such as conference organizing committee. She has obtained several certificates and Post Graduate diploma in teaching and learning with Rhodes University and the University of Cape Town. In 2013, she was a visiting scholar at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA. Currently she is planning to register with the University of South Africa for her PHD study.

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