

# Analyse the causes and effects of lifestyle diseases

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Analyse the Causes and Effects of Lifestyle Diseases in the World Lifestyle diseases are illnesses associated with the way an individual or a group lives, including cancer, stroke, heart disease, diabetes, chronic liver disease, smoking-related diseases and obesity. There are a number of considerable factors that can lead to those sicknesses. For instance, external causes involve poverty, work pressure, unhealthy diets and unbalanced life, while internal factors refer to unawareness and misconception of those illnesses.

Consequently, those sicknesses have significant long-term effects on individuals' lives, which may shorten their life expectancy. Furthermore, lifestyle diseases have been regarded as one of the primary causes of mortality in the world. Globally, 60 per cent of the death toll is due to sicknesses associated with unhealthy ways of life, which can translate to nearly 36 million deaths (AllAfrica Global Media, 2011). In addition, by the year 2015, those illnesses will become a considerable financial burden around the world (Sabu et al. , 2009: 1-14). This essay will focus on causes and effects of lifestyle diseases in the world.

The first section will analyse the causes of lifestyle sicknesses in the developed world. These causes can be divided into three parts, which are unbalanced diets, lack of regular exercise and insufficient sleep. Those who are in developed countries sometimes do not pay much attention to their diet and the consumption of alcohol which could lead to several diseases, such as obesity and hypertension. For example, fruit and vegetables contain a great many of nutritions, such as vitamins, minerals and fibers, and many other things that do good to health.

Eating more fruit and vegetables can make the risk of certain cancer or cardiovascular diseases (CVD) lower. However, in the United States, the consumption of fruit and vegetables decreased from 3.

43 times per day in 1994 to 3. 24 times per day in 2005. It seems to show that the importance of diet is not stressed adequately (Blanck et al. , 2008). Likewise, alcoholism can also cause lifestyle illnesses.

It has been proved that total mortality goes up rapidly when a person consumes three or more bottles of wine each day (Pearson, 1996). It can be seen that unhealthy diet could lead to poor condition of body.

Because of the fast living pace in the developed countries, lack of regular physical exercise has been a common phenomenon among citizens. This can lead to coronary heart disease. According to research done among San Francisco longshoremen, those who did lower levels of vigorous work took significantly twice higher risk of coronary heart disease death rate than those did not.

It also has been found that civil servants who were not addicted to active exercise in their spare time were more likely to have clinical coronary heart disease than those who preferred to vigorous activity in Britain (Siscovick, Laporte and Newman, 1985).

Moreover, lack of exercise can lead to obesity. Another research has shown that the population of obesity was 32. 2% among adult men and almost 35. 5% among adult women from 2007 to 2008 in the United States (Flegal et al.

, 2010). However, at present American citizens are paying more attention to the benefits of regular physical activity, such as walking. Some even walk or ride to work instead of taking a bus or driving (Pakenham, 2004). Even though individuals' attitude to exercise has changed, there is still another factor that influences their health.

In the developed world, insufficient sleep can be more serious than that in developing countries.

It can attribute to many severe sicknesses, such as myocardial infarction, which is a kind of fatal heart diseases. In Japan, there was a case-control study. The study was based on the effect of inadequate sleep among men with and without myocardial infarction. The case group comprised 250 men who were diagnosed with myocardial infarction, while the control group consisted of 445 men who did not suffer from this illness.

The results showed that those who slept less than 5 hours a day and those who were lacking sleep frequently would take twice or three times increasing risk of grievous myocardial infarction (Liu and Tanaka, 2001).

Thus, having sufficient sleeping time can be important and necessary for individuals' health. Three effects of lifestyle diseases in the developed world will be described in the following section, namely premature death, high mortality and economic cost. Lifestyle diseases are one of the major health burdens in the industrialized countries.

Obesity and smoking-related illness have considerable long-term effects on the patients' lives, which may lead to premature death. Over the course of the obese individuals' lifetime, the physical conditions will deteriorate.

This results from the relationships between fatness and a number of severe sicknesses. For instance, those who are overweight are probably with high blood pressure which is the main cause of heart disease and stroke (Nazario, 2011). Moreover, the risk of early death for those who are 40% overweight is twice that of normal-weight people (Ibid).

Similarly, smokers also have a higher risk of premature death than non-smokers. A study has shown that average smoking can lead to a decline in life expectancy by 6.8 years, while heavy smoking reduces even two more years.

However, if a smoker stops smoking at the age of forty, the lifespan will increase 4.6 years, and the disease-free period will be increased by 3.0 years (Streppel et al. , 2007: 107-113). Furthermore, sickness associated with tobacco, such as lung cancer, is the main risk factor of high mortality in developed countries. Evaluations on smoking-related deaths were made among 44 industrialised countries in 1990.

Those indicated that tobacco was accountable for 24% of the deaths in men and 7% of the deaths in women (Peto et al. , 1996: 12-21). In addition, from 1993 to 2003, the death rate associated with smoking in Germany rose from 13.0% to 13.4%, and the female mortality increased by 45.

3% (Neubauer et al. , 2006: 464-471). Similarly, the mortality for cancer related to tobacco in central Europe have increased quickly in recent 10 years (Bray, Brennan and Boffetta, 2000: 122-128). Nowadays, even though only fewer than 20% of the whole deaths in industrialized countries result from tobacco, the death rate is still on the increase.

It seems to indicate that if the current pattern continues, more than 20% of the population in western countries ultimately dying from tobacco-related diseases (Peto et al. , 1992: 1268-1278).

Additionally, obesity and smoking-related sickness not only affect the individual health but also the national wealth. The economic cost of lifestyle diseases is extremely high. A recent evaluation of the expenditure of fatness in America is a case in point. An American National Health Interview Survey in 1994 indicated that obesity attributed to limited movement, increasing doctor visits, excess days in hospital, and lost productivity among the U.

S. population (Wolf and Colditz, 1998: 97-106).

In addition, the entire cost associated with fatness rose to 99. 2 billion dollars in 1995, and direct medical costs made up over half of the total, which was 51. 64 billion dollars. Reviewing the 1995 NHIS (National Health Interview Survey) data, the economic cost related to obesity accounted for almost 5. 7% of the American total national health expenditure (Ibid).

In terms of smoking-related diseases, in Germany, the whole expenditure on those illnesses in 2003 was 21. 0 billion euro, with 4. 7 billion euro for the

costs of mortality; 7. 5 billion euro for medicine and hospital care and 8. billion euro for costs due to unemployment and retirement (Neubauer et al. , 2006: 464-471). Therefore, it shows a clear need to put emphasis on ways to lead a healthy lifestyle. Unlike the reasons of lifestyle diseases in developed countries, the main causes of lifestyle diseases in developing countries are poverty and unawareness. These will be discussed in the following section. There are three aspects that can explain poverty.

A survey shows that since the life stress in rural area is increasing, individuals especially females, have to do vast agricultural activities to support family in sub-Saharan Africa.

That suggests that women do not have time to pay attention to the way of life (Jiggins, 2002: 953-963). In addition, many illnesses, such as obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension and other chronic diseases, are believed to have a close relationship with the poor nutrition and improper dietary practices. A questionnaire, which was finished by 4, 320 schoolchildren, revealed that taking in more fatty food, less fruit and vegetables and reducing daily breakfast consumption will attribute to a long-term disease risk (Cartwright et al. , 2003: 362-369).

Furthermore, the unsanitary living conditions can also have an unfavourable effect on health.

It may increase the possibility of infecting some noncommunicable diseases, such as lung cancer and stomach cancer. Therefore, it is necessary to change the unhealthy way of life. According to the research done by <https://assignbuster.com/analyse-the-causes-and-effects-of-lifestyle-diseases/>

McKeown on changes in death rate in tuberculosis, the most decrease in mortality was due to the lifestyle modification from crowded, unhygienic living conditions to clean and comfortable situations (Stjernsward, 1989: 1-2). Another main cause is that publics in developing nations are unaware of the close relationship between health and lifestyle. Due to the absence of education, the individuals do not have a good knowledge of the connection between illness and unhealthy lifestyle.

They do not realize that unhealthy ways of life can lead to diseases. For example, several patients suffered the pain of CVD (cardiovascular disease) because they did not receive the education that unhealthy lifestyle can lead to sicknesses such as CVD. If they had recognized that balance diets can prevent this illness, they would not develop the disease. A questionnaire among 341 participants indicates that overweight prevalence was 33.4% in Nepalese.

The reason is that government considered obesity as prosperity. As a result, there was a higher level of obesity prevalence among Nepalese civil servants than the general population yet. They had not realized the fact that obesity is a kind of lifestyle disease and it means unhealthy. Consequently, health education plays an important role in changing the national attitudes and behaviours (Simkhada, 2011: 507-517). The final cause of lifestyle diseases is that governments do not recognize the significance of the association between health and lifestyle diseases.

Although several publics want to keep fit, there is no correct guidance. A report describes that Sub-Saharan Africa is the most severe region that lacks

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healthcare in the world. The World Health Organization suggests that the lowest standard of the fundamental healthcare supply should be 34-40 dollars for each person every year in developing countries. Since those nations have accepted vast assistance from industrialized countries, it is possible that they can afford it (International Finance Corporation, 2008).

However, the scarce medical resources and facilities make it difficult for all patients in developing nations to gain access to treatments. For example, CVD has become the highest mortality disease in developing countries, because resources for this sickness are limited and patients cannot obtain good treatments.

This situation may lead to an enormous socioeconomic burden for individuals and society (Gaziano, 2007: 13-24). The last section will analyze the effects of lifestyle diseases in the developing countries. It seems that the economic effect for unindustrialized nations is much more serious than industrialized nations.

The World Economic Forum (2011) stated that the total output of chronic respiratory disease, diabetes and cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the developing world would surpass 7 trillion dollars from 2011 to 2025. The large costs of these illnesses seriously impede the development of those countries.

For example, in South Africa, the expenditure for the treatment of cardiovascular disease accounts for 2% to 3% of the whole financial revenue

(Gaziano, 2005). Some indirect costs, such as lost productivity and social healthcare burden, are even more significant.

A survey conducted in Brazil, India, China, South Africa and Mexico estimated conservatively that at least 21 million years of future productive life are lost every year because of cardiovascular disease (Gaziano, 2005). Another main lifestyle disease which also has a significant negative impact on economy is diabetes. In 2007, the treatment expenditure for diabetes in developing countries accounted for about 9% of the global healthcare costs (Nugent, 2010).

Moreover, lifestyle diseases are causing a large number of deaths in developing countries, which is a great threat to life expectancy.

To general public, lifestyle sicknesses are the exclusive diseases of western countries, but in fact most of the deaths occurred in the developing world. A report of WHO (2011) demonstrated that there were 36.1 million people dying from diseases such as diabetes, chronic lung diseases and strokes in 2008, and almost 80% of these deaths occurred in developing countries. At present, CVD is the leading cause of death over the world, especially in developing countries. In the Middle East and North Africa, deaths for cardiovascular disease are estimated to be 25% to 45% in total.

In the Russian Federation, life expectancy for men has decreased significantly from 71.6 years in 1986 to approximately 59 years in 2004 mainly because of CVD (Gaziano et al., 2006). The condition seems to be graver in some extreme poor countries, because many people suffering from

chronic diseases in those countries cannot receive efficient healthcare, which finally may lead to enormous premature death. The mortality associated with lifestyle diseases in the developing world is far beyond the public expectation. The negative impact of lifestyle diseases on individuals and society is also very severe.

Because of the lifestyle sicknesses, many individuals die in their most productive years, which implies a large loss of labor supplies in these developing countries. As a report from WHO (2011) mentioned, about 30 percent of deaths for non-communicable diseases in developing countries are under 60 years old. The shortage of labor force can make poor families even more difficult to survive. Therefore, children may be forced to drop out of school to support their families, which leads to an even lower education rate. The burden coming from lifestyle illnesses for low-income households seems enormous.

For example, a low-income family will spend at least 20 percent of its total income to care about a family member with diabetes (WHO, 2009).

Lacking medical resources, those in poor countries are experiencing the risk of both communicable and non-communicable sicknesses. Healthcare systems of these countries are also under high pressure. To conclude, this essay has demonstrated the causes and effects of lifestyle diseases in the world. There are a variety of factors that can lead to these sicknesses. First, excessive work pressure and poverty may emerge as leading causes.

Second, individuals sometimes do not pay much attention to their unhealthy ways of life, which involve diets, living conditions and work-life balance.

Third, there are unawareness and misunderstanding of the lifestyle diseases.

As a result, those illnesses can induce a number of serious issues. The individuals' lives may be affected and shortened. Then, the global mortality may rise. Finally, the economic cost of lifestyle diseases may increase as well.

If this current pattern continues, the health and wealth consequences for not only individuals but also societies will be enormous.

Therefore, it is necessary to draw the public's attention to healthy ways of life. The governments and health organisations should emphasize the importance and benefits of healthy lifestyle and provide guidance to help the public to improve their ways of life. Similarly, the individuals should turn particular attention to their own way of life and build a balanced healthy lifestyle by having well-balanced diets, enough sleeping hours, regular exercise, and proper time for work and relax.