

Nutrition assignment



Globalization is instrumental to an overall improvement in the standards and quality of living across most nations all over the world, especially in the ‘ western countries’. As a result of the reduction of food prices, the number of people ingesting more calories compared to that of our ancestors is increasing remarkably. Many people have been influenced by westernization and are now taking western diets, which accompany modernization and wealth.

Many people around the world have migrated from rural areas to urban areas where they access mechanized means of transportation and modern technology devices, which lead to reduced physical activities. As a lack of enough exercises, many people have gained excess weight and have become obese (Miller, 2007). This has resulted to rise of cases of obesity related diseases and premature deaths. The rise in living standards experienced in the western countries has influenced many countries across the world making people adopt more western lifestyles and habits for example, taking fast foods and junk food in their diets.

This has led to the spread of obesity and its related ailments globally, so intensely that it is now a global epidemic and a major public health hazard in many countries (Lusk, Roosen & Shogren, 2011). This paper explores how globalization and westernization are affecting levels of Obesity in Houston, United States. It also discusses the consequences of this transformation. How globalization and westernization are affecting levels of Obesity in Houston, United States Globalization can be described as an inexorable spread of knowledge, technology, culture and capital in countries all over the world.

Despite being associated with many positive outcomes for example, lifting many people out of poverty, hunger and infectious disease reduction and improving living standards; it has negative consequences too. It has led to the spread of obesity and its ailments across many countries in the world. Overweight has overtaken underweight despite the fact that malnutrition persists in many countries. Globalization has facilitated the accumulation of wealth for many nations leading to many people to gain a lot of weight because of sedentary lifestyles.

Houston city has topped many times as the fattest city. In 2010, for example, it was reported that 17% of adolescents aged between 15- 18, 29% of adults and 28% of fourth graders in Houston were obese. An area survey conducted by Stephen Klineberg and associates at Rice University indicated that one of the causes of obesity was the availability of affordable food alongside a high level of interest in the locally grown food by people living there. Obesity is by energy imbalance whereby too many calories are in, but only a few are (Davies & Fitzgerald, 2008).

The world in which people live shapes choices of food and physical activities, for example, in Houston, people prefer taking food products grown locally. Food price reduction in Houston also is fundamental to many people taking a lot of food. Most people in Houston live a sedentary lifestyle whereby they do not move around so much and eat big portions. Currently, 39% and 58% of children and adults respectively are obese or overweight in the Houston community.

Many people here take fast foods, eat generous portions, and have little or no meal planning structure, take snacks that are high calorie and high fat and sugar filled sodas among other carbon intensive foods (Klimis-Zacas, 2006). They also lack good exercises to help burn the calories because of their car cultures leading to energy imbalance hence obesity. Most people in Houston consume food from restaurants. Many families have done away with the traditional pattern of eating where families ate together at a kitchen table and prepared food at their homes.

According to research, more than 46% of family food expenditures in Houston are on food and beverages outside their homes. About 34% of this is on fast foods (Schlosser, 2012). People here are to buying and consuming restaurant foods, and it even accounts for more than a half of away from meal consumption at their homes. In most cases, they take fast foods, eat enormous portions, and have little or no meal filled sodas among other carbon intensive foods from the restaurants.

This is a practice that has from other western countries and is instrumental to people gaining more weight hence obesity. Soft drink consumption in Houston has overtaken many nutritious beverages for example, milk and fruit juices. The teenagers take the lead in taking or consuming soft drinks, copying the behaviors from teenagers of other western countries (Bagchi, 2011). Many people more especially the adults in Houston prefer higher energy foods for example, hamburger, popcorn and muffin and other fast foods.

These foods are with high fats, sugar and calories and if taken in large quantities with little or no physical activities may lead to excess weight gains hence obesity. In Houston, a changing environment has broadened both, eating habits and food options. This has seen many groceries stocking their shelves with a variety of products. There is accessibility of fast food restaurants, pre-packed foods and soft drinks. These types of foods may appear to be fast and convenient, but they contain lots of fats, sugar and calories (Preedy, Watson & Martin, 2011).

Houston people due to their sedentary lifestyle prefer such foods, and this accounts for the reason why it tops in the list of the fattest cities. Physical activities have a lot of benefits to every person for overall health. They help to control weight, balance, relieve pain of arthritis and decrease the risk of diseases (Yearbook of science and the future, 1975). Despite the fact that regular physical activities are beneficial, most people in Houston are sedentary'. With modern technology, many time and labor saving products have been created.

Technologies such as cars, computers, elevators, dishwashers and televisions have made these people lazier. Houston people have easy access to microwaves, washing machines, dishwashers and vacuum cleaners among other labor saving devices (Lupton, Miller & MIT List Visual Arts Center, 1992). With these devices, human energy needed for household work in Houston is down leading to people gaining more weight, obesity and its ailments. Most people use mopeds and cars to run short distance errands instead of walking or riding bicycles leading to reduced physical activities.

Instead of participating in games and other physical exercises during leisure time, most people spend their time watching television. Growth of mass media and computer technology in Houston is instrumental to people spending a lot of their leisure time sitting indoors watching TV or surfing the web setting aside very little or no time for outdoor physical activities. This lifestyle change in Houston is instrumental to the overall reduction of the amount of energy expended in their day to day life.

As a result of mechanization and modern technology, there are a few or no active jobs in manufacturing and service industries, in Houston. People expend less energy in traditional jobs than compared to how they did before the establishment of mechanized farm equipment Globalization has influenced rapid shifts to urban styles leading to behavior changes that have contributed to the obesity epidemic in Houston. The use of mass media to advertise food and beverages and copying from west's overeating habits or culture have influenced food choices by people in Houston (Smith, 2013).

Children, being prone to advertising sway are more lured by these two influences hence find themselves taking unhealthier options. This is a good reason to explain why teenagers in Houston lead in taking or consuming soft drinks and fast foods. Consequences of this transformation Westernization and globalization are fundamental to reduction in poverty in many countries across the world, reduction of infectious diseases and hunger, as well as improvement of quality life (Inglis & Gimlin, 2009). However, the same transformations are instrumental to ' globesity epidemic', a global obesity epidemic.

Some of the consequences of obesity include; short life expectancy, high risk of premature deaths, more risks of diabetes, high blood pressure, heart diseases, gallbladder problems, fertility and pregnancy problems among other risks (Hu, 2008). Some of the risks of obesity that involve psychological and social wellbeing include; people being discriminated because of being fat, social isolation and negative self-image among others. Day to day living also becomes a problem for people with obesity.

When one is obese, moving around becomes difficult leading to normal tasks becoming harder for them. An obese person also tires easily and they find themselves short of breath (Acton, 2012). They also feel humiliated when they are or when they do not fit in public transports seats, cars or telephone booths. Maintaining personal hygiene too becomes difficult for them.

Conclusion Obesity is by energy imbalance whereby more calories taken in exceed those that are burnt. Globalization and westernization have had a lot of positive effects to many countries all over the world.

They have led to a reduction in poverty in many countries across the world, reduction of infectious diseases and hunger, as well as improvement of quality life. However, they have some impacts too; for example, they have greatly contributed to a global obesity pandemic. Many people have migrated from rural areas to urban areas where living standards are higher. With many people being wealthy, labor saving devices are in many rich nations and many people have adopted more western lifestyles and habits for example, taking fast foods and junk food in their diets.

Houston city for example, has topped in the list of fattest cities many times. Most families living in the city use most of their food expenditures in restaurant foodstuffs and beverages which have a lot of calories. Mass media in Houston advertises those foods and beverages luring the people of Houston. They have a sedentary life, a life that most western people live that has spread globally, and this is a good reason for most of them becoming obese. They also have a culture of overeating and rarely get involved in physical activities. This has impacted them with obesity.