

World Congress on

Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Source

November 16-18, 2017, Barcelona, Spain

Factors Influencing the BMI of Fast Food Consumers: A Case of Mdanstane in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Pamela Matyolo*, Abbyssinia Mushunje and Saul Ngarava

¹University of Fort Hare, P. Bag X1314, King William's Town Road, Alice, 5700, South Africa

The South African fast-food industry has experienced recent growth. However, as consumers incorporated more fast food into their daily diets, obesity has become a major problem. Aggressive marketing techniques of fast foods coupled with busy urban lifestyle have significant implication on dietary health habits. This study sought to raise awareness on the factors that have a bearing on the Body Mass Index (BMI) of fast food consumers. The study used a semi-structured questionnaire in a survey through a quantitative research method. The study was limited to Mdanstane with a purposive sample size of 200 respondents. A Multiple regression model was fitted to identify factors influencing the BMI of fast food consumers. The respondents consisted of 51% female respondents with most of the respondents aged between 20 and 29. Seventy five percent of the respondents were Christians, with most earning less than R500 monthly mainly through State Social Grants and 92% of the respondents were non vegetarian. The study revealed that BMI level is mainly influenced by age (*P values* <0.01), gender, franchise source of food, source of income and level of income (*P values* <0.05) as well as supermarket source of food and consumers' perception towards the fast food (*P values* <0.1). Respondents who were underweight (BMI<18.5) had their BMI influenced by non-supermarket and non-franchise source of fast foods. Respondents with normal weight (i.e. BMI 18.5-24.9) were under the age of 20 on a Social Grant usually with a non-franchise source of fast food with preference to fast foods based on taste and energy-dense. Respondents who were overweight (BMI 25-29.9) had the BMI influenced by the source of income as remittances with a level of income less than R500. The study advocates for public health policy making concerning awareness of the health consequences of fast food consumption targeting mostly young adult females who mainly purchase in franchises and supermarkets with a high meaty diet. The study also recommends fast food enterprises to advise low price portfolios with low diets to targets the low income earners.