

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Obesity in Bangladeshi Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the obesity discourse in Bangladeshi newspapers. The paper uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how the Bangladeshi media frames obesity and how this framing influences public perceptions of the issue. The analysis reveals that obesity is framed in a negative light, with a focus on individual responsibility and blame. The composition strengthens the idea that obesity is an individual problem, instead of a public health crisis. Content analysis was used to assess the types and frequency of obesity-related news items on causes, determinants, impacts, and solutions. The qualitative research design was used to explore the framing of obesity through discourse analysis. The study uncovered that obesity was underrepresented in both newspapers. Individual causes and solutions were the most prominent news items in both newspapers, whereas genetic and biological determinants were less likely to be presented. The data for this study came from two major Bangladeshi newspapers: The Daily Star and The Daily Observer. The adult population, around 18 and older, that is capable of taking responsibility, was the target audience. A total of 80 articles were gathered to collect data, 40 from each newspaper, from the years 2016 to 2024. This method was chosen because it allowed for a closer look at the underlying ideology and power structures that affect obesity discourse in Bangladeshi media. Discourse analysis found three major frames—legitimization, responsibility, and stereotype—that meant to indicate individual responsibility and (by implication) social responsibility. In each newspaper, stereotypes, weight stigma, and shrill discourse were mentioned. Framing analysis found that news stories about obesity tended to transfer medical costs onto individuals rather than emphasizing the responsibility of the food and beverage industry. The use of stereotype frames was more prevalent in both newspapers. The presence of stereotype frames was greater in both newspapers. Specifically, older people are at higher risk of obesity. Children and teenagers who are addicted to electronic devices are more likely to develop obesity. Finally, the paper concludes by arguing that in order to reduce stigma and promote public health, one must take into account the complex social and economic factors that contribute to the problem.

INTRODUCTION

In light of Bangladesh's growing concern over obesity, our critical discourse analysis clarifies the various causes that contribute to this health crisis. The alarmingly high rates of obesity in the nation have prompted a closer look at the sociocultural, economic, and lifestyle factors that contribute significantly to this rapidly developing health epidemic. Global obesity rates have tripled since 1975 (Bener *et al.*, 2013) demonstrating that obesity is a major global health issue. The global electronic print media play a huge role in the image of obesity and how we are to address the problem.

There is also the question of how to enhance the quality of health journalism to achieve better health outcomes. Introduction In the colorful landscape of Bangladesh, a country famous for its richness in legacy, culture, and progress, an unsettling fact has begun to resonate across the healthscape. Overweight refers to the condition in which people are considered weighty or the amount to which an individual is obese. In today's social context, as the scope of being overweight and its negative effects begin to interfere with the lives of people in the community, mass media, the primary defining framework of and discursive engagement with this somewhat

multifaceted issue, becomes increasingly important. In turn, this article aims to unveil the complexities of South Asian newspapers especially in Bangladeshi newspapers in particular using critical discourse analysis (CDA) when examining obesity reporting. Analyzing the language and discussing the discursive features used in media assists the degree examination in discovering the details that go into constructing the notions of the public that contribute to forming perception and awareness of obesity. Holistically, the feature portrayal of health issues in a country where newspapers act as effective carriers of information, which mirrors, fosters, and influences the overall views, perceptions, and beliefs of a society, exercises enormous influence over the public consciousness. Bangladesh, which is now witnessing a series of socio-economic changes, could be an exemplar of traditional, post-modern, or modern values with competing connotations for health and lifestyles. Against this background, the article is analyzed using the cause-and-effect framework to explain the various factors that have led to the emergence of the obesity epidemic in societies and the role played by the media in passing communication on the various factors and effects of obesity. This is not a journey into the linguistic portrayal of obesity in the Bangladeshi

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newspapers; instead, it is research for the socio-cultural signification, political subtext, and health discourses that materialize in the newspapers. By critically detecting this semiotic domain, our long-term goal is to raise awareness about how the obesity problem is discursively constructed and, therefore, how communities in Bangladesh can respond to this emerging threat. The general population is divided into five categories based on their BMI (Body Mass Index): minor underweight or thinness (BMI of 18.5 kg/m² or less), desirable or ideal weight (BMI between 18.5 kg/m² and 24.9 kg/m²), overweight (BMI in the range of 25.0 kg/m² to 29.9 kg/m²), obesity (BMI in the range of 30.0 kg/m² to 39.9 kg/m²), and extreme (Srivastava and Apovian, 2019). Now, let's analyze the current situation in Bangladesh. Over the years, there has been a considerable rise in obesity levels. Currently, 20% of the population is obese, this fact is confirmed by (Gupta *et al.*, 2022). As such, obesity has been attributed to functional, nutritional transition, and other socio-demographic factors such as sedentary lifestyles due to the adoption of fast foods and other processed foods, genetic factors, and enhanced environmental factors as posed by (Goon, 2014). Given the prevalence of obesity in Bangladesh, it is critical to examine how the issue is framed in the media. Previous research has shown that the media can play an important role in shaping public opinion and influencing public health guiding principles (Well, 2007). To better take the pulse of how the public talks about obesity, it is good to see how the issue of obesity is conveyed in the media. This study investigates the discourses surrounding obesity in Bangladesh by analyzing articles from Bangladeshi newspapers using critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to (Peace, 2005) discourse and language analysis may reveal underlying ideologies and power structures.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A critical discourse analysis (CDA) of obesity in Bangladeshi newspapers the analysis is very clear in terms of the inflow into the media used for shadowing the issues in the discourse-frame in catering to obesity issues within the geographical territory of Bangladesh. In this analysis, we explore the language, framing, and narratives of newspaper articles to learn how obesity is portrayed and how such representations could potentially influence public perceptions and attitudes towards obesity. (Bishwajit, 2017) examined household wealth status and overweight and obesity among adult women in Bangladesh and Nepal. The conclusions of the study state that the more the woman is from a well-off household, the greater the probability that she has increased weight, and the less likely it is if she comes from a poor family. The findings highlight the underlying socioeconomic determinants of obesity rates and the importance of taking these larger contextual factors into account in dealing with weight concerns. (Ahmed and Zahangir, 2023) study urban-rural gaps in overweight and obesity in Bangladeshi women by examining the independent impacts of educational

attainment and mass media exposure. This may contribute to identifying the role of information and knowledge in the health outcomes of different population segments by studying the impact of education and media on weight-related issues. (Ahammed *et al.*, 2022) this multilevel study by (Alam, 2022) investigates the prevalence of overweight and obesity in reproductive-aged Bangladeshi women and their covariates at the individual-and community-levels. These findings indicate the importance of recognizing the multitude of influences on weight status and, therefore, the importance of multi-level interventions in changing individual behavior related to weight as well as creating supportive communities where people live and work to help solve the obesity problems facing the nation. Examining discourses of obesity and risk in the UK press (Hiltunen, 2023), give particular attention to how media framing contributes to the obesity-risks process. The findings from this comparative analysis of obesity frames in the UK and Germany highlight that media play a key role in shaping people's perceptions of weight-related issues and, thereby, in policy debates on obesity prevention and management. The study by (De Brún *et al.*, 2013) of the portrayal in the Irish media of obesity the paradox of public discourse, encoding attributions of responsibility and gender portrayal, these results reveal how media narratives framing individual responsibility for obesity may detract attention from the wider environmental determinants of obesity and reinforce the importance of accurate and balanced reporting on obesity. In their British Journal of Health Psychology article, (Carbone-Moane *et al.*, 2021) discuss weight stigma in the British media during the COVID-19 pandemic and how portrayals of obesity in the media can drive public health responses and further stigmatize individuals who are overweight. This thematic analysis highlights a gap for tactful and evidence-based journalism reporting on weight-related topics in the prevention of perpetuating the discrimination and stigmatization of obesity. (Blevins and Ragozzino, 2019) create a systematic review of social media. They conducted a review on Twitter for obesity information that showed high amounts of stigmatizing. This research highlights how social media could affect public understanding of obesity and the need for reliable and less prejudiced communication on weight and health. (Hingle and Kunkel, 2012) investigate the media representations of childhood obesity and the ways that in discourses of weight combat, mothers are given responsibility for managing their children's weight. This research highlights the gendered dimension of the obesity discussion and the importance of scrutinizing the social norms and stereotypes shaping ideas about parental responsibilities in the response to childhood obesity. (Flint, 2020) commented on the stigmatizing media portrayal of obesity during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the negative effects of weight stigma on both the physical and psychological well-being of people living with obesity. The study argues for the need for media to portray messages about weight such that the interlocutors

empathize with one another to prevent weight discrimination and to promote a whole-person approach to good health and well-being. (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2018) trends, prevalence, and risk factors of overweight and obesity among women of reproductive age in Bangladesh, the study allows to identify the change in overweight. It is important to keep this information in mind when examining the ways that gender-specific issues regarding obesity are covered in newspapers, as this can help to pick up on potential biases or underrepresentation in media reporting. (Khanam *et al.*, 2021) study on underweight, overweight, and obesity among Bangladeshi women of reproductive age, however, it highlights how body weight is shaped by a two-way relationship with education and Socio-economic status (SES). The acknowledgement of an intersectional approach is central to a more sophisticated understanding of the representation of obesity in newspaper discourses, illustrating the need to consider different social determinants in the discussion of this complex public health issue. (Shill and Alam, 2023) presents a study titled An Insight into Fat Mass and Obesity Gene Polymorphism and its Association with the Measures of Obesity among the Bangladeshi Population, which brings a genetic locus to the obesity conversation. In newspapers, this can be interpreted as portraying obesity as a matter of individual predispositions, and genes may offer complexity to weight management talks by accounting for hereditary factors and all of the underlying genetic biochemistry. (Brookes and Baker, 2021) look at the fear and responsibility discourses of obesity in media representations of UK newspaper headlines, providing a cross-comparative framework that could help to understand how newspaper narratives about obesity emerge. An analysis of attributions of risk and responsibility in media coverage of obesity reveals the ideologies and power relations informing public understandings of obesity. The analysis of obesity frames and counter-frames in British and German online newspapers by (Atanasova and Koteyko, 2017) highlights the role of media framing in the development of public understanding of obesity. It allows researchers to know what stories the public is being told through the press—what narratives move people to think in a particular way about obesity—and, hopefully, what narratives policymakers pay attention to when they make decisions about obesity interventions. It has been seen obesity-related news items that incite fear regarding prevalence, appearance, and individual responsibility about obesity may serve to increase societal stigmatization and obdurate attitudes towards obese people. Moreover, media portrayals do disseminate information pertaining to public health and perpetuate the obesity taboo. (Atanasova *et al.*, 2012) existing studies to date have been predominantly concerned with problematizing obesity in news stories, suggesting the necessity to examine the process of obesity communication critically. (Glenn *et al.*, 2013) analyzed news media reporting on weight-loss surgery and utilized critical discourse analysis to consider

the representation of bariatric surgery. The research reveals the need for research focused on the portrayal of medical treatments for obesity in the media and the role the media plays in influencing public perceptions of weight management interventions. (Flint *et al.*, 2016) findings contradict (Ashcroft *et al.*, 2016) where their suggestion portrays that the obesity in newspapers can result in anti-obesity attitudes. Therefore, in conducting a critical discourse analysis, researchers can take a number of methodologies and frameworks from studies such as (Brookes *et al.*, 2022) in terms of obesity in newspapers. (Bargain & Zeidan, 2019) used data from a panel in Mexico and showed that the link between subjective well-being (SWB) and obesity is dependent on the earning ability of the individual. For those in the highest income percentage, obesity has a detrimental impact on mental health. There is substantial economic inequality in Mexico, and this socio-economic background can lead to differences in estimates of the prevalence of obesity. One may also have a negative image of obesity in the higher socioeconomic stratum in relation to modern western standards of livelihood. Contrarily, obesity may have a positive and beneficial impact on the poorest, if it is seen as a symbol of wealth. As a result, whether obesity and SWB are associated may be different across socioeconomic status. (Moniuszko, 2023) by 2035, more than half of the world's population will be overweight or obese. Unless there is action on a global scale, a new forecast shows that by 2035, more than half the people in 19 countries will be overweight. Based on the figures published in the World Obesity Federation 2023 Atlas, at least half of the people in this world could be fat or overweight in the next 12 years—more than 4 billion. This conclusion is drawn in the report on the body mass index (BMI). The World Health Organization takes into account a BMI of 25 and above to be heavy, and 30 or more is considered obese. And globally, 2.6 billion people, or 38% of all people, fell into these categories by 2020. The researchers estimated that child obesity could rise with 208 million boys and 176 million girls with obesity in 2035. “Especially worrying is the fact that the increases in obesity in children and adolescents are the largest, said Louise Baur, who is the chair of the World Obesity Federation. Governments and policymakers need to make sure they avoid passing on health, social, and economic costs to the younger generation. The federation estimates that the global social impact of the health illnesses associated with obesity will be over 4 trillion annually by 2035, or 3% of world GDP. The results predict the countries in the world where the largest obesity increases are expected to occur almost all. (Kuroki, 2016) using cross-sectional data from the United States, also found lower life satisfaction with overweight and obese status. Even when controlling for various health indicators showed that the obesity coefficient is still negative and significant in relation to life satisfaction. We have many causes and effects of obesity that we have to consider.

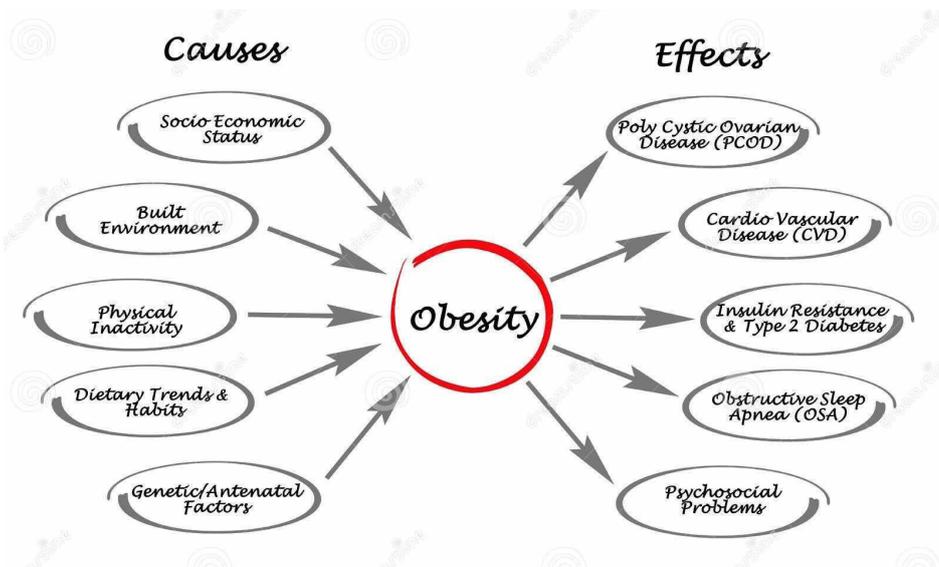


Figure 1: Diagram of Obesity: causes and effects (Stock, 2023)

All in all, a critical discourse analysis of obesity in Bangladeshi newspapers necessitate a comprehensive examination of scientific research on the prevalence, determinants, and implications of obesity in the Bangladeshi population. Even from this study, the reader might get a nuance understanding of how this public health issue is portrayed and discussed in newspaper discourse by synthesizing relevant studies and taking into account larger research on media framing of obesity, thereby contributing to informed policy interventions and public awareness campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

The data was analyzed using a qualitative approach. The articles were coded and categorized according to the themes that emerged from the data. The themes included: causes of obesity, health risks associated with obesity, prevention and treatment of obesity, and public health initiatives to address obesity. Target audiences were the adult population roughly aged 18 and above, who are capable to take responsibility. The data for this study was collected from two major Bangladeshi newspapers: The Daily Star and The Daily Observer. From 2016 to 2024, a total of 80 articles (40 from each newspaper) were collected for data analysis. The articles were selected based on their relevance to the topic of obesity. The data was analyzed using a critical discourse analysis approach. This approach was chosen because it allows for an examination of the underlying ideologies, power structures and linguistic nuances embedded within texts that shape the discourse of obesity in the Bangladeshi media. The analysis focused on the language used to discuss obesity, as well as the underlying assumptions and ideologies that were present in the news articles. By adopting this lens, we endeavor to differentiate not only what is said about obesity in Bangladeshi newspapers but also how it is said, examining the implicit meanings, biases, and rhetorical devices that shape public discourse.

Data Analysis

Over the span of the nine-year period from 2016 to 2024, an analysis of articles on obesity from two prominent newspapers, The Daily Star and The Daily Observer, sheds light on the prevailing perspectives and narratives surrounding this unescapable health issue. The articles reflect a range of opinions on the matter, touching upon individual responsibility, health consequences, societal attitudes, and potential solutions.

In the discourse around obesity, the individual is often singled out as the primary actor responsible for their own health, as evidenced by a statement from (Hassan, 2019) in the Daily Star which asserts that “overweightness is a personal problem, and it is up to the individual to take responsibility for their own health.” This perspective is echoed in The Daily Star (2019), which characterizes obesity as a sign of laziness and a lack of self-control. The prevailing theme in both newspapers is the attribution of obesity to personal choices and behaviors. The articles tend to emphasize the individual consequences of obesity, particularly in terms of health and social aspects. According to (The Daily Star, 2021) obesity is linked to various health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. (The Daily Star, 2024) highlights the social challenges faced by obese individuals, noting that they are frequently subjected to ridicule and discrimination. These perspectives emphasize the multifaceted nature of the obesity issue, encompassing both physical and societal dimensions. Notably, the analysis reveals a common thread in the proposed solutions to obesity, with both newspapers advocating for individual lifestyle changes. (Naureen, 2022) emphasizes in the Daily Star the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise, asserting that these are the only ways to combat obesity. Similarly, (Khan, 2023) advocates in Daily Star for lifestyle changes, including a balanced diet and daily workouts. Interestingly, (The Daily Star, 2023) introduces an alternative perspective, attributing

weight gain to the use of thyroid medicine, indicating the complexity of factors influencing obesity. A distinctive divergence between the two newspapers emerges in their approaches to the topic. The Daily Star leans towards a medical perspective, emphasizing the health implications of obesity, while The Daily Observer takes a sociocultural stance, underlining the social consequences and stigma associated with being overweight. Furthermore, the analysis uncovers a shared tendency in both newspapers to concentrate on individual responsibility for obesity, largely neglecting broader societal factors that contribute to the problem. Despite the growing awareness of the impact of environmental and systemic factors on obesity, the articles insistently position the individual as the focal point of responsibility. Moreover, the study identifies a prevailing negative portrayal of obesity in both newspapers, with limited exploration of the potential benefits of being overweight or obese. The subtle interplay of genetics and DNA in obesity, which can predispose individuals to weight gain, receives little attention. This oversight is significant, as it highlights a gap in the discourse around obesity, neglecting the influence of genetic factors that might make weight management more challenging for some individuals. The analysis of articles from The Daily Star and The Daily Observer spanning the years 2016 to 2024 provides valuable insights into the prevailing narratives and perspectives on obesity. The individual-centric focus, combined with a lack of attention to larger societal factors and genetic influences, underscores the complexity of the issue and suggests avenues for a more comprehensive and nuanced discussion surrounding obesity in public discourse. The analysis also revealed that the articles tended to focus on individual solutions to the obesity problem, such as diet and exercise. For example, one writeup in Daily Star specified that “the only way to battle against obesity is to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly” (Jabbar, 2016). Another article stated that “the key to losing weight is to make lifestyle changes, such as eating a balanced diet and working-out daily” (Observer, 2023). Another newspaper specified that taking thyroid medicine is responsible for gaining weight. (The Daily Star, 2023). Additionally, the study’s outcomes revealed that the two newspapers took very different approaches to the topic of obesity. The Daily Star tended to focus on the medical aspects of obesity, whereas The Daily Observer emphasized the social and cultural aspects. The study also discovered that both newspapers, having targeted an audience consisting of grown-up people, were inclined to focus on individual responsibility for obesity rather than looking at the larger societal factors that contribute to the problem. Furthermore, the study discovered that both newspapers tended to represent overweightness undesirably, with little discussion of the potential benefits of being overweight or obese and the unfortunate role of DNA to cause obesity which is difficult to avoid. So, the analysis of articles spanning from 2016 to 2024 from The Daily Star and The Daily Observer reveals a predominant focus on individual responsibility for obesity, with varying

emphases on medical and societal aspects. The findings suggest opportunities for a more comprehensive dialogue that explores the intricate interplay of individual choices, societal factors, and the complex nature of obesity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Individual solutions to the obesity problem, such as diet and exercise, were emphasized in the articles. These solutions, however, fail to account for the complex social and economic factors that contribute to the problem because of poverty, food insecurity, and a lack of access to healthy food. Furthermore, a focus on individual responsibility and blame can be harmful, leading to feelings of guilt and shame in obese people. This can lead to additional health issues such as depression and anxiety (Hossain *et al.*, 2020). We need to acknowledge, without criticizing them, that people become obese due to genetic factors such as hormonal imbalance and hereditary causes. Therefore, we should not shame or blame them but rather have an empathetic outlook on their day-to-day lives. Furthermore, the obesity discourse was frequently linked to other issues, such as poverty and a lack of education. Obesity, for example, is a rising issue in Bangladesh, particularly among the poor and uneducated, according to an article in (The Daily Observer, 2024). An examination of obesity discourse in Bangladeshi newspapers revealed a number of key themes. This was evident in headlines like “Obesity: A Growing Problem in Bangladesh” (The Daily Star, 2019) and “Obesity: A Growing Health Risk” (The Daily Star, 2019). Obesity, according to these headlines, is a personal problem rather than a public health issue. Eating an unhealthy diet, for example, with high-calorie items like fast food, processed snacks, and sugary drinks, might result in weight gain. Obesity can be caused by a lack of physical activity. Genetics, on the other hand, can play a role in obesity since certain genetic differences make people more susceptible to gaining weight. It is a side effect of taking thyroid medication. Type 2 diabetes and associated cardiovascular diseases, including heart disease and stroke, are all made more likely by obesity, a condition in which the body does not create enough insulin or does not use insulin correctly. It also raises the risk of some cancers, including breast, colon, and endometrial cancer. Therefore, obesity is a complex condition influenced by various factors, encompassing lifestyle choices, genetic predispositions, and environmental elements. Sedentary lifestyles with low physical activities contribute significantly, as do overeating, food addiction, or excessive nutrient intake. Inadequate sleep, smoking, alcoholism, insomnia, and certain medications can also contribute to weight gain. Genetic factors and hormonal imbalances play a role, as well as emotional factors such as stress, family history, and genes that contribute to weight gain. Social and economic status, environmental factors, education, and pregnancy are additional contributors. The prevalence of easily accessible junk food and beverages, coupled with colorful advertisements, contributes to unhealthy dietary habits. Misinformation online can also impact individuals’

understanding of nutrition and weight management. Age, especially older age, is linked to a higher risk of obesity. Both newspapers mentioned that multifaceted issues require comprehensive strategies targeting lifestyle, genetics, and environmental influences. Furthermore, a balanced diet that is high in fruits, vegetables, and oats and low in processed foods can help prevent weight gain. Regular exercise can encourage weight loss and prevent weight gain. Smaller portions of food may help prevent weight gain. People can reduce their weight and keep it off by altering their diet and engaging in more physical exercise. Some drugs can aid in weight loss and weight maintenance. For those who are extremely obese, surgery may be an option in some circumstances. Newspapers provide some suggestions. Preventing obesity can be achieved by educating people about a healthy diet and regular exercise. Then expanding access to nutritious foods, such as fruits and root vegetables, can help reduce obesity. Obesity has been connected to food industry advertising directed towards children and youth. Other industries' advertising frequently objectifies women and girls, contributing to body dissatisfaction, eating disorders, low self-esteem, and despair. Many adolescent girls, in particular, have body image issues and engage in problematic weight-control activities. Obesity and unhealthy weight-control habits (e.g., fasting, skipping meals, eating very little food, vomiting, and using diet pills, laxatives, or diuretics) have been linked. Weight bias may marginalize children and adolescents seen as obese by their peers and parents, putting them at risk of mocking and bullying. Body dissatisfaction and weight-related issues are prevalent across all ethnic groups, and weight-related stigma has been linked to depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal thoughts. Creating regulations that encourage healthy eating and physical activity can also assist. The most interesting point is that both newspapers discussed how advertisements, in online media are to blame for obesity. The more time children spend watching television, the more obese they become. Children's exposure to television advertisements for unhealthy food

products (such as high-calorie, low-nutrient snacks, fast foods, and beverages) is a substantial risk factor for obesity. According to (Miller *et al.*, 2008) every one-hour increase in TV viewing per day leads to higher intakes of sugar-sweetened beverages, fast food, red and processed meat, and overall calories (48.7 kcal/day) among very young children. It is possible to gain excess weight by consuming only 150 calories every day. Children who watch more than three hours of television every day are 50% more likely to be obese than children who watch less than two hours (Ashton, 2004). Children's food and beverage advertising affects their product preferences, demands, and diet. The food and beverage industries have resolved to self-regulate their marketing to children, but this has not resulted in a significant improvement in the marketing of healthier food to children (i.e., fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and beans). Almost three out of every four items advertised to youngsters are unhealthy, contributing to the obesity pandemic. Food advertisements on television account for half of all commercial time on children's programs. According to Ashton, these advertisements are nearly entirely dominated by unhealthy food products (34% for sweets and snacks, 28% for cereal, 10% for fast food, 4% for dairy products, 1% for fruit juices, and 0% for fruits or vegetables). Public service announcements or advertisements for healthy eating are rarely shown to children. On the contrary outdoor advertising can influence food intake both directly and indirectly through promoting food purchases. Food advertising has been linked to childhood obesity, and marketing in general has been regarded as one of the key contributors to the obesity pandemic (Lesser *et al.*, 2013). So, obesity is a complex issue influenced by various factors. To effectively manage and prevent obesity, it is important to take a holistic approach. This involves maintaining a sensible diet, engaging in daily workouts, and addressing underlying psychological and environmental factors. It is always recommended to seek personalized advice and treatment from healthcare professionals.

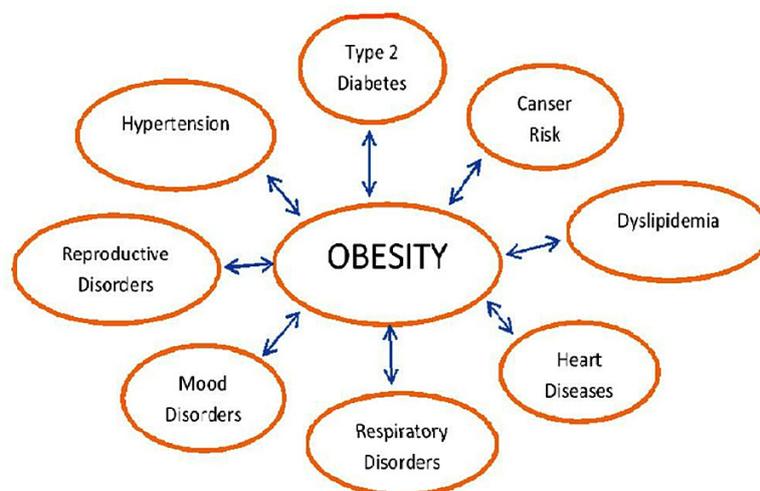


Figure 2: Flowchart depicting complications of obesity (Jha & Mehendale, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The critical discourse analysis of obesity in Bangladeshi newspapers highlights the alarming prevalence of obesity-related health issues in the country. Obesity has implications beyond physical health, affecting mental health, reproductive health, and overall well-being. Health problems associated with obesity include insulin resistance, lethargy, osteoarthritis, depression, and more. The relationship between obesity and various health conditions, ranging from heart disease to psychological problems, emphasizes the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to address this growing health concern. The findings highlight the interconnectedness of various elements, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive approach to address this public health issue. Instead of blaming individuals for their weight, this discussion should focus on solutions that address the root causes of obesity. Obesity is linked to serious health concerns such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer. It can also cause mental problems, including depression and low self-esteem. Public health initiatives can help foster healthy lifestyles and reduce the risk of obesity by expanding physical activity opportunities, providing access to healthy foods, and promoting healthy behaviors. Isometrics, daily bodybuilding, and moderate exercise are beneficial for mental health. Children and adolescents can benefit from moderate television watching, regular family mealtimes, and workouts. Limiting time spent watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the web, monitoring children's media use, and encouraging healthy dietary habits can also contribute to a healthier future. A holistic and collaborative effort involving government bodies, healthcare professionals, educators, and the community is required to address the obesity epidemic in Bangladesh. By implementing targeted strategies, it is possible to mitigate the impact of obesity and promote a healthier society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Promoting bodily activity encourage and facilitate initiatives that promote a more active lifestyle. This can include public awareness campaigns, community programs, and policies that support physical education in school, college and workplaces. Nutrition education implements instructive programs to raise awareness about proper nutrition and the dangers of overeating. Addressing food addiction and promoting healthier eating habits can contribute significantly to opposing obesity. Sleep hygiene advocates for the importance of sufficient and quality sleep. Promote sleep hygiene practices and create an environment that supports better sleep patterns to address the role of inadequate sleep-in obesity. Regulation of medications evaluate and regulate medications that may contribute to weight gain as a side effect. Health professionals should be vigilant when prescribing medications and monitor patients for potential weight-related issues, stop tobacco and alcohol. Implement and enforce policies aimed at stopping tobacco and alcohol consumption. These substances not only contribute to unhealthy lifestyles

but can also impact metabolism and increase the risk of obesity. Stress management develop and promote stress management programs, especially in educational and workplace settings. Addressing emotional factors and providing coping mechanisms for stress can contribute to better lifestyles. Genetic counseling and healthcare access offer genetic counseling for individuals with a family history of obesity. Improve access to healthcare services to ensure early detection and intervention for those with genetic or hormonal imbalances contributing to obesity. Social and economic interventions implement policies that address social and economic disparities, as these factors play a significant role in obesity. Ensure access to affordable and nutritious food options for all socio-economic groups. Environmental changes create environments that support physical activity and healthier food choices. Urban planning, workplace design, and community infrastructure should be oriented towards fostering healthier lifestyles. Educational programs targeting different age groups, focusing on the risks associated with obesity, the importance of a balanced diet, and the hazards of relying on junk food and beverages. Pregnancy health programs should be implemented for pregnant women, emphasizing proper nutrition and lifestyle choices to prevent excessive weight gain during pregnancy. Combating online misinformation collaborate with online platforms, health professionals, and educators to combat misinformation related to obesity. Promote accurate information through various digital channels. Regulating the advertisement of junk food advocate for and enforce regulations on the advertising of colorful junk food. Implement policies that restrict the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages, especially targeting children and adolescents. Public awareness campaigns launching targeted public consciousness movements can help to educate the people about the detrimental effects of obesity on health. These drives should emphasize the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle, including regular exercise and a balanced diet. Interventions in policy enacting laws that encourage better eating practices and make it easier to engage in more physical activity is necessary. This may involve regulations on the food industry, subsidies for nutritious foods, and the development of public spaces for recreational activities. Healthcare system strengthening to address obesity-related health issues is essential. This includes training, healthcare professionals to provide effective obesity management, establishing obesity clinics, and ensuring access to necessary medical interventions. Education initiatives integrating health education into school curriculum can help impart healthy habits from an early age. Additionally, providing resources and workshops for adults on nutrition, fitness, and mental health can contribute to long-term behavior change. There should be initiatives to provide psychosocial support and counseling services to individuals struggling with weight-related issues. This can contribute to improve mental health outcomes and overall well-being. Addressing the obesity epidemic in Bangladesh requires a multi-faceted approach involving public awareness, education, and policy initiatives. It

is crucial for the healthcare system, government, and society at large to collaborate in promoting balanced lifestyles, encouraging physical activity, and fostering better nutritional habits. As we navigate the complex discourse surrounding obesity, it is paramount that we recognize its profound impact on individual health and broader societal well-being. Through informed discussions, proactive measures, and a collective commitment to health, we can strive to control the rising tide of obesity in Bangladesh. The time for action is now.

Finally, further research can be conducted to explore different aspects of this phenomenon. Addressing and preventing obesity is crucial for reducing the risk of these health conditions and promoting a healthier life. Practitioners or researchers should understand the genetic condition, as for instance hormonal imbalance, and give proper guidelines to maintain a compact lifestyle.

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