

# **Body Weight Perception and Management Practices of Overweight and Obese Nigeria Primary Care Patients.**

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## **Abstract**

**Title:** Body Weight Perception and Management Practices of Overweight and Obese Nigeria Primary Care Patients.

**Context:** Overweight and obesity constitute vital driving forces for chronic diseases globally and contribute substantially to multimorbidity in the Nigerian primary care setting. Patients' weight and body size self-perceptions do influence weight management practices and such information is essential for clinicians in addressing the problem.

**Objectives:** To determine the accuracy of body weight and size self-perceptions and weight management practices of overweight/obese patients in Nigeria.

**Design:** Cross-Sectional Study.

**Participants:** Overweight/obese adult patients above 17 years receiving care at practice-based research network (PBRN) primary care facilities in Nigeria.

**Intervention:** interviewer-administered questionnaires and Modified Stunkard's body silhouettes were used to collect data on body weight, size perceptions and weight management practices. Weight and height were measured.

**Results:** Of the 1071 overweight/obese patients from 89 tribes analyzed, 27.5% (n=294/1071) correctly perceived their body weight status. Significantly more overweight (44%; n=132/302) than obese (21%; n=162/769) patients correctly perceived their weight status. ( $X^2$  29.7;  $P < 0.001$ ). Overweight patients (48.3%; n=146/302) were about 3 times more likely than obese patients (18.3%; n=141/769) to misperceive their weight status as normal. (OR 2.64; CI 2.0 - 3.4).

Also, 62.7% (n=671/1071) of patients correctly perceived their body sizes. A significantly higher proportion of male (9.4%; n=24/256) than female (4.9%; n=39/815) overestimated their body size. ( $X^2$  6.45;  $P=0.01$ ). Irrespective of BMI Status and assessment method, female were more likely to underestimate while male were more likely to overestimate their BMI status.

Preferred body size choices showed that about 59% (n=629/1071) of participants preferred overweight body size, 29.4% (n=315/1071) normal weight body size and 2% (n=21/1071) preferred underweight body size.

Only 17.4% (n=186/1071) of patients were engaged in weight loss activities. Overweight and obese perceivers were two and half and three times respectively, more likely than normal weight perceivers to engage in weight loss activities. ( $X^2$  6.81;  $P < 0.01$ ).

**Conclusion:** Most overweight/obese patients have good visual understanding of their body sizes but their body weight perception greatly underestimated their BMI-categorized weight status with preference for overweight body size. Weight perception influences participation in weight management practices and clinicians should explore this relationship to address misperception and increase weight reduction management.

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## **Author's contributions**

JKA conceptualized the study, drafted the protocol, pilot tested the tool, participated in data collection and drafted the manuscript. OO reviewed the protocol, participated in data collection in the North-Central Zone, oversaw the logistics of the ethical clearance by the centres, analysed the data and reviewed the manuscript. UNE reviewed the protocol, supervised the data collection in the South-South Zone and reviewed the manuscript. OOO reviewed the protocol, secured ethical clearance, participated in data collection, coordinated data collection in the South-West Zone and reviewed the draft manuscript. GB reviewed the protocol, collect data, coordinated data collection in the North-West Zone and review the draft manuscript. OJ reviewed the protocol, collected data, coordinated data collection in the South-East Zone and reviewed the draft manuscript. AM reviewed the protocol, collected data, coordinated data collection in the North-East Zone and reviewed the manuscript.

## **Competing interest**

All authors stated that they have no conflict of interest to declare.

(Note: 8 researchers met the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) criteria for authorship of this study however, at the time of sending in this abstract, only 7 have gone through the draft and also endorsed the submission for the abstract for the poster presentation as contained in the revised cover letter. We hope to include the remaining authors once they have finally endorsed the poster presentation.)

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