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Lifestyle Pattern and Quality of Life among School Children in Gaza City- Palestine

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Dedication

To my husband who supported me through each step of the way, for being for me the greatest source of motivation, inspiration and push me in the success way ... The sun of my life "Ghassan"

To who sacrificed a lot for me to become what I am now … My mother and father.

To the light of my eyes ... My kids "Waseem, Rama, Khalil & Jad"

To who supported me, my second family ... My mother in law and father in law.

To my friends

To my colleagues

And

To everyone who encouraged, supported, and helped me to make this study a reality

I dedicate this research for all of them…

Thank you all for your endless support.

Kholoud Khaled Al Sedawi

Declaration

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of master is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis or any of its parts has not been submitted for higher degree to any other university or institution.

Kholoud Khaled Al Sedawi

Signed: *Kholoud Khaled Al Sedawi*

Date: 28 Nov. 2018

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With respect,

Kholoud Al Sedawi

Abstract

Universally, there is a growing interest in studying the Quality of Life (QOL); where, most studies have shown that the quality of life has positive outcomes on both the individual and societal levels. This study ascertains the status of quality of life of the Gaza children and explores its correlates with their life style among children aged 10, 11 and 12 years.

Triangulated study design was used. For the quantitative part; 370 randomly selected (multi-stage cluster sampling approach) school children consented to participate of the study with 95.2% response rate. In addition, four focus group discussions with student' mothers were conducted. Quantitative data were collected first through face-to-face interviewed questionnaire and preliminary findings derived from the analysis of the questionnaires had informed the qualitative data collection. The researcher used the international scales for lifestyle and Kidscreen-52 Instrument for QOL. Cronbach Alpha readings for these scales were high (Cronbach's Alpha 0.937). The Statistical Package for SPSS software was used for the quantitative data entry and analysis while open coding thematic technique was used to analyze the qualitative data.

Findings revealed that 74.9% of children presented with normal weight for age, 2.2% of children were underweight with higher prevalence amongst girls (2.4%) than boys (2.0%). Furthermore, 23% were obese and overweight, boys showed higher obesity rates than in girls 29.5% and 15.3% respectively. The study findings revealed that a large percentage of Food Consumption Score (FCS) for food groups (94.9%) of children have acceptable food consumption and a very small percent (0.8%) of children have poor food consumption. It is worth mentioning that, more than half of children (62.2%) were living active and very active life, of the boys were (35.2%) higher than girls (27%). Differently, 36.8% of children were sedentary and low active, where the boys equal girls at this point. Also, most children sleep more than eight hours daily and practice appropriate personal hygiene habits. Main results indicate that most of the children had a high level of QOL in all dimensions, where the QOL among girls was higher than boys in most domains of QOL. Where the lowest domain of QOL for both was autonomy had the lowest score (74%), and the parent relations and home life which elicited the highest scores (93%). There was a significant association between high level of QOL and food intake with some socio demographic-economic factors such as had the monthly income more than 1500 NIS, children who always took pocket money and number of family members that 6 members and less. Inferential statistics show that children who have parents educated, parents employed, members of smaller families and take pocket money respondents had elicited statistically significantly higher quality of life scores than their counterparts (P value less than 0.05). Interestingly, ANOVA analysis shows that most of life style patterns were statistically significantly with the overall of QOL (P value less than 0.05). Where the children with undesirable lifestyles, such as skipping breakfast, longer television viewing, and later bedtime, were more likely to have poor level of QOL. These correlations were independent of sex, BMI and social background. Also there were no statistically significant differences in the overall of QOL in relation to participants' physical activity and their BMI Z-score.

The study concluded that the QOL is a multi-faceted concept and interventions aiming to enhance it, must be multi-sectoral. The study results can be used for the purposes of addressing the children needs and help to solve their lifestyle problems such as promoting healthy life style, positive behaviors, good food habits, conduct health education and increasing physical activity need to be implemented. Further understanding of these relationships will facilitate the development of interventions to help children with poor QOL.

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Abbreviations

AASM	American Academy of Sleep Medicine
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BMI	Body Mass Index
CDC	Center of Disease Control and Prevention
CNPP	Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSHS	Global School-based Student Health Survey
HRQOL	Health related Quality of Life
HUC	Health Unit Collaboration
IFH	International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene
IRC	International Water and Sanitation Centre
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NIDDK	National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
NIS	New Israeli Shekel
NPAP	National Physical Activity Plan Alliance
PASSIA	Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PNGO	Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization Network
QOL	Quality of Life
SD	Standard Deviation
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations for children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
US	United States
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Research over the past decades has proven that childhood is a period when the lifestyle patterns are initiated.). As children grow up, the life style evolves in general. One of this pattern is the physical activity, where the physical activity has immediate health benefits in childhood and adolescence, and it can be considered the construction phase for adulthood, thus resulting in the long-term health benefits (Macera, 2010). However, many children and adolescents in developed countries have sedentary lifestyles such as inactive physical activity, too much television viewing, video games, and increasing use computers (Kimm et al, 2002; Salmon et al., 2005; Rey-López et al., 2008; Clarke, 2015). Sedentary lifestyles are recognized to be associated with children and adolescents' obesity, diabetes, sleep disorders, violent behaviors, and other problems (Singer et al, 2004; WHO, 2002).

Recent several studies have revealed that lifestyles are associated with physical and mental health status, as well as the Quality of Life (QOL), where it is considered to be a multifactorial structure that focuses on individuals' personal evaluation of their physical health, mental health, and social functioning (Sawyer et al, 2001; Velten et al, 2014), It may be compatible with the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health as status of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity (WHO, 2006b; WHO, 2011a).

Lifestyle plays an important role on a person's health synchronized with technological development that affects positive or negative on the daily lifestyle such as breakfast, physical activity, smoking, watching television and using computer (WHO, 2008)

The dietary behaviors is another important factor of lifestyle, that influenced by many factors in a complex interplay manner. At the beginning of their lives, parents and the