

## Evaluation of Nursing Students' Perceptions of Obese individuals

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**Background:** Obesity, known as one of the most important health problems in the worldwide, is a disease that must be threatened. Psychologically, obesity may lead to stigmatization and result with negative stereotyping, judgments, bullying, low self-esteem, self-under treatment, depression, and social isolation. Objectives of the study to identify the attitudes of nursing students about obese individuals.

**Material and method:** Descriptive study design was used to adopted current study. The study extended from (15-12-2021) to (15-5-2022). The sample of the study consists of (129) students from second, third, and fourth stages at college of nursing in university of Mosul. Data were collected from participants using an online survey and questionnaires took approximately 10 min to complete.

**Results:** the study found that there are (51.16%) of the nursing students are positive attitudes about obese individual while, (48.84%) of the negative attitudes, And there a highly significant between nursing attitudes and some demographic data such as socioeconomic status, stage, and BMI.

**Conclusion and recommendations:** the researchers concluded that more than half of the students, with a slight percentage, had positive attitudes towards obese people. And there a highly significant between nursing attitudes and their some demographic data such as socioeconomic status, stage, and BMI. The researchers recommend not to show negative feelings and behaviors towards obese people, but to encourage and support them to control weight to get rid of health problems resulting from obesity.

**Keywords:** Evaluation, Nursing Students', Perceptions , Obese .

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### Introduction:

Obesity, known as one of the most important health problems in the worldwide, is a disease that must be threatened. Psychologically, obesity may lead to stigmatization and result with negative stereotyping, judgments, bullying, low

self-esteem, self-under treatment, depression, and social isolation. Individuals with a higher body weight in addition to their physical ailments, need to cope with psychological and sociological problems originating from the negative attitudes of the society<sup>(1)</sup>. Obesity and overweight rates have reached epidemic levels, according to the World Health Organization (2017). Obesity and overweight are substantial risk factors for many chronic diseases, including cancer, diabetes, and heart disease, and should be treated as worldwide public health issues. Being overweight or obese, on the other hand, raises the risk of acquiring a variety of other health problems, such as a lower back injury<sup>(2)</sup>. argued the importance of nurses being able and confident to intervene with patients when obesity is an issue relevant to health<sup>(3)</sup>. suggested that such an intervention can be influenced by the healthcare professionals' attitude towards obesity. Obesity stigma is pervasive and individuals with obesity experience stigma from health professionals, employers, and educators<sup>(4)</sup>. Nursing students are the next generation of registered nurses and an important part of the future healthcare workforce. Promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors in nursing students could assist in their health promoting role<sup>(5)</sup>. To facilitate the development of positive views of overweight and obese people, nursing students need to gain an understanding of the physical and mental health impact on a person from being overweight and obese. Equipped with such awareness nursing students should be prepared to provide comprehensive patient care in patients who are overweight and obese, including the provision of health promoting lifestyle activities<sup>(6)</sup>. The study aims to assessment of nursing students' attitudes toward obese individuals.

## Methods and Materials:

Prior to the actual collection of the data, formal administration approval was obtained from department of the clinical science/ college of nursing/ university of Mosul to conduct the study. Descriptive study was used to adopted current study. The study extended from (15-12-2021) to (15-5-2022).The sample of the study consists of (129) students from second, third, and fourth stages at college of nursing in university of Mosul. The study was conducted at college of nursing in university of Mosul. A questionnaire was developed based on the previous study related to the research problem, and validity tested by presenting it to a group of experts (11) in the several fields includes nursing, medicine and medical statistics. The reliability was checked through pilot study was conducted in one 10 students and analyzed by person correlation in the data by SPSS program version 24 at value (0.79) this questionnaire consists of two parts, part one includes: demographic data such as age, gender, stage, Marital status, Address, socioeconomic status, body mass index. the part two consist of (20) items to assess the nursing student's attitudes about obese individuals. Data were collected from participants using an online survey and questionnaires took approximately 10 min to complete. Data were collected between 10 December 2021 and 15 March 2022. The collected data was arranged analyzed and presented in tables by using frequency and percentage by using SPSS version 24<sup>(7,70)</sup>.

## Results:

**Table (1): Distribution of the study sample according to their attitudes towards obese individuals**

Variables	Positive Attitude		Negative attitude		T-test
	No.	%	No.	%	
Age	No.	%	No.	%	T=1 NS
Less than 20 years	8	12	9	14	
20-22 years	29	44	27	43	
More than 20 years	29	44	27	43	T=3 NS
Total	51.16% positive		48.84% Negative		
Gender	No.	%	No.	%	T=0.33
Male	30	45	28	44	
Female	36	55	35	56	
Socioeconomic status	No.	%	No.	%	
Low	54	82	56	89	

Middle	12	18	5	8	HS
High	0	0	2	3	
Stage	No.	%	No.	%	T=0.501 HS
Second	14	21	15	24	
Third	18	27	19	30	
Forth	34	52	29	46	
BMI	No.	%	No.	%	T=0.375 HS
Underweight	3	5	5	8	
Normal weight	37	56	32	51	
Overweight	20	30	17	27	
Obesity I	6	9	8	13	
Obesity II	0	0	1	2	

This table indicated that a slightly more than half of the participants had positive attitudes towards obese people (51.16%), and that there was a significant relationship between students' attitudes and some demographic data (socioeconomic status, stage, and BMI).

## Discussion:

Nurses (as well as other clinicians) have a central role in addressing the public health priority of reducing the high rates of overweight and obesity. Critical to this role is the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Nurses' health-related behaviors influence both the extent to which they engage people in health promotion activities such as nutrition and exercise and the extent to which people accept the advice given<sup>(71-143)</sup>. Existing evidence points to patterns of poor health-related behaviors among nurses, including low levels of physical activity and unhealthy diets high in sugar and fat and low intakes of fruit and vegetables. Consequently, many nurses and nursing students are overweight and obese<sup>(72-74)</sup>. Table(1) shows that the majority of the students were over 20 years old and most of them were females (55%), while the economic and social level of the majority of the students was middle (85.3%), and most of the students' weights were normal (53.5). Table (2) indicated that a slightly more than half of the participants had positive attitudes towards obese people (51.16%), and that there was a significant relationship between students' attitudes and some demographic data (socioeconomic status, stage, and BMI).

## Conclusion:

This study concluded that the students' attitudes about obese people were different, nearly half of the students had positive attitudes while the other half were negative and The study showed that there is a significant relationship between students' attitudes about obese people and some demographic data about them, such as socioeconomic, educational stage, and BMI.

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