

Frequency of Daily Meals and Body Mass Index in Young Angolans

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INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition and obesity constitute a dual epidemic of Portuguese-speaking African countries in the 21st century, with implications for the health of populations. Inadequate feed presents a multifactorial etiology, where eating behaviours of young people, such as omission of meals can have consequences on their nutritional status¹⁻³.

OBJECTIVES

Evaluate the frequency of daily meals and the Body Mass Index (BMI) of young Angolans.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative and cross-sectional study. A simple random sample of 370 young people (47,6% males and 52,4% females) aged 12-19 years who lived in the city of Viana - Luanda. The information on the frequency of daily meals was obtained by interview and the BMI was classified according to WHO criteria. For the statistical analysis of the results, the SPSS[®] software version 19.0 (2010) was used for Windows of Microsoft[®].

RESULTS

In the age group of 12-14 years, 19,8% were underweight and 11,5% overweight / obesity. 5,6% of the young people aged 15-19 were underweight and 11,2% were overweight / obese. A significance level of 5%, it was found that the BMI presented was statistically dependent on age group ($p = 0,004$) and gender ($p = 0,005$). Regarding feed behaviour, 44% said they ate breakfast daily, 8,9%, 41%, 9,7%, 42,9% and 6,5% had daily meals in the middle of the morning, lunch, snack, dinner and supper respectively. There were no statistically significant differences between age group and feed behaviour ($p > 0,05$), nor between BMI and the frequency of daily meals ($p > 0,05$).

CONCLUSION

The results are illustrative of a sample of young Angolans characterized by the coexistence of low weight and obesity. Being healthy eating a basic requirement for human existence and therefore an inalienable condition of peoples, the establishment of strategies as a way to improve the coordination, coherence and alignment of food policies at the global level is crucial.

Table 1. Age group and BMI- WHO

Age Group		<P3 Low weight	>P3 Normal <p85	>P85 Overweig P<97	Obesity P>97	Total
	12 -14	N	24	83	9	5
	%	19,8%	68,6%	7,4%	4,1%	100,0%
15 - 19	N	14	207	19	9	249
	%	5,6%	83,1%	7,6%	3,6%	100,0%
Total	N	38	290	28	14	370
	%	10,3%	78,4%	7,6%	3,8%	100,0%

Table 2. Gender group and BMI- WHO

Gender		<P3 Low weight	>P3 Normal <P85	>P85 Overweigh P<97	Obesity P>97	Total
	Male	N	25	138	8	5
	%	14,2%	78,4%	4,5%	2,8%	100,0%
Female	N	13	152	20	9	194
	%	6,7%	78,4%	10,3%	4,6%	100,0%
Total	N	38	290	28	14	370
	%	10,3%	78,4%	7,6%	3,8%	100,0%

Table 3. Feed behaviour

	Never or almost never	1-3 days per week	4-6 days per week	Every day
Breakfast	7,3 %	12,4%	36,2%	44,1%
Middle of the morning	65,4 %	17,6%	8,1%	8,9%
Lunch	11,4%	9,5%	38,1%	41,1%
Snack	68,9%	15,1%	6,2%	9,7%
Dinner	14,9%	8,6%	38,4%	37,8%
Supper	76,2%	16,8%	4,6%	2,4%

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