Child Obesity Literature Review

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Child obesity

When conducting research, reviewing existing literature is vital and beneficial to the researcher in numerous ways. A literature review provides researchers with the already known informational details enabling them enhance their understanding of the topic. A review of literature also allows researchers to gain an understanding of what is workable during various steps in research such as data collection. It is therefore imperative that before conducting a study, one should review existing literature on the topic of interest to gain a better understanding of the existing foundational knowledge to build on. For this paper, a review of the literature will be conducted, examining various relevant research focusing on child obesity.

Bhadoria et al. (2015) did a research to establish the origin and impacts of childhood obesity. While obesity in adults is a cumulative result of sedentary lifestyles and poor eating habits, the same cannot be said about children as they have little control over their lives. For children, obesity arises from a parent’s ability or inability to ensure their children undergo health exams while upholding proper eating habits. According to the authors, obesity results from excessive consumption of calories and fats with little or no physical activity. While this is the primary cause of obesity, researchers often don’t go beyond this point to thoroughly understand the health condition. In this study, Bhadoria et al. cite that increased intake of soft drinks is one of the leading causes of obesity during the early developmental stages of children (Bhadoria et al., 2015). During this research, the authors extend their study to uncover as much information on childhood obesity with aspects coming in, such as the contribution of genetics in causing the health condition. New information towards life-threatening conditions such as obesity is vital as it enables researchers and caregivers better understand how to prevent the psychological and physiological impacts of the disease in children.

Karnik and Kanekar (2015) conducted research aiming to establish the best ways to address childhood obesity on a global scale. During the study, the researchers examined the prevalence of the health condition from a global perspective in a bid to determine the primary factors contributing to obesity. In an attempt to explore all the factors associated with obesity, the authors analyze aspects such as genetic factors, behavior, and environmental dynamics during their study. In a similar study, Dehghan, Akhtar–Danesh, and Merchant, (2013) also identified lifestyles, environment and cultural practices as some of the main factors associated with obesity (Dehghan, Akhtar–Danesh, and Merchant, 2013). Karnik and Kanekar, through their study findings, indicated that all the above factors to a certain extent, were a concern to children’s well-being and as consequence obesity. The authors hence suggest many possible interventions basing them on families, communities, schools, and hospitals. At the end of the study, Karnik and Kanekar indicate that childhood obesity can be reduced and prevented through educating individuals (Karnik & Kanekar, 2015). The education enables populations to understand how to prevent obesity while also giving them an insight on suitable interventions through aspects such as physical activities and nutrition. The combined findings for the two research projects reveal they improved intervention and prevention strategies for preventing the development of obesity in youngsters.

Obesity is a significant health challenge for individuals all over the world due to its increasing prevalence rates throughout the past three decades. This, however, is subject to emerging trends in research suggesting that childhood obesity has reached a plateau. A study by Ogden, (2008) indicate that childhood obesity is at an all-time high citing a recent survey by NHANES which suggests childhood obesity is no longer on the rise as was the case in the past two decades (Ogden, 2008). Cali and Caprio (2008) conducted a similar study to understand the high obesity prevalence rates in children and adolescents and the associated risk of developing other metabolic complications. To thoroughly capture all the factors resulting in the health condition, the researchers chose multiple routes of approach by focusing on individual differences. The main aspects selected for the research were different races, developmental trends, and the degree at which obesity contributed to other metabolic complications among the research group. The researchers conclude that obesity in children and adolescents resulted in a manifestation of other metabolic health conditions, leaving them prone to the advancement of early morbidity (Cali & Caprio, 2008). Through findings, this article significantly contributes to the understanding of obesity by providing essential insights on the pathogenesis of this terrible health condition.

Despite current surveys indicating no significant increase in obesity, many children remain obese and overweight. CDC indicates 17% of the young people under the age of 19 years in the US are obese with 32%, either obese or overweight (Jin, 2017). In light of the situation, researchers such as Luttikhuis et al., (2019) researched to examine the effectiveness of leading responsible lifestyles and other medical interventions such as surgery and drugs in treating obesity. Extensive research on secondary data was conducted by the researchers for thirteen years beginning 1985 in an attempt to develop productive lifestyle and therapeutic interventions. The researchers conducted trials on individuals below the age of 18 years, exposing them to controlled intervention strategies through lifestyle changes and drugs. During the research, no surgical intervention approaches were used due to eligibility complications leaving medications such as Orlistat and physical interventions as the only methods used in this study. The findings indicated there was not enough quality data to facilitate the preference of one response over the other. However, lifestyle behavioral strategies and physical activity produced desirable results across all populations. For adolescents, drugs such as Orlistat and Sibutramine may be used; however, more research should be conducted to determine potential side effects (Oude Luttikhuis et al., 2019). The results are significant as they will provide scientists with information on the potential effectiveness of various intervention strategies at different stages of development.

This literature review contributes significantly to childhood obesity research as it encompasses a multifaceted approach to establish suitable methods of preventing and reducing childhood obesity. By examining the existing literature, it is evident that despite little information being known regarding how to treat childhood obesity; researchers are working towards finding a suitable solution. Obesity is a known cause of other numerous conditions such as diabetes, depression, and other incredibly dangerous diseases such as cardiovascular disease. It is, therefore, crucial to treat obesity as one of the significant health concerns where researchers need to invest their resources and solve this global healthcare mystery.

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