TITLE: **Identify The Main Causes Of Obesity, Provide Examples Of Interventions, Indicating Briefly Their Degree Of Success.**

In 2016, over 650 million people were obese across the globe and among them are 41 million children under the age of 5 who were either overweight or obese *(WHO 2019, accessed 27/07/2019)*. From the archives; obesity has tripled across the world since 1975 and in 2016, 39% of adults aged 18 years and over were overweight and 13% were obese while over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese *(NHS 2019, accessed 29/07/2019).* This expectedly had taken obesity to an epidemic level in developed countries with the highest prevalence rates of childhood obesity observed across board; and its prevalence is as well increasing in developing countries till date with studies emerging from different parts of India within the last decade also indicate such trend *(Krushnapriya Sahoo,Bishnupriya Sahoo,Ashok Kumar Choudhury,Nighat Yasin Sofi, Raman Kumar and Ajeet Singh Bhadoria 2015, accessed 29/07/2019)*. Despite the fact that obesity is preventable, yet most of the world's population live in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than underweight. This outraging epidemic reports indeed calls for urgent preventive interventions to alleviate the epidemic of obesity. Hence, in this essay, I aim to identify probable causes of obesity, provide referenced examples of likely interventions and degree of success achieved.

Obesity occurs when calories intake outweighs its output inform of energy. The world today, makes unhealthy options easiest and healthy choices more difficult in what we eat and drink than burning through physical activity *(Cancer Research UK 2018, accessed 27/07/2019)*. Calories is the unit measure of energy value for food, while the average physically active man and woman needs about 2,500 and 2,000 calories respectively in a day to maintain a healthy weight. For a person who consumes high amounts of energy, particularly fat and sugars, and do not burn off the energy through exercise and physical activity, much of the surplus energy will be stored by the body as fat, generally causing obesity as a result of eating too much and little movement *(NHS 2019, accessed 29/07/2019).*

In reality, obesity does not happen spontaneously despite its ubiquitous nature. It develops gradually over time, as a result of poor diet and lifestyle choices, such as; eating large amounts of processed or fast food, drinking too much alcohol (which contains a lot of calories), eating out a lot especially those food with higher fat and sugar, eating larger portions than need, drinking too many sugary drinks including soft drinks and fruit juice and comfort eating out of low self-esteem or depressed feeling *(NHS 2019, accessed 29/07/2019).*

Another major factor that causes of obesity is lack of physical activity. Many these days engage in jobs that involve sitting at a desk for the most part of the day, some even rely on their automobiles rather than walking or cycling. For relaxation, some tend to watch the television, play games and browse the Internet while they rarely take regular exercise thereby making them inactive enough, use not the energy provided by the food eaten, and the extra energy consume is stored in the body as fat and after a while obesity sets in *(NHS 2019, accessed 29/07/2019).*

*Krushnapriya Sahoo,Bishnupriya Sahoo,Ashok Kumar Choudhury,Nighat Yasin Sofi, Raman Kumar and Ajeet Singh Bhadoria (2015, accessed 29/07/2019)* gathered in their research that genetics are one of the biggest factors examined as a cause of obesity with body mass index (BMI) accounting for 25–40% heritability while less than 5% accounts for obesity cases in children. However, they explained that genetic susceptibility often need to be coupled with contributing environmental and behavioural factors in order to affect weight.

Primary reasons for the prevention of obesity is so vital in children and adults now than ever because the likelihood of childhood obesity persisting into adulthood increases as the child grows to avoid chronic disease (high risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease) and premature death respectively *(Johns Hopkins Medicine 2019, accessed 29/07/2019)*. According to NICE guideline, to prevent obesity in an obese individual, a number of interventions must be in place and not limited to, lifestyle interventions, behavioural interventions, physical activity, dietary, surgical interventions, pharmacological interventions to mention few. “Goal setting, decrease eating rate, self-monitoring of behaviour and progress stimulus control are recommended routine for adults while rewards for reaching goals should be included for children as encouragement” *(NICE 2014, accessed 27/07/2019)*. For emphasis, caregiver or intervention experts must understand the person's personal preference, social circumstances, experience and outcome of previous treatments upon any preventive measures prescribed *(NICE 2014, accessed 27/07/2019)*.

Among other preventions is the intervention from the department of health (DoH), on the 9th of March 2012; as they developed ‘*A Fitter Future for All’* to empower the population of Northern Ireland to make health choices, reduce the risk of overweight and obesity related diseases and improve health and wellbeing, by creating an environment that supports and promotes a physically active lifestyle and a healthy diet *(Department of Health 2019, accessed 27/07/2019).* Pertinently therefore, it is important that the obese should “increase physical activity levels (i.e. decrease inactivity), improve eating behaviour and the quality of diet, reduce energy or sugar intake” *(NICE 2014, accessed 27/07/2019)* and many more for healthy life.

Prevention of obesity is most preferred over other methods to treat the condition as interventions takes longer time before an identifiable impact is obvious on person’s health leading to a high cost- effectiveness. Yet, there exist a number of success degree so far, even though there is still long way to go with little to be done to help individuals with healthy choices and the government supports to make it easier, “changes are now noticeable, as companies now reduce the amount of sugar in some drinks due to the sugar tax introduced within UK. Another giant step by the government is the released its *updated childhood obesity plan*, to halve childhood obesity by 2030, by reducing junk food marketed for children and families” *(Cancer Research UK, accessed 27/07/2019).*

Hence, the *GLAIntelligence reports* on childhood obesity in London, noted that most OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) member countries have recognised the problem of obesity and governments have started implementing a number of initiatives to address the epidemic. The main success here is the promotion of a healthy eating culture and active lifestyle among young age regarding food and drink, and improvements in facilities for physical activity with several campaigns on nutritional guidelines and health promotional messages. And today, governments have generally refrained from using regulation and fiscal levers because of the enforcement costs and implications for key industries *(GLAIntelligence Unit 2011, accessed 29/07/2019)*.

By understanding the role of policymaking, individual preference and habit, we can conclude that the government need to formulate healthy policies and enlighten citizens to checkmate their intakes for healthy lifestyle. In lieu of the aforementioned therefore, according to the John Hopkins medicine, every individuals should ensure the following; keep a food diary of what to eat, consume 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, weigh and measure food for correct and adequate portion as prescribed, defer eating foods that are of high energy density, get weighed regularly and above all, keep a consistent record for an average of an hour and half (60 to 90 minutes) of moderate and intense physical activity at least 3 days each week *(Johns Hopkins Medicine 2019, accessed 29/07/2019)*. That way, we can mitigate the epidemic resultants from the menace of obesity in the society and create room for healthy living.

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