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**Overweight/Obesity Prevalence among rural children by household head Obesity and socio-economic status: Rural Area, South Africa****Peter M. Mphekgwana***University of Limpopo, South Africa*

**Background:** Childhood overweight and/or obesity become a significant public health problem in the 21st century. The rising prevalence of childhood obesity poses a significant public health challenge by increasing the burden of chronic non-communicable diseases. However, there is limited literature in Sub-Saharan Africa content to assess the prevalence of obesity among rural children by head household status. Therefore, the present study aimed to identify household head obesity and socioeconomic status factors that may contribute to the development of childhood overweight/obesity in the rural setting of South Africa.

**Methods:** A quantitative cross-sectional population study was conducted within a bigger ongoing project of the DIMAMO Health and Demographic Surveillance Site (HDSS) involving 51 selected primary villages within the Dikgale, Mamabolo, and Mothiba (DIMAMO) surveillance area in the Capricorn District of the Limpopo Province, South Africa rural area. The study involved 294 children in total, 154 girls and 140 boys, who were under the age of 18.

**Results:** Of the two hundred ninety-five (295) participants, 127 (43.2%) were normal and 167 (56.8%) were overweight/obese. There were significant differences in the prevalence of child sex between normal and overweight/obesity with more girls being more overweight/obese than boys. More children who are not receiving child grant and their head of household are aged between 45-54 years, poor and overweight/obese had a higher prevalence of overweight/obese ( $p$ -value < 0.05). It was also found that girls, receiving child grants and household head being overweight/obese are associated high odds of being overweight/obese children.

**Conclusions:** It is critical to deepen our understanding of the causes of childhood overweight and obesity, and more primary research is required to guide policy development and implementation to halt the rise of childhood obesity/overweight in rural South Africa.

**Biography**

Peter M. Mphekgwana is employed as a Biostatistician in the Research Office, where he provides statistical advice to all academic and administrative personnel at the University of Limpopo, as well as master's and doctorate students. His research focuses on gaining insight into health issues via the use of statistical techniques and various data sources. He has published multiple peer-reviewed articles on DHET-accredited platforms in both local and international journals. Since 2016, Peter has been a member of both the South African Statistical Association (SASA) and the Southern Africa Mathematical Sciences Association (SAMSA).