Socioeconomic Status and prevalence of obesity

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Socioeconomic status (SES)

- **Education + income + occupation**

- Higher SES correlated with :
  - → Access to more resources
  - → better psychological wellbeing

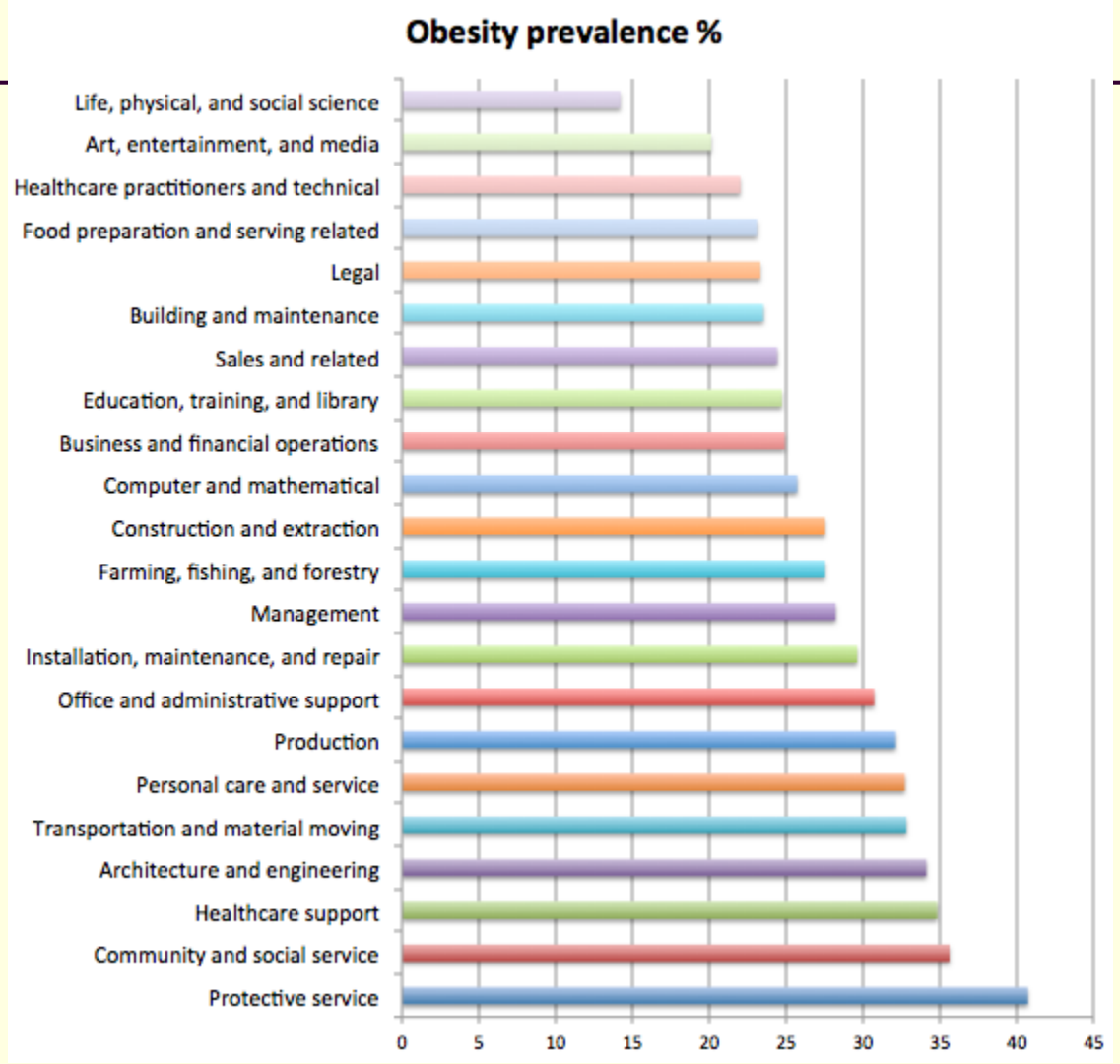
Obesity statistic UK - 2015

- 58% of women and 68% of men were overweight or obese.
- There were 525 000 admissions in NHS hospitals where obesity was recorded as a factor.
- 26% of adults were classified as inactive (fewer than 30 minutes physical activity a week).
- 26% of adults ate the recommended 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day

Education Level

- Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre) conducted research to find relationship between obesity and education attainment
- Pat studies, specialist websites, contacted experts, independent consultations with teachers and students
- Weak correlation found
- Individuals with lower education levels are more likely to be obese
- Reasons :
  1. Not understanding benefits of exercise
  2. Not understanding components of a balanced diet
  3. Not understanding the harmful effects of being overweight

Occupation

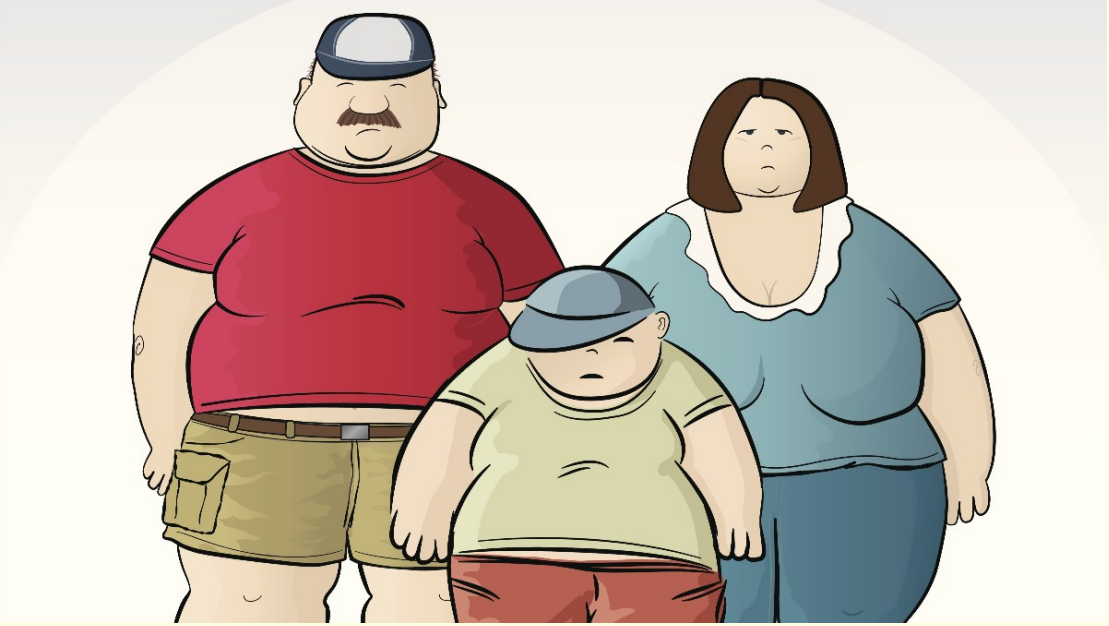


Study by American journal of preventive medicine

Occupation

American Journal of Preventive Medicine

- More than 40 hours per week + hostile work environment → significantly more likely to be obese
- Highest obesity rates – healthcare professionals, engineering, protective services



Income

- Prevalence of obesity was considerably higher among families in the poorest quintile compared with those in the top income quintile

- For children – there was no correlation until the age of 11 by the time differences between children from poorer compared with richer families had emerged (20.2 vs. 16.5%)

- Potential explanations

- Junk/fast good – inexpensive

- More stress /money concerns → increased food intake

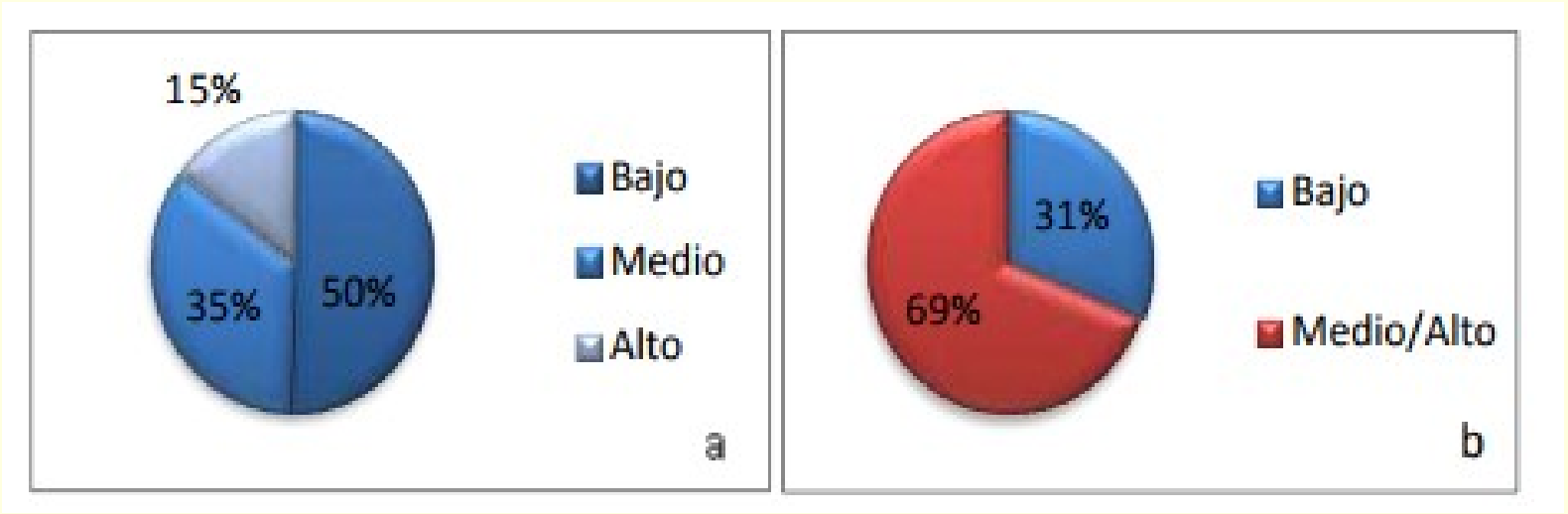
- Less money available for physical activity – gym membership, organising sport activities

Conclusion

- Overall there was a inverse correlation between SES and obesity
- However at times correlation between a single component of SES related to obesity was weak and could have been classified as statistically insignificant
- In some studies parameters were not so well defined. For example healthcare workers encompassed all those who worked in the hospital – doctors, nurses, secretaries, admin despite all of them having different job descriptions, income, responsibilities ect

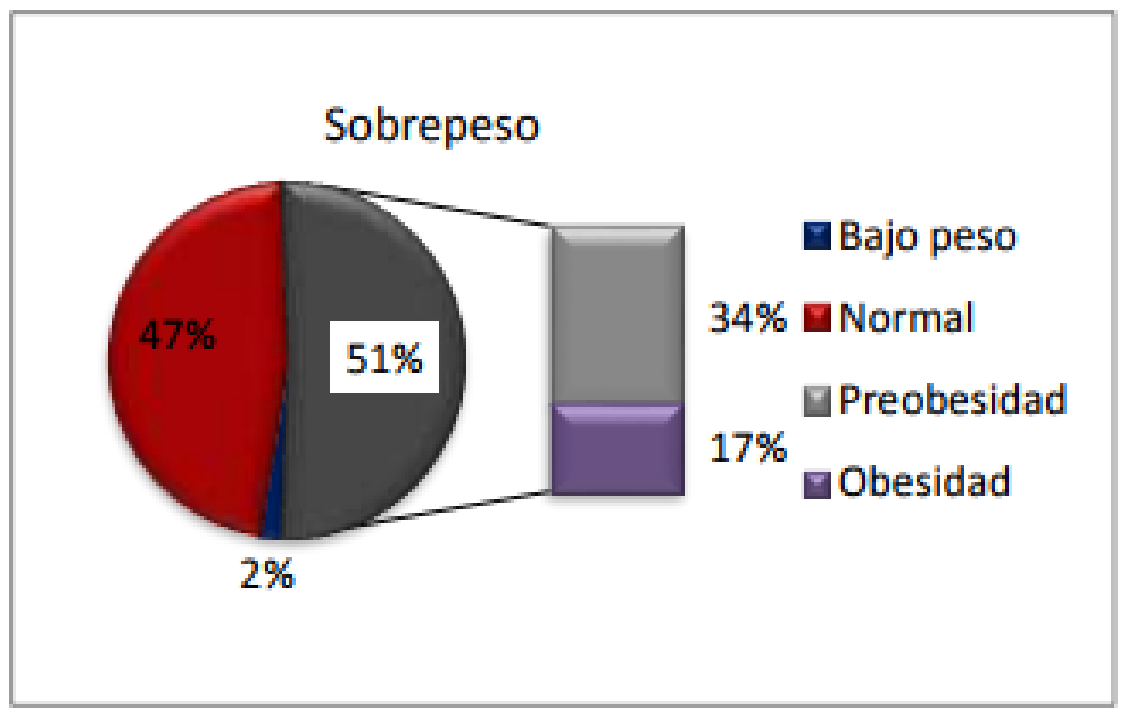
Socioeconomic Status and prevalence of obesity

Example in Spanish population



Socioeconomic status (a) and **Level of studies** (b) CODIES 2011.

Prevalence of obesity



BMI levels on the studied sample

- 57% of the people from the lower socioeconomic status had over weight
- 35% of the people from the highest socioeconomic status had over weight
- Obesity levels in high, medium and low status were 9%, 13% and 22% respectively

Obesity and level of studies

- 66% of people with over weight had lower level of studies
- 44% of people with over weight had higher level of studies
- Furthermore, the prevalence of pre obesity and obesity was higher in married people (41% and 21%) compared to prevalence of pre obesity and obesity in single people (27% and 13%).

References

- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/613532/obes-phys-acti-diet-eng-2017-rep.pdf
- https://academic.oup.com/eurpub/article/26/1/7/2467515
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THANK YOU