

MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT AND CHILDREN'S LIFESTYLE BEHAVIOURS, FROM MOTHERS ATTENDING UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS

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Background: A recent rise of childhood obesity has been observed over the past years and it has been implicated that maternal employment has in fact caused this rise in childhood obesity. A mother's work hours can most defiantly affect the amount of time that they do spend on child's related activities. It is therefore appropriate to look at factors such as the child's after school activities as well as television and computer use.

Objectives: To investigate if there is an association of maternal employment and the nutritional health status of their child/ children.

Design: Using empirical data in the form of questionnaire consisting of 25 questions, 24 being closed and 1 being open and one food frequency table, gathered from mothers who were found on the University of the West Indies, St Augustine campus, who had children between the ages 1- 12 years old.

Results: Evidence from the study was found that Maternal employment and the type of food chosen for the child showed no association, since the both groups of mothers (employed and unemployed) ate out around the same amount of times per week. However when it came to doing thing that took up additional time i.e. play sports etc as well prepare meals on a daily basis there was a significant difference between both segments of mother.

Conclusion: Evidence suggested that reason for childhood obesity was unclear and more detailed studies should be carried out