

**PowerPoint Presentation at the 2nd International Congress
of the World Public Health Nutrition Association**

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Topic: The impact of food systems on livelihoods, nutrition, diet and health.

**Title: Standard American Diet (SAD) Versus Displacing Zulu Indigenous Diet:
Related Health Concerns Associated with Overweight and Obesity among Zulu
Women.**

ABSTRACT

Introduction

While a lot has been documented on the nutrition transition among overweight and obese South African Zulu women from an allopathic perspective, relatively little has been written from a cultural anthropological viewpoint. This poster presentation reflects Zulu women's diversion from their optimal traditional diet, towards progressively embracing trends borrowed from the Standard American Diet (SAD), with dire health consequences.

Methods

The research methodology applied qualitative inquiry linking ethnomethodology with oral history interviews and feminist viewpoints, based on self-reflexivity of sex and gender roles among participants as well as the author. Data was gathered through individual in-depth interviews, group discussions as well as ethnographic observation among 50 Zulu females either working or studying at Durban's University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus.

Results

The increasingly popular SAD, characterized by a heavily refined and processed diet alongside overly large meat portions and other animal products detrimental; instead leading to overweight and obesity as compared with the healthier Zulu traditional diet comprising organic vegetables, fruits wholegrains and smaller meat portions (except at social functions).

Conclusions

Among wide ranging measures, to counter SAD, Zulu fare could be promoted in a manner equally or more appealing than SAD since the latter runs counter to South Africa's scientific-based recommended dietary guidelines. Equally important is promoting leaner bodies towards healthier outcomes, since culturally popular overweight and obese bodies are venerated among Zulu women. In addition, Zulu women need to re-consider deliberately putting on excess weight to avoid having lean bodies currently associated with HIV/AIDS. (248 words).

Key words: Overweight and obesity, Zulu women, culture, indigenous diet, SAD