Health burden of overweight and obesity: Mortality and years of life lost (YLL) of diseases in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

High prevalence of obesity increased burden from non-communicable diseases. Our study aimed to estimate the number of death and years of life lost (YLL) diseases related to obesity. The Obesity attributable fraction (OAF) was used to estimate the proportion of each comorbidity attributable to obesity. The number of deaths attributable to obesity was estimated by multiplying the number of patients in each disease category and the OAF. The number of deaths attributable to overweight was estimated by using the number of patients in each disease category and the OAF. The YLL was calculated by the number of years remaining life and the number of deaths due to overweight and obesity. The mortality attributable to overweight and obesity was estimated at 2,264,593 and 1,414,670 respectively, with the proportion of woman death were 60% and 72% of total death due to overweight and obese respectively. The YLL attributable to overweight and obesity was estimated at 67 million and 42 million person-years respectively. Diabetes mellitus and ischemic heart disease were two highest burdens both in the number of death and YLL. Obesity imposes a substantial health burden on Indonesian society especially in term of health burden. In view of a magnitude of the impact of obesity, there is a need for both further research and action at the level of health policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of obesity is increasing both in developed and developing countries. Epidemiology studies indicate that obesity is a major risk factor for diabetes type 2, cardiovascular diseases, and cancers1,2. The high prevalence of obesity, combined with other health risks, makes it a high health burden, which can lead to further incidence, mortality, and economic costs3,4. Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study (GBD Study) has quantified the health loss from diseases and injuries, by age, sex, and risk factors in worldwide population over time, covers 195 countries to project the burden magnitudes5. The leading three causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) globally according to this study were ischemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, and lower respiratory infections, comprising 16.1% of all DALYs.

The health impacts associated with obesity is expected to be immense and have a greater impact on developing countries6,7. Obesity and its attributable comorbidities caused enormous healthcare impact ranged from an increasing number of deaths, years potential life lost, as well as healthcare costs8,9.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the global prevalence of obesity has more than doubled between 1980 and 200810. In 2008, Kelly et al estimated that more than 1.4 billion adults aged 20 and over were overweight (a BMI greater than or equal
to 25 kg/m²). Of these overweight adults, 500 million were obese. As a result of lifestyle changes in eating, and lower physical activity, the obesity epidemic affects populations in most countries, including in Asia. The epidemiology data and burden of obesity is documented for most developed countries. Direct healthcare costs attributable to obesity have been estimated to range from 1.5% of national health expenditure in Thailand to 9.8% in Hong Kong. Estimating the health burden of obesity is critical for healthcare providers, policy makers, and payers. Not only can the data estimate be used to establish priorities for research and health resource use, but it can also be used to improve public awareness of the negative health impacts of obesity.

In accordance with global projection trends, the prevalence of obesity in Indonesia increased more than 70% between 2010 and 2014. According to the WHO global health observatory (GHO) database 2010, 17.3% of adult Indonesian men and 25.2% of women were classified as overweight (BMI 25-30 kg/m²), and prevalence of obese (BMI > 30 kg/m²) were 3.1% and 6.5% in male and female respectively. Despite this rapid increase in obesity over the last five years, and it is recognized that obesity-related comorbidities generate high costs, few cost analyses have been conducted for Indonesia setting. Previous study focused on healthcare costs in Indonesia noted that treatment cost of comorbidities related to smoking in Indonesia was estimated to be at least USD 2,177 million, approximately 2.5% of GDP. Since no empirical study is available in Indonesia for determining obesity-related health burden, our study aims to estimate the burden of diseases in terms of premature death and years of life lost (YLL) related to overweight and obese among Indonesian adult population.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was a prevalence-based burden of diseases study. Epidemiological data used in this study were taken from the literature and official Indonesia publications as described below.

2.1. Obesity and comorbidities

Obesity was categorized into two categories, as overweight (having a BMI of 25-30 kg/m²) and obese (having a BMI of 30 kg/m² or higher). Criteria of comorbidities included in this study were selected based on the degree of disease associated with obesity, the availability of existing information and its relevance to the Indonesia context. The following 10 comorbidities were included in our study: colon and colorectal cancer, pancreas cancer, breast cancer, ovarian cancer, endometrial cancer, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, ischemic heart disease, asthma, and stroke. The number of mortality for each disease was estimated from the Obesity Attributable Fraction (OAF). The attribution of the mortality of comorbidity in the population that is related to obesity, was calculated for each comorbidity using the following formula:

\[ \text{OAF}_{ij} = \frac{P(\text{RR}_{ij}-1)}{P(\text{RR}_{ij}-1)+1} \]

where, \( \text{OAF}_{ij} \) is the Obesity Attributable Fraction, \( P \) is the Prevalence of body mass index (BMI) level (i.e., BMI = 25.0-29.9 kg/m² and BMI >= 30 kg/m²), \( P \) is the Prevalence of obesity at BMI level i or j of comorbidity, \( \text{RR}_{ij} \) is the Relative Risk of comorbidity associated with BMI level i or j.

In this study, obesity prevalence (P) was obtained from the WHO global health observatory (GHO) database by country in 2010, where overweight among male and female 17.3% and 25.2% respectively. Prevalence of obese were 3.1% and 6.5% in male and female respectively while the Relative Risks (RR) were derived from meta-analyses which consisted of a prospective cohort study of the general population of countries in Europe or North America, Australia or New Zealand.

2.2. Mortality and Years Life Lost (YLL) attributable to obesity

The number of mortality of comorbidities related to obesity was estimated by multiplying sex-and age-specific cancer mortality and OAF. The number of deaths from each comorbidity was obtained from the 2011 WHO mortality data. These mortality rates were estimated based on updated regional data inputs which take into account the greater availability of national death registration data. Projections based on the historically observed relationships of mortality with cause-specific mortality rates as well as economic and social development were used to estimate years life lost (YLL).
risk was used to estimate the number of deaths attributable to obesity. We use WHO standard expected years of life in 2011 to calculate the years of premature death. The number of years remaining to live was derived from subtracting age of death from “life expectancy”. Life expectancy was obtained from the WHO standard expected years of life in 2011.

To estimate age-specific YLL each comorbidity we applied the YLL formula as number of obesity attributable deaths multiply by number of years remaining to live.

| Comorbidities                  | RR | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female |
|--------------------------------|----|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|
| Colon and colorectal cancer    | 1.51 | 1.45 | 1.95   | 1.66 | 8.11   | 10.19| 2.32   | 3.87 |
| Pancreas cancer                | 1.28 | 1.24 | 2.29   | 1.6  | 4.62   | 5.70 | 3.12   | 3.53 |
| Breast cancer                  | 1.08 | 1.13 | 1.98   |      |        |      |        |      |
| Ovarian cancer                 | 1.18 | 1.28 | 4.34   |      |        |      |        |      |
| Endometrial cancer             |     | 1.53 | 3.22   | 11.78| 11.93  |      |        |      |
| Diabetes Mellitus              |     | 2.4  | 6.74   | 12.41| 42.39  |      |        |      |
| Hypertension                   |     | 1.28 | 1.65   | 2.4  | 4.62   | 14.07|        | 7.97 |
| Ischemic heart disease         |     | 1.29 | 1.8    | 3.1  | 4.78   | 16.78| 1.77   | 11.36|
| Asthma                         |     | 1.2  | 1.25   | 1.78 | 3.34   | 5.93 | 1.06   | 4.54 |
| Stroke                         |     | 1.23 | 1.15   | 1.51 | 3.83   | 3.64 | 1.26   | 2.90 |

Table 1. Relative risks for selected comorbidities in obese subjects and Obesity Attributable Fraction (OAF).

3. RESULTS

The overall relative risk estimates and OAFs for obesity and the 10 comorbidities, disaggregated by gender, are presented in Table 1. OAF estimates indicate that about 12.55% to 42.39% of all deaths of diabetes mellitus, 1.77% to 16.78% of all deaths of ischemic heart disease, and 11.78% to 11.93% of all deaths of endometrial cancer in Indonesia were attributable to obesity.

Estimates of the overall number of deaths of obesity, disaggregated by types of comorbidities, gender, and BMI level are displayed in Table 2. With regard to total death, the three conditions that were found to incur the highest deaths were ischemic heart disease (1,488,714), diabetes mellitus (1,270,377) and stroke (280,000).

As shown in Table 2, the estimated number of deaths attributable to obesity is 3.7 million deaths. The death attributable to obesity was accounted for 1.48% of total deaths in 2015. Obesity-related deaths for women were about 2 times higher than for men (2,392,111 in women vs 1,287,152 in men).

Table 2. Number of deaths of comorbidities related to obesity.
The three conditions that incur the highest YLL were ischemic heart disease (43,728,918 person-years), diabetes mellitus (38,151,513 person-years), and stroke (7,232,421 person-years). The estimated YLL as a result of obesity-related conditions was 109 million person-years. The YLL incurred by women was 2 times higher than it is in men (72,421,671 vs 37,080,797 person-years) (Table 3).

### 4. DISCUSSION

This was the first analysis of health burden related obesity in the Indonesian context, where obesity-attributable mortality was found to be substantial, accounting for 1.48% of national death in the year 2011. Many studies have shown that obesity exerts a significant health and cost burden on a country’s health system and productivity. In addition, the analysis revealed that YLL associated with obesity were broadly similar, which are in line with the findings of previous studies. According to the WHO report, overweight and obese account for 44% of diabetes mellitus cases, 23% of coronary heart disease cases, and 7-14% of cancer cases. These data in accordance with our findings, which estimated that about 40.5% of ischemic heart deaths, 34.5% of diabetes mellitus deaths, 7.5% of hypertension deaths, and 5.5% cancers deaths in Indonesia were associated with obesity. Similar findings were previously observed in Mexico populations, revealed that type 2 diabetes mellitus was the main cause of premature death. In accordance with western countries, our study found that cardiovascular disease related to obesity to be the primary leading cause of economic and mortality burden. In line with a previous study in Thailand, considering recent updates on the epidemic of cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes in Asia, we found that ischemic heart disease is the first leading cause of obesity premature death, followed diabetes mellitus, and stroke associated with obesity.

Furthermore, we found that years of life lost attributable to obesity was substantial. These burden had a health impact equal that of smoking, our results indicate that health burden attributable to obesity are the same as those attributable to smoking, which was estimated at 1,207,845 YLL. A substantial burden both in mortality rate and YLL was largely concentrated in the overweight population, which possible explanation is the higher prevalence of overweight rather than obese population. Given the rise of obesity in Asia, and the prevalence of related conditions, particularly cardiovascular disease and diabetes mellitus, community intervention programs aimed at changing lifestyle and eating habits to control obesity clearly deserve more attention.

In summary, our findings clearly explain that the effect of obesity on the Indonesia’s health burden is substantial, and it potentially affects in escalating health care costs, which are since 2014 all Indonesian people are covered by universal health insurance, and paid by government in Indonesia. It is needed that, a public health campaign targeting obesity epidemic should place emphasis on the impact of obesity on society as well as social responsibility, to effectively tackle obesity in Indonesia.

Some potential limitations of our analysis should be noted. First, we used BMI cut off levels for overweight and obesity that are valid for a Caucasian population and the BMI cut off levels of an Asian population used might be lower for overweight and obesity. This might result in underestimating the burden of disease in Indonesia. Second, we used data from the International Database...
estimation in 2011 to estimate the prevalence of obesity by gender and BMI categories (25 - 30 and ≥ 30 kg/m²). The prevalences of each comorbidity are derived from the WHO mortality report 2011. In this study, the prevalence of obesity in 2011 was used to calculate the OAF. As lag times for chronic diseases may differ across persons and diseases and are not exactly known, we might have overestimated the mortality from the impact of obesity as the induction time need for developing comorbidity as well as duration of obesity were not taken into account. We also note that there is some evidence that the risks of selected diseases not included in our analysis including osteoarthritis, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea, and depression may be higher among persons who are obese. Furthermore, due to the unavailability of incidence of disease data in Indonesia, the incidence of non-communicable diseases associated with obesity was not included in the analysis.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis confirmed that obesity imposes a substantial health burden on Indonesia society. In light of the rapid and continuous increase in obesity prevalence in Indonesia, large-scale research focusing on economic cost of obesity, including health care costs and premature mortality costs would be beneficial. Comprehensive interventions for the healthy lifestyle and prevention of obesity should be regarded as public health concerns in Indonesia.

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Conflict of interest

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Ethics approval

This study was approved by Medical and Health Research Ethics Committee (MHREC) Universitas Gadjah Mada with reference number UGM/MHREC/314/REF/2017.

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