Forum: General Assembly Sixth Committee

Issue: The question of recruitment of young people by terrorist groups

Student Officer: Madelief van Pelt

Position: Deputy Chair of General Assembly Sixth Committee

Introduction

Terrorist groups recruit more and more young people for their acts of violence every year. For example, between 2015 and 2016, the amount of young people that have been recruited by terrorist groups had more than doubled in number. Just within the terrorist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), there had been a tallied 89 deaths of young people within one year; it had been predicted that that number would increase exponentially each subsequent year.

There have been reports and evidence of these younger individuals taking higher ranks within the groups than was previously expected. Instead of being used for labour and background support, they are used within propaganda or extremist videos sent out to the public. Some are even placed on the front lines of combat, alongside the male adults. An example of such a propaganda video featuring children was released on August 26th, 2016, by the Islamic State (ISIS), where young, recruited, soldiers are featured executing 5 Kurds who were involved in an organization fighting against ISIS. Through these inclusions of young people into terrorist groups such as ISIS or Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (Al-Qaeda or AQAP) can expand dramatically and become a larger threat.

Definition of Key Terms

Young People

The United Nations (UN) classifies young people—or “youth” in this case—as “people within the ages of 15-24”. This definition is set between member states regardless of a country’s respective definition of the term. This definition was first referred to in 1981 by the Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim, during his report to the General Assembly on the International Youth Year (un.org) but it can refer to people as young as 5.
Terrorism

Despite there not being an official UN definition of terrorism, the United States Code of Federal Regulations defines it as: “the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (fbi.gov). Essentially, that means that it is an act of unnecessary violence against a respective government, civilian population or another group based off of their political or social preferences.

Recruit

According to Merriam Webster, this means “To enlist as a member of an armed service”.

Extremist

“A person who holds extreme political or religious views, especially one who advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme action” as stated by Oxford Dictionary. The definition is often associated to terrorist groups due to their violent actions towards a respective government based on a difference regarding political or religious views.

Propaganda

“Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view”. Essentially, an advertisement for a certain group in order to promote one side’s opinion on an issue or cause.

FIGURE 1: A YOUNG CHILD RECRUITED BY ISIS HOLDING A FIREARM (rudaw.net)
Background Information

Early terrorist groups included Germany’s Red Army Faction, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, as well as American terrorist groups such as Weather Underground and the well known Ku Klux Klan. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was first recorded to exist in 1866. The third Klan continues to exist today, and their ideas and symbols are a rising threat since the election of President Donald Trump.

The KKK is a group from the American Southeast that was initially created to resist against the “Republican Party’s Reconstruction-era policies aimed at establishing political and economic equality for blacks” (history.com). Today, the KKK still exists, and does not cease to make itself known. In February of 2017, the Southern Poverty Law Center said that “the radical right was energised by the candidacy of Donald Trump” (cbsnews.com).

Since then, ideas of terrorism and terrorism itself has developed into something much bigger. The act of targeting teenagers has become more popular over the time. Youth groups today spend up to 9 hours a day on social media, (socialmediatoday.com). This, naturally, creates an easier way for terrorists to persuade and to spread ideas to teenagers without breaching the physical barrier and without having to be seen.

Terrorist groups recruit youth in order to indoctrinate them with the extremist beliefs and train them to be child soldiers, as well as actors for propaganda and other uses as aforementioned. There have been many propaganda videos shared over social media depicting children handling guns. For example, one grotesque video posted by ISIS shows small children and teenagers handling guns and firing weapons as a training session, while the older kids are chanting a religious motto used often in such groups. This is then what is can be seen by teenagers spending their day online.

More recently than not, these terrorist groups have focused their attention on recruiting teenagers because they are easy to control and manipulate. After building up trust with youth, they build a sense of “belonging” and idealized living conditions, so that teenagers feel like it’s better than their previously worse living conditions. Due to the mass numbers of teenagers on the internet, more and more are coming in contact with these accounts, and are being brainwashed to accept the extremist beliefs that are presented to them.

However, this sense of controlling them doesn’t end when they join the group; the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has even warned that the children taken by the terrorist group Boko Haram to be used for suicide missions are drugged beforehand, so that they follow orders without questioning any part of it (independent.co.uk). Multiple witnesses and security sources had mentioned to the Telegraph that the fighters seemed drugged, and that the commanders used a drug called Tramadol.
- a painkiller used on animals during procedures to ease the pain and numb the feeling - to dull the senses of the suicide bombers. Of the child suicide bombers, where 80% are girls, one 18 year old girl, Halime, kidnapped from her home in Chat had lost her legs after the group had drugged her and forced her to take part in a suicide attack on a crowded market; once the other girls’ bombs went off, her legs flew off and she was thrown to the side, unable to set off her bomb. (telegraph.co.uk). Even though she survived the attack, she was rejected by her family “out of fear of stigma”, or “a strong feeling of disapproval that most people in a society have about something, especially when it is unfair” (independent.co.uk) (dictionary.cambridge.org).

Regarding one of the most dangerous terrorist groups, most of ISIS’ and other terrorist group’s recruits come from Syria and Syrian/Iraqi descent; as can be seen from the table on the left, a total of about 60% of children that join ISIS are from Syria/Syrian-Iraqi descent/Iraq. Regardless, a lot of terrorist groups, such as some of those aforementioned, as well as those with many foreigners from all over the world in them, reside in Syria and Iraq, and constantly pose as a threat. Looking at statistics, it is to see that about 27,000 foreigners had joined the forces in just 2015, which means they could easily pose as innocent people while they’re classified as terrorists and illegal (edition.cnn.com). Nevertheless, of those people, the Syrian Human Rights Committee has disclosed that there were at least 800 children under the age of 18 that had been recruited to ISIS in August of 2014 alone (rcimun.org). Yet, they keep recruiting more people, using food, water, and shelter as incentives for families and children to join the forces, as well as children in propaganda and through social media.

Terrorist groups are also specifically targeting girls. For example, on April 16th, 2014, 230 schoolgirls were kidnapped by the terrorist group Boko Haram in Nigeria. The group, whose name has been translated to “Western education is a sin”, opposes the education of women due to the Sharia law. The focus for these specific abductions, along with others conducted by extremist groups, are usually based around making the girls wive who can cater for the men and act as slaves for the men in the terrorist group. Due to this, women and girls - who are usually Christian to start off with - may be pregnant or have had children by the time they get rescued, and may have been forced to convert to
Islam in order to marry their kidnappers (edition.cnn.com). This then makes it difficult to rehabilitate them and help them mentally and emotionally.

**Reasons for joining**

Reasons as to why these young persons join the extremist terrorist groups are endless, with the most popular ones relating to economic benefits and living conditions. A study from the recruitment of young people to the al-Shabaab in Somalia—conducted by Mahdi Abdile and his team showed that “27% of respondents joined al Shabab for economic reasons, 15% mentioned religious reasons, and 13% were forced to join. Once joined, the reasons for them to stay are endless alike. The feeling and idea that the young people have a sense of “belonging” within the group (21%); they receive support and responsibility (11%) for joining and staying within the group (eip.org). In order to get many and keep them, extremist groups find incentives to keep the extra armed members there.

**Seekers**

In the interview conducted by The Quantum of 49 people concluded that there were 9 “seeker” categories that the people fitted in; the Status Seekers, the Identity Seekers, the Revenge Seekers, the Redemption Seekers, the Responsibility Seekers, the Thrill Seekers, the Ideology Seekers, the Justice Seekers and the Death Seekers.

The status seekers are based around money, and find their social status to be really important and a primary aspect of their life. They want to be recognised.

The identity seekers easily feel left out or isolated in normal day life, so they are looking for a sense or feeling of belonging to a certain group or such. A religion such as Islam, provides a “pre-packaged transnational identity”. In this case, a transnational identity means that they find solace and “home” in more than one place, and feels comfortable and “belongs” in more than one place.

The revenge seekers seek revenge on a group because they feel marginalized or depreciated/belittled by that group.

The redemption seekers join extremist groups to get away from their past problems or crimes; they believe joining a religious extremist group absolves their crimes and takes away any previous sin to start a new life.

The responsibility seekers are interested in the economic value of the extremists and the way whereupon it grants them some material or financial support.
The thrill seekers join terrorist group for the adventure; they are not joining for another reason than to try something new and to get a rush of risk taking.

Each of the seekers may have a different background regarding where they come from, but don’t necessarily have to. Each seeker can come from both a Less Economically Developed Country (LEDCC) and a More Economically Developed Country (MEDCC), depending on the person; however, identity seekers, responsibility seekers, and the thrill seekers would be associated more with MEDCCs while the redemption and revenge seekers would be associated with LEDCCs, plainly due to the descriptions and situations of the people. However, it is important to reiterate the each of the seekers can come from either.

**Forcefully dying as an incentive**

In order to keep the group’s ideology and beliefs going, extremist groups have started to use children as weapons. As John Horgan, a researcher at the Georgia State University said, “Most terror groups find it difficult to rationalise or explain child recruitment. According to a study set up by Georgia State University, 39% of all children recruited died due to suicide bombing, 33% died in battlefield operations, and 18% died in suicidal raids across the enemy border. Of these children, 60% were between the ages of 12 and 16; the remaining percentage are the children older than 16 (pbs.org). For example, on Sunday, August 21st, a 12 year old boy was saved from such an act in Kirkuk, Iraq, after saying that an explosive belt had been strapped to his body before he could detonate the bomb. He was saved after security officials defused and removed the bomb. However, Turkey was not as lucky. At a wedding in Turkey, a 12-14 year old bomber blew up and killed 54 people, and injured almost 70 people. There was also not a definitive conclusion as to if the child had blown himself up or if someone had done it from the outside (independent.co.uk).

This just shows another incentive to get children as recruits; they are easily disposable and also easy to discipline. Terrorist groups are therefore slowly becoming stronger and easier to control.

**Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

**National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)**

The NCTC was a center set up in 2004 to help with the response system against terrorist threats in the United States (US). The main incentive for this center to be made was the 9/11 attack of 2001, where a bout of miscommunication of information, or the lack of communication of information, allowed for a lack of response when the planes hit the towers. The center was hence established to “bring
together all available information on terrorism, analyse the information, and provide warning of potential attacks on the U.S.”. However, there are doubts of NCTC’s successful work and its relationship with the Counterterrorism Center of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), whose mission objectives run parallel to those of the NCTC (fas.org).

**Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force**

The Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) is an organisation set up by the UN after the UN Strategy against terrorism was implemented in 2006. It was specifically set up by the General Assembly, and was given the role to be active in tackling terrorism, working under the General Assembly and Security Council Essentially it focuses on implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which claims the following:

1. Addressing the Conditions Conducive to the Spread of Terrorism
2. Preventing and Combatting Terrorism
3. Building States’ capacity and strengthening the role of the United Nations
4. Ensuring Human rights and the rule of law

Some things that the CTITF has done in the past were all projects relating to terrorism and fighting the issue of terrorism, specifically in Central Asia, Central Africa, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) [Countries such as Angola, Congo, Madagascar, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, etc] (un.org) (sadc.int). These projects include those dealing with charity, chemical and bio attacks, fair trialing, terrorism appeal, nuclear or radiological attacks, I-Act, Central Asia, and raising awareness (un.org).

**Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee**

The Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) was created by the Security Council after a unanimous vote on resolution 1373, which was ultimately passed on September 28, 2001, after the drastic acts that occurred earlier that month on September 11th, 2001. The Committee consists of all 15 chairs of the Security Council and were given the task of implementing resolution 1373, which required member states to impose measures in order to counter terrorist activities in the area, that would ultimately take steps towards:

1. Criminalising the financing of terrorism
2. Freezing without delay any funds related to persons involved in acts of terrorism
3. Denying all forms of financial support for terrorist groups
4. Suppressing the provision of safe haven, sustenance, or support for terrorists
5. Sharing information with other governments of any groups practicing or planning terrorist acts 
6. Cooperating with other governments in the investigation, detection, arrest, extradition and 
   prosecution of those involved in such acts 
7. Criminalising active and passive assistance for terrorism in domestic law and bring violators to 
   justice (un.org/sc/ctc)

Syria & Iraq

Syria and Iraq play a big part in this issue, seeing as the majority of territory that ISIS is active in 
and controls is in Eastern Syria and Western Iraq, as well as other smaller, less significant places within 
the countries. Even though they branched out to over 18 countries, the ISIS core group is in the 
aforementioned areas.

The background of ISIS and Al-Qaeda

Both ISIS and Al-Qaeda were formed and developed within Iraq, yet ISIS branched off of 
the latter. In the beginning, the Islamic State (IS) grew out of what was already Al-Qaeda in Iraq, which 
was created in 2003 as to start a rebellion and become a rebel group. In 2011, IS joined the other group 
in a rebellion against President Bashar al-Assad in Syria. Then, in 2013, IS changed their name to the 
Islamic State and the Levant (ISIS or ISIL). Since then, both ISIS and Al-Qaeda have been active in 
especially Syria and Iraq; it was due to the fact that they disagreed with the government.

As aforementioned, more than 50% of the children within the terrorist groups are from Syria, Iraq, 
or Syrian or Iraqi descent. Whether this comes from kidnapping (which is more popular in groups such 
as Boko Haram in Nigeria), from the persuasion methods regarding teenagers, or from giving incentives 
such as money, food, or shelter.

Nigeria

Similarly to ISIS’ approach to the matter, Nigeria’s Boko Haram uses forceful methods to lure 
young people into their group. However, unlike ISIS, Boko Haram uses children as suicide bombers and 
exploits them for their lives instead of using them to get more recruits. Seeing as children are weak and 
expendable, they get used as portable bombs to blow up certain areas. Earlier this year, an 18 year old 
woman was stopped while wearing a suicide vest, and told officials that she was given a N200 (50p) for 
food by the Boko Haram group, who also told her that she would go to heaven if she pressed the button 
(independent.co.uk)
Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Security Council Resolution 2199 on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts by Al-Qaeda, 2 February 2015 (S/RES/2199)
- Security Council Resolution 2178 on threats to international peace and security caused by foreign terrorist fighters, 24 September, 2014 (S/RES/2178)
- Security Council Resolution 2195 on preventing and combating terrorism, including terrorism benefiting from transnational organised crime, 19 December, 2014 (S/RES/2195)
- Security Council Resolution 1624 on youth, peace, and security, 14 September, 2005 (S/RES/1624)
- Security Council Resolution 2225 on children and armed conflict, 2015 (S/RES/2225)

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Tackling the issue of terrorism as a whole, regardless of the youth aspect, has been a global force for many years, and has been an area that has been growing stronger as threats have been growing bigger. There have been organisations set up, such as the aforementioned National Counterterrorism Center in America, to help improve communication and the sharing of knowledge under a secure and private network to ensure the security from threats. To go on, the UN has implemented the aforementioned UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which works to “enhance national, regional, and international efforts to counter terrorism” (un.org).

However, regardless of the counterterrorism solutions as a whole, there has been a lack of action taken against the recruitment of children into these groups. There have been buildings set up by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the UN for peacekeeping, as well as The Guiding Principles on Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding group.

The Guiding Principles for Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding

The Guiding Principles for Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding, which was developed by the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), and is co-chaired by the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). The working portion of the group consists of youth-led organisations, governmental organisations, members representing the UN, and other academic groups (sfcg.org).
To go on, and to conclude, there have been many unofficial initiatives taken to finding solutions, and there have been many many small, local peacebuilding operations constructed to tackle the same issue. These local operations are usually conducted in areas of great concern, such as those aforementioned in the previous sections (munob.com).

Possible Solutions

Along with the past, it is important to look to the future as well, to search for solutions for the long- or short term. These solutions can be simple and complex, considering the extent that this issue has spread to. From spreading awareness to placing safety warnings on social media sites, to even putting restrictions on what teens can see online.

Awareness

Naturally, the first step to take, and to continue taking throughout the issue is the step of spreading awareness; this doesn't have an endpoint, not even after the issue has been resolved. There are therefore many ways to easily make this spreading of awareness accessible, one of which can be both a pro and con when it comes to spreading awareness: social media.

Facebook holds over 500 million people while Twitter holds around 232 million users; both of these means, as well as other ones such as Instagram and tumblr., are social networks that allow the viral sharing of photos, messages, and videos (storify.com). As aforementioned, this is the primary way that teenagers these days get their news and awareness, and with terrorist propaganda videos flying around everywhere, it is impossible not to be exposed to them at least once in a teen's online life. However, this method can also be used to portray and communicate positive and good messages; that's why it is important to **clarify your intent** before posting something, so that it is easy to see what the stance on the issue you are making people aware of is. Unclear messages can only be taken the wrong way, and can lead to a counterproductive reaction. Furthermore, another way to spread awareness is by **involving people through activities or online viral challenges**. For example, a couple years ago, there was the ice bucket challenge to spread awareness for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), where users would take a video of themselves pouring ice water over their head, and would then nominate 5 users to do the same within 24 hours. This spread throughout the world like a wildfire, and was purely started on social media (triplepundit.com)

Spreading awareness in such ways is an easy and effective way to get a message across; spreading a positive message is easier this way than it is for a negative message, seeing as it literally involves people to do something for the cause.
Online Security

Another possible solution would be drastically improving online security and teenage exposure and security. As aforementioned, the groups seems to be creating fake accounts in order to lure the children in. They also try to get information from their account through illegal manners. In order to reduce the risk of this happening, as well as the hacking of these teenage accounts, the account security is crucial.

Apart from setting a strong password and email back up from accounts, it is also important to sketchy accounts that seem untrustworthy. These accounts can be hard to find, but on some instances, it is always safe to stay away from strange accounts and strange people that are unknown to the teenagers; not accepting friend and message requests is crucial in this manner. Secondly, it is important not to post private or personal information on the public part of a social media account; putting your location, full name, or school on your public profile makes the life of baiters much easier.

To go on, using a secure browser and being careful with public Wi-Fis is also important; some networks are easy to connect to and find another person’s private information on the database that stores it for security reasons. One way to prevent this is by using the “incognito mode” preference on browsers; this makes sure that information that you put in or save does not get saved locally or on the network. However, even this isn’t foolproof (heimdalsecurity.com).

In conclusion, awareness and online security are two of many possibilities that could help solve the issue as a whole, and that have lots of reasoning behind their importance. Therefore, it is crucial to follow these steps, as well as other methods to tackle the issue at hand.

Bibliography


15 August 2017]


Introduction

All of us has felt the sweaty wholeness and satisfaction that comes after playing a good sports game. As the quote goes: “Apart from education, you need good health, and for that, you need to play sports.” According to the World Health Organization, “Physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality causing an estimated 3.2 million deaths globally.” Playing sports can reduce the risk of a variety of diseases and illnesses, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, colon and breast cancer, and depression.

In the past, UNICEF has passed a resolution titled “A world fit for children” stressing that “Education shall be directed to the development of children’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.” As can be seen in this statement, physical abilities is a crucial portion of a good and whole education. Additionally, the National Center for Education Statistics reports that “Students who are active and healthy behave better in the classroom, have higher levels of concentration and creativity, and maintain a more positive attitude about school.” So why don’t students exercise more? According to Learnliftoff.com, “When considering an average student’s day once they get home, complete homework, and eat dinner, kids do not have much additional time for physical activities. That being the case, this data suggests that 71 percent of students are left with minimal chances of meeting the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.” These are devastating statistics, and considering the current state of obesity among youth this problem must be addressed.

Not only does sports bring international health benefits and prolong life spans, the United Nations agrees contends that sports “[promote] tolerance and social inclusion.” On December 16th 2016, the United Nations drafted the resolution A/71/L.38 entitled “Sports as a means to promote education, health, development and peace,” which stated that sports are important “in combating non-communicable diseases and building the confidence and
strengthening of young people, persons with disabilities and minority groups, and empowering young women and girls.” Thus, sports is not only a way to create healthier bodies, but also healthier mentalities.

Definition of Key Terms

Physical Activity

According to the World Health Organization, Physical Activity is “any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure.”

Background Information

Sports play a strong part in creating a better educational experience, raising health levels, and promoting international development and peace.

Sports as part of physical education

Regulation issues

It is reported by UNESCO’s “World Wide Survey of School Physical Education” that “Noncompliance with regulations is particularly evident in countries where curriculum responsibility lies with education districts or individual schools.” Monitoring of physical education class quality usually comes from the administration staff of individual schools themselves, which may lead to irregularities and inconsistencies..

Overemphasis on competition

It has also been observed that an overemphasis on the competitive aspect of sports in schools can have negative effects on student interest levels. This is because sports become less focused on the joy of the experience, and more about the end result. Additionally, the high pressure processes of team selections can increase pressure for athletes, and make sports an “elite activity.”

Physical Education Facilities

Especially in less developed countries, there are a lack of good physical education facilities, or a lack of physical education facilities altogether. In rural areas where populations are struggling for survival from epidemics or hunger, physical education comes as a luxury. Nonprofits are making significant efforts to provide education in many rural areas, however physical education facilities are at the bottom of the priority.
In more developed countries, physical education facilities may not be adequate in schools due to lack of emphasis placed on sports.

**Bullying and treatment of students**

There has been argument over the negative psychological effects of physical education on students. There is little controversy over the fact that sports bring positive benefits to individuals. But the physical education system in schools through which sports are mandated can often create negative experiences. With no supervision in the locker room, students can be subject to verbal abuse on their body image and sexual orientation. It has been reported on several student-written articles on prominent news sites that the PE teachers were not understanding of personal conditions on days of PE. Teachers often took students’ reports of feeling unwell as an excuse to miss class, which may evoke feelings of hurt. All combined, this can make the PE experience less than ideal for many students.

**Sports as a method of increasing health levels**

As exercise is a big part of health and well being, promoting sports through charity work and volunteerism in less developed countries will create longer life expectancies. As cited by www.appliedsportpsych.com, “sports can create improved move, ... reduced stress”, as well as other benefits. These benefits help victims of various types of trauma to recover and reintegrate themselves into normal and healthy lives. A study done by Soyeon Ahn (University of Miami) and Alicia Fedewa (University of Kentucky) in 2011 suggests that “physical activity interventions” helped significantly in reducing trauma for children, and should be considered to be implemented as a crucial aspect of a trauma recovery process.

**Sports as development for the economy**

Sports provide both short term and long term methods of ameliorating a country’s economy. In the short term, countries that host the Olympics or other such competitions can better their economy through increased tourism during the duration of the competition, which brings better business. In the long term, generating a supportive environment and providing plenty of opportunities for citizens to integrate sports as a crucial part of their lives will create more energy and efficiency for the workforce.

**Sports and less developed countries**

Below are negative aspects associated with sports in less developed countries.
Negative cycles

There is a severe case of “muscle drain” in less developed countries, in which talented athletes move to more developed countries where there are more opportunities for career development. In less developed countries sports are less prioritized, which creates a negative cycle in which there are less career paths available to athletes. This therefore leads to brain drain and brings down the economy even more.

Child labour and exploitation

Especially in early years, there has been high amounts of news coverage on the exploitation of child labour in creating sporting gear for big sporting brands such as Nike and Adidas. As reported by globalmarch.org, Pakistan is the largest producer of the football with India in the second place. China and other countries in Asia and Latin America are also amongst the biggest producers of sporting goods. It has been reported that the factories in charge of the production of sporting goods have bad working conditions, with workers suffering bad pains, short eyesight, and deformed fingers from stitching and working on machines. These deformations, injuries, and illnesses have an even more devastating impact amongst child labourers.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF is one of the biggest driving factors in propagating sports activities as a way to promote education, health, development, and peace. UNICEF partners with organizations such as Manchester United, FC Barcelona, Gothia Cup, in helping millions of children worldwide. UNICEF has hosted football events in countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Fiji, Ghana, and more. UNICEF also propagates inclusive sports such as football for students on wheelchairs.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

“Girls play football at Savelugu Junior Secondary School in the town of Savelugu, Ghana, capital of Savelugu-Nanton District in Northern Region.” - UNICEF
ILO works heavily on the issue of child labor, and has worked with countries such as Pakistan in reducing child labor used in factories that produce sporting goods.

**America**

The country has high levels of obesity due highly to both social and economic factors. It is mandated by The American National Association of Sports and Physical Education that schoolchildren participate in 150 minutes a week of physical education. Time Magazine reports that only six out of fifty states in America have met these standards. This is due to lack of adequate governmental enforcement, as well as the fact that schools are under budgetary pressures and time constraints.

**Timeline of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>The first modern Olympics game. Held in Athens, Greece. The Olympics occurred from then on once every four years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>A Model Code of Conduct for global business practices that addresses working conditions in factories abroad was developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2 big marches across over one hundred countries in an attempt to raise awareness on the exploitation of child labor in the production of sporting goods. This lead to the creation of the Global March Organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 October 2009</td>
<td>The UN General Assembly granted the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Observer Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>UNESCO releases Worldwide survey of School Physical Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 July 2014</td>
<td>Stanford releases new study that shows that “lack of exercise … is linked to rise in obesity”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**
The following events are listed in chronological order. For the list from the UN website, please visit "https://www.un.org/sport/resources/documents/general-assembly-resolutions." As mentioned above the UN did this annually or biannually over a wide range of years, so I would recommend skimming some of these. They will help you significantly on your resolution. (PLEASE NOTE THAT I expect you guys to build on what has already been done by the UN.)

- **International Year of Sport and the Olympic Ideal, 25 October 1993** *(A/RES/48/10)*
- **Observance of the Olympic Truce, 25 October 1993** *(A/RES/48/11)*
- **Sports as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace, 11 December 2008** *(A/RES/63/135)*
- **Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal, 17 October 2011** *(A/RES/66/5)*
- **Sports as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace, 28 November 2012** *(A/RES/67/17)*
- **Sports as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace, 16 December 2016** *(A/RES/71/160)*

### Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

**United Nations (UN)**


**International Labour Organization (ILO)**

A meeting with the ILO and lasting negotiations with producers (subcontractors) in Pakistan developed an industry-wide programme to eliminate all forms of child labour in soccer ball manufacturing. In 1997, a Model Code of Conduct for global business practices that addresses working conditions in factories abroad was developed.
Global March Organization

The organization started with 2 big marches in 1998, crossing over a hundred countries with over 7 million people in support. This raised awareness over the issue of child labour. The global march fights against exploitation of child labor in the production of sporting goods.

American Kinesiology Association (AKA)

This association is one of the information leaders in physical activity and health.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom has implemented a nationwide scheme to increase the amount of cyclers in the country. Overall, the government has published £1.2 billion plan in 2017 to increase cycling and walking. This fund is used for building more bicycle roads and other biking related infrastructures, safety and awareness training for all citizens, free bike training for children, extra secure cycle storage, and more. The UK believes that good biking infrastructure is the best way to encourage more biking, as this way the sport may become more convenient than taking public or private transit. Additionally, the UK has implemented a Cycle to Work scheme, in which workers can rent bikes at little to no taxes, as long as they do so through an employer. This is to encourage the action of biking to work.

Possible Solutions

One direct way to increase the quality of physical education classes is to make better the treatment towards Physical education teachers. It is reported by UNESCO that “In around a fifth of [all] countries, physical education teachers do not enjoy the same status as other subject teachers.” The undervaluing of physical education teachers is a sign that the school administration undervalues the benefits of a good physical education.

There are many ways to make sports more enjoyable for students at school. A more accepting and welcoming environment must be created, and locker room abuse must be prevented. This must be enforced by the school administration and carried out by teachers. Another way is to make PE class not mandated, and give students the choice of joining an extracurricular or club sport instead. Additionally, PE classes could give students the opportunity to follow fitness videos and courses in their own homes, and sending evidence of their exercise.
Furthermore, inspection teams can be created by individual member nations to monitor and regulate the quality of their physical education classes.

On a bigger scale, a stronger emphasis must be placed on physical education internationally, through promotion and awareness strategies. In an era where most of the world's population spends a considerable chunk of time online in different social media sites, it would be very effective to create trending topics of viral content related to this issue. This could be achieved through encouraging nations to cooperate with film studios, individuals filmmakers, photographers, artists, and online content creators. It could also be recommended that nations create artistic initiatives and competitions related to this topic.

Infrastructure that encourages sports as well as sport-related transit methods such as biking should be built. City-wide biking significantly decreases the amount of pollution emitted by vehicles, reduces traffic congestion, and increases overall health levels for the city. Biking or walking has also been argued as being a more stress free method of transit, since commuters don’t have to sit through traffic.

On an international scale, doping as well as other cheating tactics must be prevented in competitions such as the Olympics, as this decreases the levels of trust between citizens of different countries, especially since sports is such a highly watched form of entertainment. Sports is also strongly linked to patriotism and national identity. Further investigation on doping must be conducted by pre-existing or newly established international agencies, and methods of raising awareness will propagate the process. One good example of this is the recently released documentary “Icarus”, which explores the topic of sport doping.

Bibliography

I definitely recommend you to start your research with some of the links below. I have organized them into different categories in the hopes of helping you, so please use it :)  

Formal Websites, Documents and Reports:


**Physical Education Regulations:**

Rado, Diane. “Many Schools Skipping Some PE Classes, despite the Law.” *Chicagotribune.com*, Chicago Tribune, 9 June 2016,


Negative aspects of Physical Education:


Sports as a way to encourage development and peace:


Sports as a way to encourage health and reduce trauma:


**Sports and child labour:**

“Global March Against Child Labour | From Exploitation to Education.” *Global March Against Child Labour | From Exploitation to Education*, www.globalmarch.org/.

**Sports as a way out of poverty:**

Introduction

According to the ‘World Health Organization Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023’ published in 2013, the term alternative medicine is interchangeable with complementary medicine and traditional medicine in some countries. To make things clearer, the term complementary alternative medicine (CAM) is used instead which means “a broad set of health care practices that are not part of that country’s own tradition or conventional medicine and are not fully integrated into the primary health-care system.”

CAM focuses on areas such as spiritual, physical, emotional and mental health. Common practices include yoga, acupuncture, homeopathy, meditation and the use of herbal and dietary supplements.

With a rise in the use of CAM and its common usage in both developing and developed countries around the world, policy makers and health professionals are debating over the legitimacy, safety, effectiveness, quality and regulation of these medicines. Many countries have CAM practices ingrained in their culture and indigenous communities. CAM practices include Ayurveda, traditional Chinese medicine and Unani medicine that have been passed down by generations. It is a concern that there is a lack of scientific research into their nature and there are certain countries that lack funding to conduct research.

Moreover CAM is at the core of some health care systems around the world such as in the African region. In these countries the accessibility and availability of conventional medicine based health services is often very limited due to reasons such as civil wars and the lack of infrastructure. Without the regulation of CAM, the safety and effective practice of such medicines may compromise the health of the public. The public may use CAM practices unknowing of its correct usage and their side effects. It is therefore vital to have regulations that focus on research, development and the public awareness of CAM.

Definition of Key Terms

Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

With complementary medicine and alternative medicine being interchangeable, this term thus refers to a broad set of health care practices that are not part of that country’s own tradition or
conventional medicine and are not fully integrated into the primary health-care system. It is also called traditional medicine.

**Traditional Medicine(TM)**

It is the sum total of the knowledge, skill, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, and often passed down by generations used in the upkeep of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness.

**Conventional Medicine**

Refers to the broad category of medical practice that is often called Western medicine, biomedicine, scientific medicine, modern medicine, or allopathic medicine, which has undergone widespread scientific research and is evidence-based.

**Allopathic Medicine**

The system of medical practice which makes use of all measures that have proved of value in the treatment of a disease. This means that it stems from evidence-based research. It is also considered a biologically based approach to healing. Example: the use of drugs to lower a patient's high blood pressure.

**Regulation**

They are rules made by a government or other authority which are in place to control a process, activity and the way people behave.

**Background Information**

Around 100 million Europeans are currently CAM users, with one fifth saying they are regular users of CAM and the same number preferring health care which includes CAM. This signifies the widespread use of CAM within Europe and the increasing need for regulations.

It is also essential to create the conditions for the appropriate and correct use of CAM methods. This is because when used correctly, different variations of traditional medicines can have significant benefits to an individual's health. The public must be better informed and aware of CAM treatments and strategies so as to enable them to make well informed decisions. Therefore it is vital for countries to implement policies and regulate the use of CAM to ensure these practices are effective and benefit the community.

**Reasons for the uses of CAM**

A reason for the increasing use of traditional medicine is a growing trend for patients to take a more proactive approach to their own health and to seek out different forms of self-care. In the process, many consumers have turned to natural traditional medicinal products, medicinal strategies passed
down by generations and home remedies under the notion that natural means safe. In Australia, visits to CAM practitioners such as acupuncturists saw an increase of over 30% between 1995 and 2005, where even 750,000 visits were recorded in a period of two weeks.

Next in countries where CAM is the foundation of their health care, it is common to find that the availability of conventional medicine-based health services is limited. The increasing use of CAM in Africa and some developing countries is due to them being readily available and affordable. For example, the ratio of traditional healers to population in Africa is 1:500 whereas the ratio of qualified medical doctors to population is 1:40,000. For the millions of people living in rural areas and with little to no access to hospitals and clinics, it is more often than not that native healers remain their health providers.

Although countries such as Singapore and The Republic of Korea have well established and comprehensive healthcare systems in place, a number of historical, cultural and familial influences have been at the core of the 76% and 86% of their respective populations commonly using CAM. Usually, residents of these countries highly respect their elders and value their knowledge, that has been passed down for generations, regarding CAM. This leads to their high usage of this medicine.

Additionally many consumers in well developed countries use CAM as complementary therapy for their existing medication. Such as coupling acupuncture with painkillers to alleviate back pain.

Furthermore people have also opted for CAM due to an increasing dissatisfaction with existing health-care services and the notion that ‘drug-free’, which is commonly associated with CAM, is the way to go for a healthy lifestyle. They believe that natural means safe. According to Johns Hopkins University, around 40 percent of Americans report using alternative medicine methods for pain relief and when conventional prescribed medications are presumed to be ineffective.

Benefits of CAM

The advantages of CAM therapies include its affordability and availability in various parts of the world; its widespread acceptance in less economically developed countries(LEDCs); its comparatively low cost to conventional medication; and the considerably lower level of technology involved to create the medication. As a result, CAM therapies do have the chance of making better health care system in many countries.

Lower costs have been a primary reason for the increasing use of CAM. With lower levels of technology needed, production costs are lowered and are made more affordable for consumers. A recent survey conducted by the WHO Roll Back Malaria Programme in 1998 revealed that in Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Zambia more than 60% of children with high fever are cared at home with herbal medicines. For African families, this means fewer hospital stays and thus lower financial costs.
Concerns

CAM methods of treatment have not always been effective. Reports have exposed examples of incorrect use of traditional medicines by members of the public, including the unknowing use of counterfeit herbal medicines, and unintentional injuries caused by unqualified and unskilled practitioners globally.

CAM products are unregulated in many countries, and therefore many concerns about the risks for consumers relate to the quality and safety of CAM therapies and products. Common problems include the sale of incorrect plant species, fumigation agents and microbial toxins have been found in damaging concentrations in CAM therapies. Uppsala Monitoring Centre, a WHO Collaborating Centre which monitors adverse reactions and issues of these medicines, received numerous amounts of reports from around the world concerning negative outcomes that follow the use of CAM medication therapies. Accidents have occurred when CAM practitioners are not fully qualified or trained; when practitioners do not strictly follow their code of conduct; or when the treatment is not adjusted or modified according to the condition of the patient. These accidents have proven to be fatal in certain cases.

Another concern is the complications that can arise from the use of CAM in conjunction with conventional medication. Studies have shown that consumers have used the two types of medication concurrently without notifying their health care provider. This poses a significant risk to their own health, as unbeknownst to them they could be risking their life because these two medicines may clash.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

WHO (World Health Organisation)

The WHO has been committed to informing and providing substantial information regarding CAM practices, uses and suggested regulations that can be implemented to member states, in an effort for consumers to be in a better position to manage their health. Documents such as the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2002–2005 and 2014-2023 have been key documents published by the WHO to further their above motives.

EU (European Union)

Along with the United Nations, has put into force treaties that regulate traditional medicine in the EU. They established EHTPA (European Herbal & Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association) in 1993, which is “dedicated to the development of herbal/traditional medicine, preserving and enhancing
the legal basis of practice across EU Members States and promoting best practice throughout the traditions."

**IRCH (International Regulatory Cooperation on Herbal Medicine)**

A network which since 2006, has brought together national regulatory authorities responsible for the regulation of herbal medicines within their own countries annually to discuss regulatory methods. This especially helps countries that lack strict regulations and is a sign of a collective commitment in addressing the issue.

**Tanzania**

Tanzania took a big step into regulating alternative medicines by adopting the Traditional and Alternative Medicines Act in 2002. Its primary aims are to monitor, promote and support the development of traditional medicine, whilst implementing stricter laws in order to become an alternative health practitioner. They also have an Institute of Traditional Medicine, which aims to research into alternative healing systems. They also have a legal framework that allows alternative health practitioners and medical professionals to work together on issues such as HIV/AIDS.

**Singapore**

In 2000, the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Act was implemented in Singapore which established the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner Board. This board provides courses in the practice of traditional Chinese medicine and is given the right to accept or reject applications of practitioners wanting to practice CAM. Moreover, Singapore has made it compulsory to pass national examinations if practitioners want to use acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine.

**France**

In France, there are around 50,000 practitioners who provide CAM therapies. It is also reported that around 50% of people have used CAM at least once. Universities such as the University of Bobigny provide courses and training for acupuncture and osteopathy. Furthermore, courses in homeopathy are also taught in 21 of France’s 24 schools of pharmacy, where CAM is part of the health care system.

**Timeline of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
A resolution called ‘Traditional Systems of Medicine’ was passed in the World Health Organization’s Regional Committee For South-East Asia, that aims for great cooperation amongst member states, and for them to conduct research on traditional medicine systems within their country.

Singapore adopts the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners Act, which formed a separate board in the country to deal with issues relating to CAM.

Tanzania adopts the Traditional and Alternative Medicines Act that aims to develop regulations within the country that supports research of CAM.

The World Health Assembly resolution named Traditional Medicine was passed, which calls for the World Health Organization to set-up regional training courses for CAM practitioners, to facilitate greater communication between member states on the topic and to promote research into CAM. urges member states to implement national policies that support the correct use of CAM.

The World Health Organization develops a Traditional Medicine Strategy which outlines the reasons and need for regulation of CAM amongst member states. It provides relevant statistics and provides suggestions on what can be implemented by countries.

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

- Traditional Systems of Medicine, 17th September 1976 (SEA/RC29/R11)
- Traditional Systems of Medicine, 12th September 2003 (SEA/RC56/R6)
- Traditional Medicine, 2003 (WHA56.31)
- Traditional Medicine, 2014, (WHA67.18)
- Traditional Medicine, 2003, (EB111.R12)
Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The above documents mentioned under the heading ‘Relevant UN Treaties and Events’ have been attempts to make Member states aware of the current state of traditional medicine and CAM, whilst proposing solutions and methods to regulate such medications.

The WHO has been at the core for the movement towards regulating CAM. They have passed resolutions in their own World Health Assembly and Regional Committee for South-East Asia. They currently have five main objectives to meet regarding CAM with them being framing policy, enhancing safety, efficacy and quality, ensuring access, and promoting rational use.

They currently urge members states to implement drug-safety monitoring systems to monitor traditional practices and CAM, whilst also pushing them to provide adequate resources for research into CAM. They also not only request countries to provide reliable information regarding CAM to consumers, but want CAM education in medical schools.

The WHO has also developed workshops and training programs that assist medical practitioners in expanding their knowledge of CAM. This helps patients communicate and discuss their own practices used at home with medical practitioners as they would have a better understanding of CAM. This benefits patients as practitioners can inform them if they are truly beneficial and if they clash with any existing medication they take.

Possible Solutions

One possible solution is the implementation of research institutes within countries. This will allow consumers and practitioners to gain a better understanding of the CAM therapies and products that are used, and to explore the benefits, consequences, side effects and effectiveness of such therapies and products. There is currently a lack of evidence for the practices being used by consumers, and this implementation will seek to resolve such issues regarding their usage over, and in addition to conventional medicine.

Additionally LEDC’s and countries who lack regulations should cooperate with countries such as the United States of America, who have research institutes such as the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) that is funded by the government and aims to explore CAM practices with evidence based research. This cooperation will help out countries in financial crisis and to

Furthermore regulations should be implemented that address the lack of information being provided to practitioners and consumers. As it stands, the number of Member States providing high-level CAM education programmes including Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees at university level has rose from a few to 39, representing 30% of the 129 countries surveyed. This means that any such available information regarding CAM practices, will be of limited knowledge to practitioners and they will not be able to easily make justified decisions on whether they should be used. These degrees must be promoted and given the same importance that conventional medicine possesses.
Moreover since herbal medicines are under CAM, and as noted before that 60% of children in countries in Africa are treated with herbal medicines for high fever in their homes, it is essential that consumers are notified of the risk and thereof benefits involved with such practices. There needs to be a greater awareness of such effects and three strategies can be implemented. Firstly, campaigns should be initiated by the government that reach out to consumers and provide regular updates on findings related to CAM. Secondly the government and relevant organisations within a country should hold conferences that bring together practitioners to discuss and inform themselves of the latest developments in CAM. This means that practitioners who did not take up CAM in university will gain knowledge and be able to communicate with their patients. Thirdly there needs to be greater communication between patients and practitioners, so practitioners can inform patients if the CAM practice they use is harmful.

Problems involving the use of incorrect plant species and contamination in herbal medicines can be prevented by the development and enforcement of herbal medicine regulations and by following good agricultural and collection practices of medicinal plants and good manufacturing practices. Firstly in order for this to happen, there still needs to be significant research in discovering the plant species that endanger lives. Secondly each country should have a board that is dedicated to monitoring and overseeing agricultural practices related specifically to herbal medicine.

Bibliography


Introduction

Obesity is defined as the state of being above one’s normal weight. There are generally three causes of obesity. The first is excess food intake, which can cause the body to gain more fat than body functions require. The second is lack of exercise, and the third is genetic factors. In general obesity can be prevented through exercise and diets. Authorities such as the American Medical Association view obesity as “one of the most serious medical health conditions of the 21st century.”

For young people growing up in our modern 21st century, it is hard to resist the many temptations of different types of fast food. According to Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “The percentage of children with obesity in the United States has more than tripled since the 1970.” It is important to note that it is more likely for children in developed countries to be obese than those in developing countries.

By 1950s, fast food has become prevalent in the United States. The highly unhealthy components of chemicals and additives in fast food has been a main factor in the rise of obesity. Large amounts of sugar or salt will also propagate a variety of other diseases. Successful expansions of fast food chains into foreign markets has caused the rise in obesity internationally.

Obesity is generally stigmatized in the modern world, especially in the Western hemisphere.
Definition of Key Terms

Morbid Obesity

Whether or not someone is “morbidly obese” is determined using the Body Mass Index (BMI). Those that are morbidly obese will have issues with basic functions such as breathing or walking. With their body under the strain of huge amounts of fat, there are high chances of illnesses such as high blood pressure, sleep apnea, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), gallstones, osteoarthritis, heart disease, and cancer occurring.

Emotional Eating

According to Medicinenet.com, “Emotional eating is the practice of consuming large quantities of food -- usually "comfort" or junk foods -- in response to feelings instead of hunger. Experts estimate that 75% of overeating is caused by emotions.” 75% is a big number. This alludes to the fact that when thinking of solutions to this issue, delegates must keep in mind that the issue is more than just a health issue-- it’s an emotional and psychological one. Therefore, in order to combat obesity, we must combat the mindsets that urges us to eat more than we need.

Acculturation

The phenomenon in which one culture is assimilated to, or affected by, another more dominant culture. A big part of globalization involves the phenomenon of other countries acculturating to America. (Being affected by American culture.)

Background Information

Obesity is a common phenomenon among youth-- especially in developed countries. In the subtopics below, aspects of youth obesity is outlined, including the causes and consequences of youth obesity.

Causes of Obesity

A variety of causes can be the stem of obesity. It can be argued that obesity can also be caused by cultural and social factors, some of which are explained in the subcategories below. Being obese can cause low self esteem and feelings of humiliation. This can cause emotional eating to be triggered, which in turn leads to more gain of fat. This is a negative downward spiral.

Academic Pressures
In countries with intense studying cultures such as China or Korea, students are faced with so much academic pressure that they have few incentives to give any time to exercising. The majority of students’ lives up to high school is spent sitting in front of a desk. As students near their college application deadline or entrance exam date, they may even prioritize their studying over sleep or eating healthy. Emotional eating during these stressful situations, combined with lack of sleep and healthy food as well as lack of exercise, can cause obesity. Additionally, if a habit of exercising is not developed during youth, as they grow up into adults they are still less likely to incorporate exercise into their daily routine.

**Poverty**

The Health-Wealth gradient is a sociological theory which states that in general the more wealthy a population is, the more healthy they will be. This is in a large part due to the fact that healthy food is quite expensive to buy in developed countries, whereas junk food is more cheap. This leads to an economical phenomenon in which the poor do not have the choice to be healthy. At least, the choices that lead to obesity are much more readily available for them. Additionally, children that grow up in less economically well-off households will have less exercise and sports options available to them, since extracurriculars often need extra payment. Less than ideal living conditions will also induce stress and negative emotions, which can lead to emotional eating of junk food.

**School policies**

In many schools around the world, school lunches are unhealthy. They consist of stir fried foods as well as foods with excess sugar, salt, or additives for flavor. This is especially true for public schools in less developed urban areas, as this form of food is the most cheap and readily accessible.

**Globalization**
Eating habits are often shaped by cultural views and values. For example, it has been observed by Sonia Caprio, MD and Stephen R. Daniels, PHD, at the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health that “... first-generation Asian and Latino adolescents have been found to have higher fruit and vegetable consumption and lower soda consumption than whites.” However, it has been observed that as acculturation occurs, “by the third generation their [Latin] nutrition is poorer than that of whites” because “fruit and vegetable consumption by Latinos decreases while their soda consumption increases,” thereby becoming closer to American consumption habits. As globalization occurs, traditional diets that are “high in complex carbohydrates and fiber have been replaced with high-fat, energy-dense diets. Rural migrants abandon traditional diets rich in vegetables and cereal in favor of processed foods and animal products.” This abandoning of traditional diets causes obesity.

Aside from food, globalization has brought about the spreading of technology into most of the world. Screen entertainment and motorized transport products has decreased exercise levels and increased levels of stagnant activity.

Health-Related Consequences of Obesity

According to WHO, “at least one in three of the world's adult population is overweight and almost one in 10 is obese.” Relating specifically to children, “there are over 40 million children under age five who are overweight.”

According to WHO, The 4 biggest health consequences are “cardiovascular disease mainly heart disease and stroke), type 2 diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders like osteoarthritis, and some cancers (endometrial, breast and colon).” These diseases result premature death, disabilities, and an overall decreased quality of living.

Consequences to a lesser agree, according to the Centres for Disease and Control Prevention, include “Sleep apnea and breathing problems, Mental illness such as clinical depression, anxiety, and other mental disorders, and Body pain and difficulty with physical functioning.”

Non-Health Consequences of Obesity

Bullying

A study in 2004 done by the OAC, based on 5749 middle and high school students, showed that those that are obese are more likely to be victims of bullying. Additional studies has found that obese children are more likely to have low self esteem, which can
propagate bullying behaviors even further. It is also reported that obese kids are more likely to be bullies themselves. There has been dispute about why this is. Some believe that it is mental trauma and anger, and others believe that this may be connected with emotional irregularities and impulses that come with excessive eating.

**Social**

It has been shown that those that are more obese are more likely to be poor due to decreased social opportunities. Obese individuals are less likely to get married, and marriage is associated with increased wealth. It has been stated by slate.com that “Women who are two standard deviations overweight (that's 64 pounds above normal) make 9 percent less money.” This alludes to the social problem of stigma against the obese.

**Economic**

Increased obesity decreases the ability of a nation’s workforce to create high quality and efficient work. High levels of obesity increases national medical expenditures. As reported, Healthcare in America on obesity alone spends about 150 billion dollars annually, and taxpayers fund about half of these costs at 60 million. So on the wider scheme, increased obesity in a nation makes the nation’s taxpayers (that is, all citizens) economically less well off.

**Political**

The American national conference on state legislatures has noted that obesity can actually serve as a concern to national security. This is due to the fact that approximately 25% of teenagers who apply for the military are rejected because they are overweight. This may result in a shortage of military personnel that the nation needs to assure national security.

**Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

**World Health Organization (WHO)**

WHO, a specialized agency of the UN, actively fights against the rise in obesity by disseminating helpful information online for those in need, as well as launching several global strategy programs to combat the issue. One programs worth mentioning is the “Global Strategy
on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.” Additionally, WHO’s “Department of Nutrition for Health and Development” engage in additional efforts to combat obesity issues around the world.

Center for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC is an United States federal agency under the Department of Health and Human Services, and is “The leading public national health institute of the United States.” It not only focuses on the well-being of American citizens, but has also developed outreach programs for international aid. The center has focused heavily on non-infectious diseases such as obesity, developing a variety of programs and agendas.

United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

The motto of this governmental department is "Improving the health, safety, and well-being of America." The department contains 115 programs across 11 operating divisions. These programs target specific aspects of health, including obesity. In 2015, the department was granted a fiscal budget of 1.020 trillion.

The American Medical Association

One of the most prominent Medical Associations around the world, this association contains the largest amount of medical personnel and physicians in the US. The Association regularly publishes reports and findings on cases related to health.

Obesity Action Coalition (OAC)

The Coalition is a platform that helps obese Americans regain healthy lifestyles. They currently have 54,000 members. As stated by OAC, “Our core focuses are to raise awareness and improve access to the prevention and treatment of obesity, provide evidence-based education on obesity and its treatments, fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination, elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health and offer a community of support for the individual affected.”

United Kingdom (UK)

In 2014 62% of adults in the UK were classified as overweight. UK is one of the countries in the world with leading statistics on Obesity. Due to this fact, the country has made significant efforts in combating the issue. As stated by www.gov.uk, “The economic costs are great, too. We spend more each year on the treatment of obesity and diabetes than we do on the police, fire service and judicial system combined.” The UK has done several things, first they
have introduced a soft drinks levy on producers and importers. The revenue from the levy will be used for programs that fight to reduce obesity. Some of these programs include introducing healthier food at schools, and spending more on physical education. The UK has also claimed that they will take 20% out of their sugar products. Quoting the government website, “All sectors of the food and drinks industry will be challenged to reduce overall sugar across a range of products that contribute to children’s sugar intakes by at least 20% by 2020, including a 5% reduction in year one.” A wide range of additional solutions including supporting businesses to make their products healthier are also incorporated into the national agenda.

**Timeline of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>The American Medical Association classified obesity as a disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 April 2016</td>
<td>The United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution proclaiming the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relevant UN Treaties and Events**

- Global Health and foreign policy, 12 December 2012 *(A/RES/67/81)*
- Follow up on the second international conference on nutrition, 6 July 2015 *(A/RES/69/310)*
- United Nations decade of action on nutrition, 15 April 2016 *(A/RES/70/259)*

**Previous Attempts to solve the Issue**

**New York City “Green Carts” program**

As mentioned before, poverty leads to obesity in youth due to the fact that healthier food choices are more expensive. The city of New York is sponsoring a “Green Carts” program that delivers fresh organic food to the poorer neighborhoods.

**Student Body Mass Index(BMI) or fitness screening at school**

The BMI index provides an easy and cheap way for schools to check the health conditions of their students. Those that are considered overweight have this information sent to
parents, along with possible ways of solution. This solution has been imposed in the following states in America: Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, and South Carolina. More widespread usage may be suggested. On the other hand, there are activists that argue this policy causes more harm than good: such as decreasing student self-confidence, or not providing enough information or motivation for the student to change their behaviors.

**UK’s “Healthy Start Scheme”**

UK has created and distributed 60 million dollars worth of vouchers to low income families across the country. These vouchers can traded for fresh milk, vegetables, and fruits. Free vitamins are also provided for pregnant mothers. A reported 480,000 UK citizens benefited from this voucher program in 2016.

**UK’s Clearer Food Labelling**

UK feels that often when families shop for food, the labels on the packages can be ambiguous and therefore lead to uninformed decisions. The government is now working to create clearer and more easily accessible packages so that families know exactly what they are getting.

**UK’s new food rating scheme for primary schools**

This is a rubric that the government will provide to primary schools. The schools will use this rubric to self-assess, and parents’ inputs will be part of the process. This incentivizes schools to improve the quality of their lunches in order to put a better name out there.

**Possible Solutions**

In order to combat emotional eating among youths, more efforts must be done to address the underlying psychological issues that can induce stress and negative emotions in teens. Governments could fund short ads or documentaries that urge parents to spend more time talking to their children. Schools should do their best to create “safe places”, and create strong bonds between teachers and students. Courses on how to deal with stress should be incorporate into school curriculums for Physical Education or Life Skills classes. Support sessions could also be arranged for students during Advisory times.

Ensuring that public schools, especially those in poor areas, have adequate nutritional food is important for the development of youths going to those schools. Additionally, all member nations should commit to ensuring at least 60 minutes of Physical Activity (PE) time a day in schools for students. These more intense PE programs should be ensured smooth integration
by offering students a variety of choices for physical activities, and ensuring that no locker room bullying or miscommunication between the PE teacher and the students take place. In countries where schools are heavily academic centered, this may require a national reconsideration of the college entrance systems. A application method is preferred over an entrance exam method, as this method encourages students to present themselves as well-rounded individuals to universities.

When considering treatment for obesity among children, cultural factors must be considered. As stated by the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health, “When recommending a physical activity program, it is important to take into account cultural and sex preferences. For example, a dance program for African American girls and resistance training for Latino boys have shown good acceptance.”

Targeting the fact that in general kids from low income families are more likely to become obese, solutions should be created that provide low income families with fresh produce at an affordable price. This can be done through different government programs. One program that can be considered is the voucher system utilized by the U.K. in which vouchers can be exchanged for fresh produce. Governments should also provide incentives for food businesses to create healthier foods. This can done by creating regulations that the most sugary foods be decreased some percentage in sugar, as the U.K. did. The government can also tax sugary drinks and unhealthy foods from the producer and importer side, which will incentivize producers and importers to move on to new and healthier food production ventures.

Additionally, successful governmental awareness campaigns on the benefits of organic and healthy food will raise demand for healthy foods, which will prompt more producers to create healthy food brands.

**Bibliography**

**Morbid Obesity:**


**Obesity and bullying:**

“Obesity Action Coalition » BULLYING, Bullycide and Childhood Obesity.” *Obesity Action Coalition BULLYING Bullycide and Childhood Obesity Comments*, www.obesityaction.org/...

**Emotional Eating:**


**Economic consequences of obesity:**


**Connection between poverty and obesity:**

“Poor Children 'More Likely to Grow up Fat' - and the Problem Is Worse for Young WOMEN.” *Express.co.uk*, Express.co.uk, 15 Mar. 2016, www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/652777/Poor-children-fat-worse-for-young-women.


**Formal Documents and Reports:**
Governmental regulations related to obesity:


Great Britain Health Policies


Race and ethnicity

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2571048/

Statistics:

