

# Type 2 diabetes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Its prevalence and the promise of community based intervention

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## Abstract

**Background:** Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is one of the fastest-growing health problems of the developed world. It is now reaching epidemic proportions in countries like Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) due to affluent life-style, lack of exercise, unhealthy diet and obesity. Recently, major socio-economic changes have occurred in the country and prosperity has facilitated affluent lifestyles. With an estimated 24% of diabetics in the population, Saudi Arabia (KSA) is among the top ten countries of the world with highest diabetes prevalence.

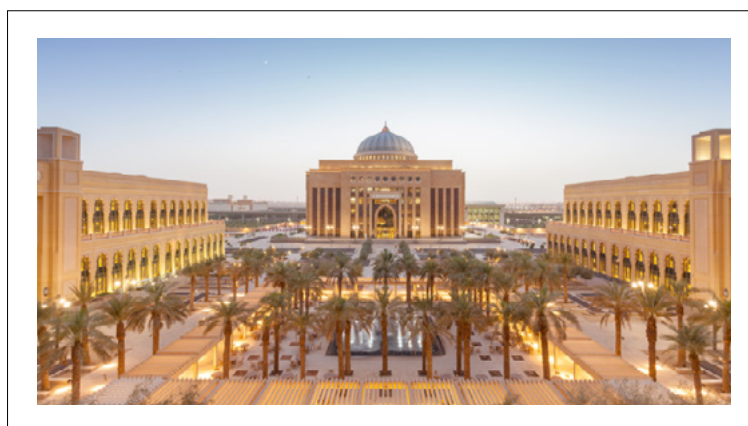
**Aim of the study:** This study aimed to determine the current burden of diabetes in the residing population of Saudi Arabia and its correlation with age, financial status and job descriptions.

**Methods:** A community-based multi-centric epidemiological study was conducted among residents - 30–70-years –old-of selected strata over a 3 -year period (2015 to 2018) in major cities of each province of KSA including cities like Riyadh, Jeddah, Damman, Mecca, Jazan etc. Self-reported data were obtained from latest known plasma glucose levels, body weight, temporal history of disease and socio-demographic status through an electronic survey to classify individuals as diabetic, pre-diabetic or non-diabetic. Data were analysed using basic descriptive statistics.

**Discussion and Conclusion:** Diabetes imposes a major health burden on individuals and financial drain on national healthcare systems. In Saudi Arabia, the logistic burden because of diabetes is likely to exceed \$0.87 billion owing to first-rate health insurance policies. Note that this study omits the indirect costs associated with diabetes, such as absenteeism, loss of productivity from disease-related complications, unemployment due to disability, early mortality /morbidity, community burden such as personal pain and suffering, toll on care givers etc. We need to spread awareness not only of the health aspects and related complications of diabetes, but also the socioeconomic root of this condition. A deeper understanding of the social aspects of the disease will eventually help in reducing burden at the community level in the Arab World and the Middle East.

## Biography

Tabinda Hasan, MBBS, MD, PHD (anatomy), PGDHE (higher education, Harvard university) MRCS (surgery, RCSI-Ireland) is working as Assistant Professor of Anatomy and cell biology. She is a Chair MSK block medicine, Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



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