



写真3 赤信号待ちの車やリキシャーの運転手に
新聞を売り歩く女性

ひとつの新聞を数人で回し読みする習慣もニューデリーには残っている。このように、マスメディアの状況は、ひとつが現れればひとつが消えるのではなく、さまざまな在り方で存在し、影響力を及ぼし続けているのである。新聞やテレビ、SNSの発する玉石混交の情報の中で人々は日々生きている。その情報の濁流の中で、流れに身を任せるのか。そ

れとも、流れに逆らいながら自らの歩みを決めるのか。いずれにせよ、彼ら自身の在り方を決めるのは彼ら自身なのである。

インドについて考える際、必ず宗教対立というものがつきまとう。それは近年になって姿を現わしたのではなく、連綿と続く歴史の中で少しずつ形成されてきたものである。その中で新しく要素として加わったものは、その流れを取り囲む環境、つまり現代のマスメディアが生み出す環境なのだ。そして、宗教対立が暴力の形をとり現れた宗教暴動という流れに、マスメディアは大きく飲み込まれてしまう。2002年のグジャラートで起こった暴動の際には、偽の情報を報じ、復讐心を掻き立てる報道を行なった地元新聞を当時の州首相であったナレーンドラ・モーディー（現在のインド中央政府首相）が称賛した。マスメディアと宗教暴動の関係は、現在のマスメディアの多様性、多量性の観点からみてもインドを考える際に重要な部分を成しているだろう。

‘Moderate’ Fatness is Desirable: Beliefs Related to Body Size in Mukono, Central Uganda

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A male acquaintance introduced me to his wife, who does not work outside their home;

additionally, they have no space to dig a garden. They live in a rented room with their

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three children. They live in village N and had moved here a few weeks earlier from village K. Both are Bakiga people from southwestern Uganda, and moved to central Uganda to find work.

This is a common situation in Mukono, since it is only about 21 km from the centre of Kampala, the capital city. Mukono is very urbanized and its population includes many people who have moved here to find work. As it takes time to save enough money to buy land and build their own houses, people often live in rented one- or two-room houses. Consequently, they have only enough space to live and nowhere to carry out agriculture. Mobility is high and people readily move from place to place to change jobs, find less expensive accommodation, or because they do not get along with their neighbours.

After introducing myself, and the nature of my research, my acquaintance's wife agreed to introduce me to her neighbours in village N and to her friends in village K (Photo 1). I hoped to use this opportunity as a starting point to find more women in the area who would be willing to participate in my study. I started off by measuring her height and body composition and then those of her neighbours and friends.

Her immediate neighbour was a primary school teacher who had also moved to Mukono only recently. She weighed 59.3 kg, but believed that she was too small, although

her BMI¹⁾ classified her as normal. She attributed this to the fact that she was growing old. She was 41 years old when I met her and wanted to weigh about 79 kg.

From other interviews, I found that a weight of 50-60 kg was considered too low for a mature person based on comments such as: *"I have ever weighed 50 kg even when I am an adult"* and *"How can Alifons, a big man, weigh only 50 kg?"*

This teacher was not the only person who felt that her recent weight change was due to natural reasons beyond her control.

Another neighbour, Ms. MJ, spoke about how she gained weight continuously during her last pregnancy although she had no appetite and barely ate anything: *"I did not*



Photo 1. Typical living quarters in Mukono; rented rooms built side by side

eat much during that pregnancy, but I gained weight rapidly and I felt weak. The nurses even advised me to stop eating so much. That is why people sometimes disagree with nurses because they always say you are fat because you eat too much, but it's not always the case."

Although she was obese based on her BMI, she reported that she had recently lost weight. In December, she weighed 84 kg despite the fact that she was gardening and doing a lot of work. Recently, she has been sitting at home and not doing much work, but has still lost weight. She said she had been using family planning (by injection) until October and thought that this might have caused the weight gain.

As another woman who was also overweight said, *"We get fat these days because of contraception and family planning."*

Ms. MJ's husband was a 'boda boda'²⁾ driver (Photo 2), and was relatively fat.

It was not uncommon to find that when a woman had a partner who was fat, she was also fat or at least desired to be. For example Maama³⁾ Mwe, who had a normal BMI, felt that she was too small because: *"My husband is fat, so people wonder why I am small."* This could be because fatness is equated to

maturity.

In the words of one woman, *"Don't you see that I look like a child, yet I am a mother of five?"*

Another woman who wanted to be fatter because her husband was fat stated: *"We don't eat and do the same things. I stay here and dig, while he goes to the big boss."*

A fat couple would also be considered affluent and so a spouse who was smaller than her husband could cause a lot of confusion and discussion in the village. In the words of one older woman who had tried and failed to gain weight, *"People think that fat people have money so when you are small people look down on you."*

In addition, a woman considered herself beautiful when she had a more substantial



Photo 2. A 'boda boda' driver waiting for customers in village K; this is a common occupation for men in Mukono

1) The international classification of body size using the Body Mass Index (BMI) classifies individuals as underweight (<18.5 kg/m²), normal (18.5-24.99 kg/m²), overweight (25-29.99 kg/m²), or obese (≥30 kg/m²) based on the formula BMI=weight (kg)/height (m²).

2) Motor cycles used as a means of public transportation.

3) In Uganda, Maama is the local term for mother and it precedes her child's name. This form of address is used more commonly than the woman's own name.

body, as reflected in the words of Ms. AF: *“Before having children, I was fat. I was a beautiful woman. I had a size although I was not very big.”* Her comment clearly shows the idea held by many women that it was desirable to be a bit fat, but not too fat.

One of the major reasons why excessive fatness was not desirable was because it reduced the ability to work. In the words of Maama J, *“I do not want to be so fat that if someone asked me to stand up and do something, I couldn’t do it.”*

Ms. MJ described both of her parents as small, but said that her sisters are even fatter than she is. She said all of the girls in her family had been small as children and only her brother was big but now, as adults, her brother is small while the girls are big. This has already been described as a manifestation of the double burden of malnutrition across the life course of an individual or group of individuals in the same family, in which people who were underweight as children become overweight as adults and vice versa.

Ms. MJ worked in a salon from about 9 am until 10 pm. She walked to work in the morning but came home on a boda boda at night. Many other women who were found to be fat were involved in similar casual labour. For instance, Maama ER, who was also obese, went to the town centre every day to work on a tailoring machine.

From village N, we travelled to village K,

where Ms. AF had originally lived. Village K is close to a university campus, so it has many hostels and other student-related businesses.

We visited a woman at her kiosk, which is located next to a student hostel (Photo 3). She has a neighbour who runs a restaurant selling whole foods during the day and fast foods in the evening. Another neighbour sells fried snacks, such as samosas, in the morning for people to eat with their tea or porridge for breakfast. When I told her about my research, she was very enthusiastic and explained that she would be willing to commit to my research over an extended period, especially if I could help her to reduce her size!

Although she had the highest BMI among all of the women I had measured to that point, it was still surprising to hear that she wanted to lose weight because there were several other women in the village who



Photo 3. Maama J, an obese woman who feels that she is too fat

wanted to become bigger or were comfortable with their weight.

She explained that she does not wake up at a specific time and sometimes fails to go to work when she does not feel motivated. Recently, however, her husband had lost his job, so she now has no choice, and has to work. This reminded me of Maama J's comment about being too fat and being less mobile and less able to work.

She described a typical day as follows: *"When I arrive at work, I open the kiosk, clean up, and sit down. This takes me about 10 minutes because I do it slowly—sometimes I even use my legs! I ask someone to fetch me water. At home, I watch TV; here I miss my TV. Some nights, like last night, I stay up until midnight watching TV. I watch the news and then the soaps immediately after the news."*

She spent more than 2 hours a day watching television, which has already been shown to be a key factor in the prevalence of obesity.

"Mother is big; father is big; and my brothers all gained weight when they finished school. My children are smaller."

This might suggest that obesity was inherited in her family. However, it also points to the double burden of malnutrition between her and her children, *i.e.*, when fat parents have thin children.

The first time that I saw her, she weighed 102.4 kg and her BMI was 40 kg/m². The

next time we weighed her, she said, *"I hope I have lost some weight, but I think I have gained weight because I have been eating a lot of pork."* She was right; that day, she weighed 104 kg. Pork and other food items are associated with increases in body size and rightly so.

Some outstanding features in this case are that others recognize her as 'too fat' and she is aware that she is too big and wants to lose weight. She believes that the biggest contributors to her weight gain were marriage, pregnancy, and lactation. She might also have a genetic disposition to being overweight. She spends nearly her entire day seated and at least 2 hours a day watching TV. She feels that she is too heavy to do daily chores, such as mopping her house.

Another woman, Maama B, is a 25-year-old woman living in the same village. She weighed 62.1 kg and her BMI was 27.8 kg/m². Based on her BMI, she was overweight although she felt that her weight was just right. She attended primary school for 5 years. Her husband is a boda boda driver. She rents a single room and lives with her three children and a relative's child. She recently obtained a short contract to cook food for builders at a nearby construction site. They do not own a television set or a radio.

"My current body size is good. When I was young, about the size that my children are now, I was extremely small. I grew a bit fat



Photo 4. Left: Maama B, an overweight woman who feels that her size is just right. Right: Maama A, a normal weight woman who feels that she is too small.

when I was a girl, but I really got fat during my marriage. Now I have grown thin” —she said.

Maama A, on the right in Photo 4, is also 25 years old. She weighed 60.1 kg and her BMI was 23.5 kg/m², which is normal,

although she feels that she is too small. She completed primary school and attended 2 years of secondary school. Her husband is also a boda boda driver. They rent a double room that costs about 20USD a month, including electricity. She has three children: a girl and two younger boys.

“I would like to really gain a lot of weight because I feel that I am too small when I conceive and deliver; I lose a lot of weight while I am lactating” —she said.

For a long time, severe thinness as a result of hunger has been the symbol of malnutrition in Africa. In Uganda, however, fatness is also emerging as a problem despite the prevailing under-nutrition. In this study, the subjects considered obesity as excessive fatness and being overweight was more desirable than having a normal weight due to beliefs attributing being overweight to a good quality of life. In addition, the changes in body size were understood as being involuntary. Many of the overweight women seem to be victims of the double burden of malnutrition over the course of their lives.