

Familial and socio-environmental predictors of overweight and obesity among primary school children in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur.

Abstract

Introduction: A cross-sectional study was conducted to determine the familial and socio-environmental predictors of overweight and obesity among 1430, 9-12 year-old primary school children and their parents in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur. **Methodology:** Body weight and height were measured and body mass index was calculated. Modified Child Feeding (CFQ) and Determinants of Adolescent Social Well-being and Health (DASH) questionnaires were used to measure familial and socio-environmental factors. **Results:** A total of 17.9% of the children were overweight while 16.0% were obese. Positive relationships were found between child's BMI and parent's BMI ($r = 0.129$, $p < 0.01$), concern about child's weight ($r = 0.125$, $p < 0.01$) and restriction ($r = 0.057$, $p < 0.05$) to unhealthy foods. However, negative relationships were found between child's BMI with pressure to eat ($r = -0.135$, $p < 0.01$) and neighbourhood safety perception ($r = -0.053$, $p < 0.05$). The logistic regression analysis showed that being male ($\text{Exp}(\beta) = 0.538$; 95% CI = 0.421-0.687), higher parent's BMI ($\text{Exp}(\beta) = 1.055$; 95% CI = 1.028-1.082), higher concern about child's weight ($\text{Exp}(\beta) = 1.082$; 95% CI = 1.030-1.127), low pressure to eat ($\text{Exp}(\beta) = 0.857$; 95% CI = 0.801-0.916) and low perception of neighbourhood safety ($\text{Exp}(\beta) = 0.951$; 95% CI = 0.913-0.990) were significantly associated with increased risk of overweight. **Conclusion:** Parents should be the main target for education to modify children's weight status. Further research should be carried out to understand the mechanism of influence of parents and the socio-environment on child's health.

Keyword: Child feeding practices; Childhood obesity; Neighbourhood safety; Restrictions.