

**TITLE: A STUDY OF RISK FACTORS FOR OBESITY AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN  
PADAWAN DISTRICT OF KUCHING DIVISION.**

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### **Introduction and Aims**

The prevalence of obesity among primary school children has increased over the years. In order to ascertain the prevalence of obesity among primary school children in a semi-urban area, a cross-sectional study was conducted in Kota Padawan District.

### **Methods**

Multistage sampling was conducted and a total of 472 children from four randomly selected primary schools were involved in this study.

### **Results**

There were 201 (42.6%) males and 261 (57.4%) females. Of the sampled population, 135 (28.6%) were Malays, followed by 27.3% Bidayuhs, 25.9% Chinese and 12.9% Ibans. The mean age of the respondents was 10.08 years (SD±1.48) ranging from 7 to 12 years. The prevalence of overweight children was 11.9% and prevalence of obesity was 14.4%. There was a significant association between gender and overweight or obesity in which male respondents had higher prevalence of overweight (6.36%) and obesity (8.47%) as compared to female respondents (5.51% and 5/93% respectively). Bidayuh children were found to have the highest prevalence of obesity (4.87%) and Chinese children had the highest prevalence of overweight (4.24%). The prevalence of overweight and obesity was significantly associated with time spent on watching television.

### **Conclusion**

It is therefore recommended that parents and the community as a whole should play an important role in preventing childhood obesity in terms of preparing healthy foods, exercise and maintaining healthy body weight among their children. This can help prevent children from getting diseases associated with obesity in adulthood.