

Socioeconomic status and glycemic index among punjabis in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: possible association with metabolic syndrome

ABSTRACT

There are only limited reports on Punjabi's health status in Malaysia. This cross-sectional study assessed the prevalence of metabolic syndrome (Mets) and its risk factors among 277 subjects recruited from the Malaysian Punjabi community. Overall prevalence of Mets was 43%, but 61% among females. Subjects classified with Mets had significantly ($p < 0.05$) higher body mass index, visceral fat and percentage of body fat. Daily carbohydrate and glycemic index (GI) were also higher among Mets subjects ($p < 0.05$). Logistics regression analysis showed that primary level of education (OR 5.57, CI 1.29-23.97, $p = 0.021$) was a factor associated with Mets, followed by middle household income (OR 2.30, CI 1.01-5.20, $p = 0.046$), GI (OR 1.03, CI 1.00-1.06, $p = 0.026$), and age (OR 1.03, CI 1.00-1.05, $p = 0.023$). Mets shows high prevalence among the studied Punjabi population, prompting the consideration of adequate preventive measures, primarily among lower socioeconomic groups.

Keyword: Punjabi; Malaysia; Metabolic syndrome; Glycemic index; Socioeconomic status