

A36 Association between nutrition knowledge, body mass index (BMI) and physical activity among staff in Universiti Sains Malaysia during COVID-19 pandemic

Nur Syafiqah MA and Juliana S

Dietetics Programme, School of Health Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Body mass index (BMI) is widely used to assess the nutritional status among adults as it is inexpensive and easy to use. However, the BMI may be associated with nutrition knowledge and physical activity. Hence, this study investigated the BMI of staff in Universiti Sains Malaysia as well as its association with nutrition knowledge and physical activity of the staff. The respondents were recruited by using convenience sampling method and 134 responses were included in the analysis. Data including socio-demographic characteristics, nutrition knowledge, BMI and physical activity of the respondents were collected in this study. The Google Form used for data collection included questionnaires from General Nutrition Knowledge (GNK) and Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPAQ) to assess the respondents' nutrition knowledge and physical activity. Among 134 respondents, 64.2% were female whereas 35.8% were male with 55.2% were non-academic staff and 44.8% were academic staff. The prevalence of overweight was the highest (44.8%) compared to other BMI categories. For nutrition knowledge, the minimum score obtained was 9 meanwhile maximum score obtained was 21 with the median scores among male were 17.00 (2.75) and female were 17.00 (3.00). Majority of the respondents met the recommendation for physical activity levels as targeted by World Health Organization. However, no significant association was found between nutrition knowledge and BMI. The association between physical activity and BMI also was not found significant. In conclusion, strategies should be implemented by the university to reduce the prevalence of overweight among the university staff in order to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes mellitus and hypertension. Besides, a longitudinal study design is needed to explain the association between nutrition knowledge, BMI, and physical activity among the staff in USM.