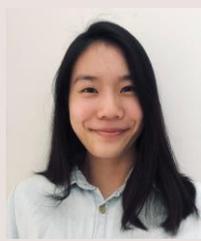


Frequency of Home Cooking, Food Insecurity and Diet Diversity among Malaysian working adults during the pandemic: a cross-sectional study among the urban low-income group



Undergraduate



Wong NXY, Lee XY, Praji S, Yeap KS, Misra S, Yang WY, Tan SS, Num KSF

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic has impacted numerous areas of people's life and activities, compelling Malaysians to stay at home to curb the spread of virus. [1] This has resulted in restricting eating outs and increase in preparing meals at home. On the other hand, prevalence of food insecurity are health concerns in Malaysia. [2] The impact of staying at home may also have adverse outcomes on food insecurity and dietary intake.

Objective

To determine the association between frequency of home cooking with individual food insecurity and diet diversity among B40 Malaysian working adults during the pandemic.

Methodology

- Cross-sectional study
- Convenient sampling: snowball sampling method:



- Total sample size: 114 participants
- ✓ 18 to 60 years old ✓ Healthy, non-pregnant
- ✓ Malaysian citizens ✓ B40 working adults

- Online data collection via Google Form
- Questionnaire in English and Bahasa Malaysia
 1. Sociodemographic
 2. Self reported body weight and height measurements
 3. Frequency of home cooking
 4. Dietary Recall, DDS (24-hour diet recall)
 5. Food Insecurity, FIES (access to food raw score)

Results

Table 1: Association between frequency of home cooking and diet diversity during among B40 Malaysian working adults

Frequency of Home Cooking	Diet Diversity Score		P value
	Moderate	High	
	n (%)	n (%)	
Low	40 (54.8)	33 (45.2)	0.989
Moderate	10 (55.6)	8 (44.4)	
High	13 (56.5)	10 (43.5)	

Table 2: Association between frequency of home cooking and food insecurity score among B40 Malaysian working adults

Frequency of Home Cooking	Food Insecurity		P value
	Food Secure	Food insecure	
	n (%)	n (%)	
Low	19 (26.0)	54 (74.0)	0.458
Moderate	6 (33.3)	12 (66.7)	
High	9 (39.1)	14 (60.9)	

- Majority of the respondents had low frequency of home cooking. This might be due to restrictions such as low income or lost jobs that reduces the accessibility to food [3].
- Participants who had low frequency of home cooking were higher in food insecurity. It is inter-related that with lesser possession of kitchen appliances makes it harder to store and cook food and more likely to be food insecure [4].

Discussion

- Results from this study had shown that frequency of home cooking is not common among B40 population during pandemic [3].
- A study done in Malaysia in 2020 showed if people are more easily assessed to buying food items, they will be more likely to prepare home-cooked meals [3].
- However, B40 population have limited food accessibility during pandemic due to factors, like, low income and lost jobs, this had restricted the population to obtain food, due to less food accessibility that leads to less home cooking [3].

Conclusion

The findings showed that the frequency of home cooking among B40 Malaysian working adults during the pandemic had no effect on diet diversity. Most B40 Malaysian working adults were food insecure and those who cooked at home more frequently had a lower food insecurity score. Larger sample size is advised for future study.

Acknowledgement

This study was funded by International Medical University (IMU), Bukit Jalil. We would like to thank all participants and supervisors who had assisted in this study [BNT I-2021 (02)].

References

1. Aziz NA, Othman J, Lugova H, Suleiman A, behalf of the Economy O, Cluster SW. Malaysia's approach in handling COVID-19 onslaught: Report on the Movement Control Order (MCO) and targeted screening to reduce community infection rate and impact on public health and economy. Journal of infection and public health. 2020 Aug 29.
2. Institute for Public Health (IPH), National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia. 2020. National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2019: Vol. I: NCDs - NonCommunicable Diseases: Risk Factors and other Health Problems
3. Abd Rahman, N. (2020). Dietary Patterns of Malaysians During the Movement Control Order (Mco) During The Covid-19 Pandemic. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences. 10(10), 97-109.
4. Oakley A, Nikolaus C, Ellison B, Nickols-Richardson S. Food insecurity and food preparation equipment in US households: exploratory results from a cross-sectional questionnaire. BDA. 2018