

## **A50 Food security status and its association with socio-economic status among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic**

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The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has increased unemployment and food insecurity in Malaysia. Recent studies found that COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent movement control order implemented by the government has deeply impacted food security. Prior to the pandemic, university students exhibited higher rates of food insecurity than nonstudent households. The objectives of this study were to assess the prevalence of food insecurity and its association with socio-economic status among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic. An online survey (via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) was administered using convenience sampling to 444 university students in Malaysia. Food security was assessed using a 10-item USDA Adult Food Security Module (AFSSM,2012). Association of food security and socio-economic status were examined using Pearson's Chi-square test. Overall, 51.3% students were classified as food insecure during COVID-19 pandemic. The results showed that there is a significant association between food security status with gender ( $X^2= 4.425$ ,  $p$ -value  $<0.05$ ) and living situation ( $X^2=40.559$ ,  $p$ -value  $<0.05$ ). These findings highlight the high prevalence of food insecurity among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic, with female students and/or living in the hostel being impacted the most and that economic relief efforts should include the students, who are disproportionately affected by food insecurity.