B11 Diet quality and weight status among urban poor adolescent in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during COVID-19

Janice Tay EF[1], Tung SEH[2], Satvinder K[1], Gan WY[3], Nik Norasma C[4] and Tan CH

[1]Department of Food Science and Nutrition, Faculty of Applied Sciences, UCSI University, Cheras, Malaysia
[2]Department of Public Health Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia
[3]Department of Nutrition, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
[4]Department of Agriculture Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown is associated with changes in daily lifestyle behaviour, including diet. However, there is limited information on diet quality and its association with weight status of urban poor adolescents during COVID-19 pandemic. This study aimed to determine the association between diet quality and weight status among urban poor adolescents in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during COVID-19 pandemic. Urban poor adolescents aged 10 – 17 years old (n=273) were included in this cross-sectional study during November 2021 to March 2022. Dietary intake was assessed by using two-day 24-hour dietary recall and diet quality was determined based on Standardized Malaysian Healthy Eating Index (S-MHEI). Weight and height were assessed, and body mass index-for-age (BAZ) was calculated. About 12.5% and 37.3% of adolescents were thin and overweight/obesity while 7.0% were stunted. The mean score of diet quality was 54.2±12.8 and more than half of adolescents (61.9%) being categorised in the category of diet quality needs an improvement. Only 1.1 % of adolescents had good diet quality that met the dietary requirement of the national guidelines. In terms of the S-MHEI components, meat/poultry/eggs (8.8±3.2) and whole grains (0.2±1.2) had the highest and lowest mean score, respectively. No association was found between diet quality and weight status (p>0.05). The findings suggested that diet quality might not have effects on weight status of urban poor adolescents during pandemic. Nevertheless, poor diet quality and weight status is still a highlighted issue among urban poor adolescents in this study. Nutrition education and intervention focus on enhancing diet quality and weight status should be implemented among urban poor adolescents.