

A05 Association of food environment and weight status in urban poor communities in Kuala Lumpur

Caleb Mok JW, Vaidehi APU and Tung SEH

Faculty of Applied Science, UCSI University, UCSI Heights, Cheras, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur

Overweight and obesity in Malaysia could be contributed by the food environment. This study is conducted to determine the association of food environment and weight status among adults aged 19 to 60 years old in urban poor communities in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. A total of 143 responses have been included in this study, along with 71 food stores and 70 restaurants. Sociodemographic variables, self-reported anthropometry measurements (height, weight and BMI), subjective food environment and objective food environment in stores and restaurants were assessed. The mean BMI of adults living in urban poor communities in Malaysia is 28.29 ± 6.85 , with most of the population being either overweight or obese (65.8%). For objective food environment in stores, grocery stores have a significantly higher availability ($p=0.018$), quality ($p=0.001$) and overall food environment ($p=0.004$) expressed in total score compared to convenience stores. However, there was no significant difference found for price across store types ($p>0.05$). There is a significant difference of the overall food environment through total scoring across restaurant types ($p=0.000$). Perceived community nutrition environment, perceived restaurant consumer nutrition environment, and home food environment has an insignificant association with BMI ($p>0.05$). However, BMI is positively correlated with perceived consumer nutrition environment ($r=0.205$, $p=0.014$) and overall subjective food environment ($r=0.200$, $p=0.017$), opposite to the expected direction. Store availability, pricing, quality and total scoring was not significantly associated with BMI ($p>0.05$). Furthermore, the total scoring of restaurants has no significant relationship with BMI ($p>0.05$). In conclusion, with the current methodology, food environment is not associated with the weight status of adults residing in urban poor communities, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.