

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SLEEP QUALITY AND
DIETARY BEHAVIOUR WITH MENTAL WELLNESS IN
PREGNANT MOTHERS IN SELECTED COMMUNITY CLINICS
IN KUALA SELANGOR**

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of mental wellness among pregnant women is increasing globally and locally (Malaysia). Sleep quality and dietary behaviour are believed to be factors that contribute to mental wellness during pregnancy. However, there is a lack of studies that have been discovered in the Malaysian population on the association between sleep quality and dietary behaviour with mental wellness among pregnant women. Therefore, this study aims to determine the association between sleep quality and dietary behaviour with mental wellness among pregnant mothers in community clinics in Kuala Selangor. Mental wellness that was discussed in this study were depression, anxiety and stress. This cross-sectional and quantitative study involved 204 participants in Kuala Selangor. Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), Eating Behaviour and Pattern Questionnaire (EBPQ) and Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21) were used to assess sleep quality, dietary behaviour and mental wellness. Binary regression investigated the relationship between sleep quality and dietary behaviour with mental wellness. This finding showed that sleep quality is significantly associated with depression, anxiety and stress, with a P-value of 0.01, <0.01 and 0.03, respectively. Meanwhile, only eating behaviour under the low-fat eating construct recorded was significant with depression (P=0.014) and stress (P=0.022). However, anxiety reported no association with any eating behaviour constructs. In conclusion, there was an association between sleep and DAS and dietary behaviour and DS. Hence, early interventions were needed to combat the risk of prenatal depression through clinics, government, education and society.

Keywords: *healthy pregnancy, mental health, sleep quality, eating behaviour, pregnant women*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explain the research background, problem statement, research significance, research questions, objectives with subsections, main objective and specific objectives, hypothesis, and research framework.

1.1 Research Background

Pregnancy is vital in women's lives, encompassing significant physiological, psychological, and social transformations. A healthy pregnancy is the regular physiological changes that occur during gestation and the flourishing of both the developing foetus and the mother's body (Soma-Pillay et al., 2016). A healthy pregnancy is crucial as it sets the foundation for the mother's and child's long-term health, influencing their risk for chronic diseases, cognitive development, and overall quality of life (Kulkarni et al., 2020). The characteristics of a healthy pregnancy include regular prenatal care, a balanced diet, moderate physical activity, and mental well-being. According to the National Institutes of Health (2018), these factors can contribute to optimal fetal development and a lower risk of complications during delivery.

However, the absence of a healthy pregnancy can lead to adverse outcomes for both mothers and newborns (UNICEF, 2022). Statistics indicate that adverse pregnancy outcomes such as preeclampsia, gestational hypertension and gestational diabetes affect a significant proportion of pregnancies, with varying degrees of long-term consequences (Muglia et al., 2022). Mental health, lifestyle choices, environmental exposures, age, nutritional status and social support are the factors that affect healthy pregnancy (Lagadec et al., 2018; Muglia et al.). Hence, it can be seen that the mother's mental well-being is also a leading factor affecting healthy pregnancy.