

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY, BODY WEIGHT STATUS AND
BINGE EATING BEHAVIOUR OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS IN
BANDAR PUNCAK ALAM, SELANGOR**

NORAMIZA IZATI BINTI MOHAMAD

**Bachelor (Hons) of Dietetics
Faculty Of Health Sciences**

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ABSTRACT

Background: Food insecurity has become a global issue. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity. A common misperception is that food insecurity or scarcity of food is the primary cause of undernutrition. But a shortage of food can also lead to obesity. Food insecurity may also increase the risk of binge eating through a “feast-or-famine” cycle. **Purpose:** To identify the prevalence of household food insecurity among early adolescents aged 11-12 years old in Bandar Puncak Alam and to assess the relationship between household food insecurity, binge eating behaviour and the body weight status of early adolescents. **Method:** The Radimer/Cornell Hunger and Food Insecurity Instrument will be used to assess the household food security status, *Skala Tabiat Pemakanan* questionnaire will be utilised to measure the occurrence of binge eating behaviour. Body weight and height that were obtained from *Standard Kecergasan Fizikal Kebangsaan (SEGAK)* were measured to obtain the body mass index (BMI). **Result:** The prevalence of household food insecurity in this study was 62.9% and there were no significant relationship observed between household food insecurity and body weight status ($p = 0.127$), binge eating behaviour ($p = 0.179$) and between body weight status and binge eating behaviour ($p = 0.257$) **Conclusion:** The findings underscore the importance of better understanding how socioeconomic and environmental factors interact to influence adolescents’ food security, body weight status and binge eating behaviour.

Keywords: Food Insecurity, Body Weight Status, Binge Eating Behaviour, Adolescent

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Food is a basic human necessity that promotes growth and health maintenance and serves as a symbol of social standing and lifestyle (Roselawati et al., 2017). The availability of adequate, safe, nutritious food that meets dietary requirements as well as interests for a life of activity and wellness for all people in all instances through physical, social, and economic means is what defines food security, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) (FAO, 2002; Tay et al., 2023). The foundational components of food security encompass food availability, access, and utilisation, all interconnected. Should one facet remain unmet, it can impact the others, potentially leading to the perpetuation of food insecurity (Murthy, 2016; Dewi et al., 2020). Contrary to food security, food insecurity refers to the inability or restricted availability of safe, nutrient-dense foods or the ability to obtain food in ways that are tolerated in society (Nur & Norfarizan-Hanoon N.A, 2024).

The World Health Organization (WHO) characterised adolescence as the transitional period between childhood and adulthood, spanning from ages 10 to 19, and globally, adolescents constitute approximately 18% of the population (Unicef, 2011; Dewi et al., 2020). Adolescence is further divided into three categories in Malaysia: early adolescence (10–14 years), middle adolescence (15–17 years), and late adolescence (18–19 years) (National Health & Morbidity Survey, 2017; Awang et al., 2020). The second-fastest stage of human development is adolescence. It's a stage of life with specific needs for growing and overall health (Alie et al., 2019). Adolescents are particularly susceptible to nutritional deficiencies during this dynamic stage of human growth since they are going through a growth spurt that increases their requirements for