

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**FAST FOOD CONSUMPTION AND OBESITY
AMONG WOMEN IN SHAH ALAM**

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate the relationship between fast food consumption and obesity among women in Shah Alam, Malaysia.

Methods: The research was conducted from 15 August until 12 September 2008. Two hundred twenty people were asked to answer a structured questionnaire about demographic characteristics, prevalence of fast food consumption, dietary intake and behaviour and other factors that contribute to obesity. The data were analyzed by using statistical package for social sciences SPSS software (version 12.0) to interpret the accurate statistical result. Chi-square test was conducted to evaluate the correlation between frequency of fast food consumption and obesity while non-parametric Spearman's rank order correlations were conducted to evaluate correlation between the frequency of fast food consumption and obesity with dietary intake/behaviour.

Results: This study found that obesity among women in Shah Alam was significantly associated with frequency of fast food consumption. Frequency of fast food consumption was significantly associated with increase in sweetened drink consumption, decrease in vegetables and milk intake.

Conclusion: Findings from the study showed that high frequency of fast food consumption may result in obesity among women and gave a bad impact on dietary intake and behaviour. Lack of physical activity was also one of the determinant factors of obesity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Obesity has become a global epidemic and today it is one of the most serious public health problems. In 2005, approximately 1.6 billions adults were overweight and at least 400 millions adults were obese. By the year 2015, it is estimated that approximately 2.3 billion adults will be overweight and more than 700 million will be obese (World Health Organization, 2006). Obesity is a significant health problem that is on the rise among adults, women worldwide, including those living in developing countries (Flegal, 2005 in Zargari, 2007).

Obesity can be termed as a condition where there is excess body weight due to a high accumulation of fat (Bouchard, 2000). Nowadays, obesity is becoming a major public health problem in an increasing number of countries worldwide including Malaysia. In Malaysia, about 24% men and 18% women are pre-obese (BMI =25- 29.9), while 5%men and 8% women are obese (BMI= 30-40) (Healthpromo, 2005). The changing nature of the environment towards greater inducement of obesity has been described in WHO technical report on chronic diseases as follows: “Changes in the world food economy have contributed to shifting dietary patterns, for example, increase in consumption of energy dense diets high in fat, particularly saturated fat and low in