WEIGHT STATUS, BODY IMAGE PERCEPTION AND DIETARY PRACTICES AMONG YOUNG ADULTS (15-25 YEARS OLD) IN USJ 13, SUBANG JAYA

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ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, the second National Health and Morbidity Survey in 1996 revealed that 16.6% of young adults aged 18 years and above were overweight and another 4.4% were obese. Young adult’s lifestyle and dietary practices may affect their nutritional status especially their weight status and body image. Unhealthy dietary practices may lead to overweight or obesity and also lead to chronic diseases. Therefore, the aim of this study was to determine the weight status, body image perception and dietary practices among young adults in USJ 13, Subang Jaya and to examine the relationship between weight status and body image perception as well as the relationship between weight status and dietary practices among young adults in USJ 13. The sample consists of 81 male (51.6%) and 76 female (48.4%) young adults. In this study, there were 22.3% young adults who were underweight, 59.9% having normal weight, 13.4% overweight and 4.5% obese. The mean ± SD body fat percentage and visceral fat level among young adults were 23.8 ± 3.46 and 4.5 ± 2.90 respectively. However, it was found that there was a significant correlation (r = -0.471, p < 0.05) observed between body mass index and body shape satisfaction score among male and female young adults. It was suggested that health and nutritional information should be taken into consideration when implementing strategies aimed at improving the nutritional well-being of individuals.