

Body Mass Index Status and Its Relationship with Mode of Delivery, Birth Weight and Early Feeding History Among Children in an Urban Area of Pahang

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: The body mass index (BMI) of children is currently increasing in trends either globally or locally. In Malaysia, the number of children approaching unhealthy BMI is alarming. Despite the frequently conducted studies on children's BMI and factors such as diet and physical inactivity, limited studies were done focusing on birth related and early life factors. Thus, this research aims to study the body mass index status and its relationship with birth weight, mode of delivery and early feeding history among children in one of the urban residential area in Kuantan, Pahang. **METHODS:** A cross-sectional study with face-to-face interview using pre-tested structured questionnaires was conducted in October till November 2018. **RESULTS:** Among 92 participants, majority were male (52.2%), Malay (58.7%), have working parents (70.9%) and within M40 household income category (50.0%). Median age of the participants was 11 years old and mostly had appropriate birth weight, delivered via spontaneous vaginal delivery and weaned after six months with proportion of 87.0%, 77.2% and 75.0% respectively. Children who were wasted and severely wasted constitute 18.5% and overweight and obese 13.1%. Among the three main factors studied, it was found that only age of weaning has significant relationship with BMI status among these children ($\chi^2=7.58$ (2), $p=0.023$). **CONCLUSION:** Therefore, intervention as early as during infancy, particularly age of weaning, is important in maintaining the healthy BMI status among these children.

KEYWORDS: BMI, mode of delivery, birth weight, early feeding

Breastfeeding in Combat Boots: The Challenges

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Role of women in military has undergone transformation and progressively recognized by the organization. However, it provides a unique environment to the women as it has always been considered as male dominated world. Hence, servicewomen faced challenges to balance their domestic role and career needs in the military. This study aims to look the effect of military life to the servicewomen on breastfeeding and the associated factors that influence the practice in Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF). **METHODS:** A cross-sectional study with face to face interview was conducted in September 2015. **RESULTS:** Among 435 servicewomen, 46% are from Army, 34.7% are Navy personnel and 19.3% are from Air Force. The mean (SD) age of the mothers was 33.2 (4.2) and mean (SD) number of children was 2.6 (0.9). Majority of them (92.2%) breastfed their children and 67.4% were able to breastfeed exclusively for six months. Mean (SD) duration of breastfeeding was 1.3 (0.74) years. The study found that majority described they were not comfortable of the surrounding working environment (98.3%), no appropriate place to express and store breastmilk (98.4%) as well as work demand that separates them from their children (98.0%) as the challenges faced to breastfeed. **DISCUSSION:** Efforts to create supportive environment and better facilities should be implemented in the intervention program to promote breastfeeding practice in MAF.

KEYWORDS: military women, breastfeeding, challenges