

A15 Association between stress level, sleep quality and eating behaviours among university students

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Transition into university life is a critical period for young adults, where they gain independency and experience some substantial life changes. They are making their own decisions in food choices, sleeping time and social activities, which may indirectly influence their health. This study was carried out to investigate the relationship between stress level, sleep quality and eating behaviour among university students in Malaysia. The study was conducted among 172 Degree university students (122 females, 50 males), aged 18-25 years. The self-administered questionnaire was created in Google Form and distributed to participants via online using convenient and snowball sampling method. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), Pittsburg Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), and Dutch Eating Behaviour Questionnaire (DEBQ) were used to determine stress level, sleep quality and eating behaviour of students respectively. Majority of the participants were Chinese female students with a mean age of 21.77 ± 1.691 . The mean total PSS score of the participants was 20.74 ± 5.324 . The sleep quality of the participants was generally good with a mean global PSQI score of 6.21 ± 2.920 and the mean of the DEBQ score was found to be 85.59 ± 18.42 . A significant gender difference found in eating behaviour among individuals ($t=2.048$, $p=0.042$). There was a weak significant positive correlation between eating behaviour and stress level ($r=0.207$, $p=0.007$), but not significant for sleep quality. Prevalence of stress among students was 78.5% and students have fairly good sleep quality. In conclusion, students tend to have abnormal eating behaviours when they were experiencing higher stress level and this may negatively affect their health consequently. Stress management intervention and healthy diet programs should be implemented in university to increase the health awareness among university students.