

## **A18 The associations of knowledge on nutrition, attitude on gestational weight gain, cultural beliefs (food taboos) practice with gestational weight gain among Malay pregnant women in Malaysia**

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Gestational weight gain (GWG) is defined as the difference between the last available antenatal weight and pre-pregnancy weight. Excessive and inadequate GWG are associated with multiple chronic diseases and complications. There are mixed findings on several factors that were found to contribute to GWG status. Hence, this cross-sectional study aimed to determine the associations between knowledge on nutrition, attitude on gestational weight gain, cultural beliefs (food taboos) practice and GWG among Malay pregnant women in Malaysia. A set of self-administered questionnaire that assess sociodemographic background, knowledge on nutrition, attitude on GWG, cultural beliefs (food taboos) practice during pregnancy as well as self-reported anthropometry data on pre-pregnancy BMI and total GWG were completed by respondents. All the data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. A total of 100 pregnant women with a mean age of  $29.95 \pm 4.76$  years, mean parity of  $1.27 \pm 1.16$  and mean gestational age of  $38.58 \pm 0.82$  weeks, were recruited in this study. A total of 51.0% of the respondents had abnormal pre-pregnancy BMI, which 38.0% were overweight and obese and 13.0% were underweight. Meanwhile, most of the respondents were classified as having inadequate gestational weight gain (44%), followed by excessive gestational weight gain (29%). Majority of the pregnant women had good knowledge on nutrition (78.0%), negative attitude towards GWG (91.0%) and did practice on food taboos during their pregnancy (50.0%). However, results showed that there were significant correlations between parity ( $r = -0.292$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), pre-pregnancy BMI ( $r = -0.246$ ,  $p = 0.014$ ) and attitude on weight gain ( $r = -0.284$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ) with GWG. Intervention programs that advocating on normal pre-pregnancy BMI and positive attitude towards weight gain during pregnancy are recommended among pregnant women to improve their total GWG status. Thus, this study provided the policy makers and healthcare professionals a better view of planning of future intervention.