

A30 Associations of socio-demographic characteristics, parental feeding practices and child eating behaviors with rapid weight gain among Malaysian children aged 6 to 24 months

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Rapid weight gain is defined as a z-score change greater than 0.67 in weight-for-age between two different ages in childhood. Parental feeding practices and child eating behaviors may play a role in rapid weight gain. Previous researches have linked rapid weight gain in early childhood to the development of overweight and obesity. To date, there has not been a published study on socio-demographic characteristics, parental feeding practices, child eating behaviors, and their associations with rapid weight gain among Malaysian children aged 6 to 24 months. Thus, this cross-sectional study aimed to determine the associations of socio-demographic characteristics, parental body weight status and their feeding practices, and child eating behaviors with rapid weight gain among Malaysian children aged 6 to 24 months. A total of 214 children and their parents participated in this study. Information on socio-demographic characteristics, parental body weight status and feeding practices and child eating behaviors were completed by the parents. The Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Practices Questionnaire was used to assess the parental feeding practices. Child eating behaviors were assessed by the Children Eating Behavior Questionnaire (CEBQ). The parents' weight and height, as well as the weight of their children, were reported. The parents' current BMI and weight-for-age z-score changes (between birth and current age during data collection) were calculated. On a side note, this study provides an insight into the high prevalence of rapid weight gain among children which was 20.1% (Boys=19.6%, Girls=20.6%). Results showed that the educational level of mothers ($\chi^2=4.326$, $p=0.038$) and slowness in eating ($r=-0.175$, $p=0.010$) were significantly associated with rapid weight gain of the children. There were 76.7% of tertiary educational level mothers have rapid weight gain children. No significant associations of parental feeding practices and weight status with rapid weight gain. In conclusion, one in five of the children had rapid weight gain, whereby educational level of mothers and slowness in eating were associated with rapid weight gain. Future study is suggested to include other factors such as energy intake and bottle-feeding frequency that may be associated with rapid weight gain of young children.