



# FOOD NEOPHOBIA AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH WEIGHT STATUS AMONG PRESCHOOLERS IN TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA

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## INTRODUCTION

**FOOD NEOPHOBIA** is known as the attitude towards foods, including reluctance to eat and avoiding trying new food, resulting in restricted eating habits. Food Neophobia (FN) influences children's food preferences and responsible for a reduction of their dietary repertoire. It can be problematic, as it can lead to either under nutrition or over nutrition. In Malaysia, we are facing the threat of a double burden: 21.8% of children under five suffer from stunting and 14.8% of children (5-17 year-olds) are obese. Therefore, the aim of this study is **to determine the association between food neophobia and preschoolers' weight status in Terengganu.**

## METHODOLOGY



126 preschoolers (36.5% were 5 years old; 63.5% were 6 years old)



Data on sociodemographic, food neophobia were collected using questionnaires through Google Form



Height and weight data were collected during the school visits.



Child Food Neophobia Scale (CFNS) consists of 10 items

**High mean scores of food neophobia indicate a high level of food neophobia.**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Socio- demographic Status

Sample Characteristic	n (%)
Gender	
Boy	25 (19.8)
Girl	101 (80.2)
Residential area	
Urban	108(85.7)
Rural	18 (14.3)
Household income (RM)	
> 10,959.00	95 (75.4)
4849.00 - 10,959.00	23 (18.3)
<4849.00	8 (6.3)

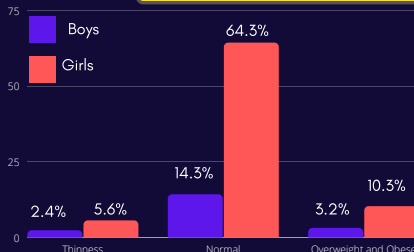


Figure 1 Prevalence of Nutritional Status

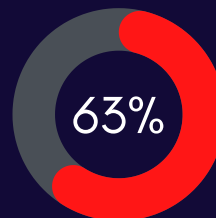


Figure 2 Prevalence of Food Neophobia

Table 2 Association between Food Neophobia and Weight Status (BMI Z-score) of Preschoolers

	F	95% CI	p-value
BMI z-score vs Food Neophobia	0.589	1, 124	0.44

simple linear regression

## CONCLUSION

Results highlight the need for interventions to educate parents on strategies to overcome FN and enable health professionals to improve children's nutrition and health in the future.

## REFERENCES

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