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Prediabetes among overweight and obese school-aged children: A cross-sectional study

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Abstract

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KEYWORDS

Prediabetes;

- 12 Lifestyle;
- 13 HbA1c level;
- 14 Children;
- 15 Overweight;
- 16 Obesity
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Obesity

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Objective: This study aims to determine the description of prediabetes events in children based on socio-demographic, anthropometric, and lifestyle characteristics.

Method: This cross-sectional study involved 110 school-aged children and their parents. Physical Activity Questionnaire for Older Children (PAQ-C) was used to examine children's physical activity, HbA1c measured to evaluate diabetes status, and feeding behavior questionnaire is given to students and through interviews.

Results: Prevalence of overweight and obese children who have an HbA1c level between 5.2% and 5.6% was 62.7%. Obese and overweight children are less support from family 72.2%, exercise once a week 82.7% with duration less than 60 min 68.2%, the habit of snacking 64.5%, and consumption of fast food \geq two times a week 62.7%.

Conclusion: Socio-demographic, cultural family, and lifestyle play a role in increasing the risk of incident prediabetes in overweight and obese children of school age.

Introduction

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bal data from 183 countries from 1980 to 2013 showed an increased prevalence of overweight and obese children higher than adults, namely 47.1% in children and 27.5% in adults. The prevalence of overweight and obese children (aged 2–19 years) in developing and developed countries 26 27 28

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has experienced an increase.¹ In 2014 it was estimated that 30 41 million children under five years were obese. In the 31 United States, more children aged 6 to 11 years old are 32 obese (17.5%) compared to children aged 2 to 5 years old 33 (8.9%) from 2011 to 2014.² In Indonesia, obesity also has 34 high prevalence.³ The prevalence of obesity in children aged 35 5-19 years has increased from 1999 to 2004, namely obesity 36 from 5.3% to 8.6%, while overweight from 2.7% to 3.7% based 37 on CDC standard cut-offs.⁴ Data from the Ministry of Health 38 of the Republic of Indonesia in 2013 showed that children 39 aged 5-12 years are an overweight problem by 18.8% con-40 sisting of category 10.8% overweight and 8.8% obese, and 41 experiencing the thinness of 11.2% comprising 7, 2% thin and 42 4.0% very thin.^{5,6} 43

Rapid lifestyle changes, namely excessive eating patterns 44 and physical activity, are less likely to cause an increase 45 in the prevalence of overweight and obese children.^{3,8} 46 Increased of overweight occurs more in children of school 47 age who are in urban areas.⁵ Obesity in childhood can 48 increase the risk of early death and disability in adulthood.⁹ 49 Severe obesity or long-term obesity can lead to serious 50 medical conditions, including coronary heart disease, type 2 51 diabetes mellitus, several types of cancers such as endome-52 trial, breast, or colon cancer, hypertension, cholesterol, 53 liver failure, and so on.^{10,11} Obesity is influenced by sev-54 eral factors such as poor diet, physical activity, limited 55 sleep, genetic factors, even illness or drugs.¹¹ Factors that 56 affect the occurrence of obesity that cannot be modified are 57 genetic, ethnic, gender, and age while the factors that can 58 be modified are nutrition intake and physical activity.¹² 59

Obese children diagnosed with TGT are prediabetic stadi-60 ums that should undergo a prevention program with lifestyle 61 improvements and healthy bodyweight.¹³ Interrupted Glu-62 cose Tolerance shows the presence of diabetes in the early 63 stages and asymptomatic. They are not classified as suffer-64 ers of diabetes but are considered to have a higher risk of 65 diabetes.¹⁴ Lifestyle has been shown to play a role in the 66 incidence of prediabetes through obesity.¹⁵ Hemoglobin A1c 67 (HbA1c) is recommended as a diagnostic tool for identify-68 ing DM and subjects at risk of developing Diabetes Mellitus 69 (DM),^{16,17} and HbA1c is a perfect predictor in identifying dia-70 betes risk in children and can be used to identify prediabetes 71 in children.¹⁸ 72

The study of overweight and obesity among children 73 is critical because most of the culture and perception of 74 Indonesia stated that a fat child is a healthy child so that 75 the family does not become aware that the impact of obese 76 could cause a high risk to school-aged children.¹⁹ Meanwhile, 77 parents do not know HbA1c as a screening tool to identify 78 prediabetes risks early on. Besides, studies of obese children 79 associated with HbA1c levels in Indonesia were very lacking. 80 Therefore the researchers aimed to determine HbA1c lev-81 els among overweight and obese school-aged children, and 82 explore their lifestyles. 83

84 Methods

This was a cross-sectional study in four elementary schools in Makassar from July to September 2017. A total of 110 students (49 overweight and 61 obese students) aged 6–13 years old, along with their parents participating in this study



Eigure 1 HbA1c level among overweight and obese children $\frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} = 110$).

were selected using quota sampling. Measurements of body weight and high, how to interview and fill out questionnaires were carried out by a trained team of 12 nurses. Assessment of children's nutritional status based on BMI-for-age (5–19 years) using WHO Anthroplus 2007.²⁰ Children with BMI z-score 1.00 SD to +2.00 SD indicated overweight, while BMI z-score 2.00 SD or more were classified as obese. Then the children were given a questionnaire and interviewed to explore family culture, behavior/eating habits of children, and behavior of children's physical activity. Instruments of physical activity using the Physical Activity Questionnaire for Older Children (PAQ-C).²¹

The HbA1c examination using the international standardized method by the National Glycemic Hemoglobin Standardization Program (NGSP) with a cut-off diagnosis was 6.5% or more as an indication of diabetes, and 5.7–6.4% indications of prediabetes. Data were analyzed using frequency distribution of HbA1c levels based on overweight and obese children and cross-tabulation between socio-demographic, cultural, and lifestyle variables with normal HbA1c levels and prediabetes using the chi-square test and Pearson correlation test. The ethical clearance approved form Faculty of Medicine, Hasanuddin University (Number: 460/H4.8.4.5.31/PP36-KOMETIK/2017). Informed consent was obtained from the child and parents.

Results

Boys consist of 68 while girls are 42. Fig. 1 shows HbA1c levels in overweight children who had the lowest HbA1c level of 4.8% in 2 children (50%) and the highest HbA1c level in 5.8% in 1 child. There were four children in the prediabetes category with an HbA1c level of 5.7% as many as three children (2.7%) and level 5.8% as many as one child (0.9%). The most obese children data had 5.2% HbA1c and 5.3% respectively. Whereas most overweight children had 5.1% HbA1c levels of 9 children.

Table 1 shows the cross-tabulations between sociodemographics of children and parents. Children with prediabetes were four children (3.6%) where more boys were compared with girls who had prediabetes, namely three boys (2.7%) and one girl (0, 9%). All children who have prediabetes are in the 10–13 years old age range. Most of the prediabetic children come from high family income and those whose father's education are high.

Table 2 shows that the average HbA1c level in obese and overweight children is 5.23%. The average age of the

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Variable	n		Pd			
		Normal		Prediabetic		
		n	%	n	%	
Children's gender						1.000
Boy	68 (61.8%)	65	59.1	3	2.7	
Girl	42 (38.2%)	41	37.3	1	0.9	
Children's age						0.055
6–9 years old	56 (50.9%)	56	50.9	0	0	
10–13 years old	54 (49.1%)	50	45.5	4	3.6	
Father's education ^a						0.321
Low education	10 (9.1%)	9	8.2	1	0.9	
High education	100 (90.9%)	97	88.2	3	2.7	
Mother's education ^a						0.078
Low education	14 (12.7%)	12	10.9	2	1.8	
High education	96 (87.3%)	94	85.5	2	1.8	
Family income ^b						0.140
Low	4 (3.6%)	3	2.7	1	0.9	
High	106 (96.4%)	103	93.6	3	2.7	

Table 1 Cross-tabulation between socio-demography characteristics of children and parents with children's HbA1c level (n = 110).

^a Parent's education based on minimum education of government's standard (low < senior high school; high = college/university graduates).

^b Family income based on a minimum salary of Sulawesi Selatan Province (low < 2,400,000; high > 2,400,000).

^c HbA1c level (normal < 5.7%; prediabetic 5.7–6.4%).

^d Probability using the chi-square test.

 Table 2
 Factors related to HbA1c level.

Variable	Mean	Std. deviation	pc
HbA1c level ^a	5.23	0.27	0.138
Children's age	9.29	1.38	
HbA1c level	5.23	0.27	0.860
Children's weight	41.87	10.49	
HbA1c level	5.23	0.27	0.703
Children's height	135.38	12.74	
HbA1c level	5.23	0.27	0.972
Children's BAZ ^b	2.20	0.84	
HbA1c level	5.23	0.27	0.451
PAQ-C score	33.48	15.87	
HbA1c level	5.23	0.27	0.738
Knowledge score	8.51	2.13	

^a HbA1c level (normal < 5.7%; prediabetic 5.7–6.4%).

^b BAZ, BMI for age z score (overweight > +1SD; obesity > +2SD).

^c Probability using pearson correlation test.

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child is 9.29 years old, bodyweight is 41.87 kg, body height
is 135.38 cm, children's BMI z-score is 2.20, PAQ C score is
33.48, and knowledge score is 8.51.

Table 3 shows children who have a family culture that is less supportive as many as 80 children (72.2%) and who support as many as 30 children (27.3%). Prediabetic children with high activity are more (2.7%) than children with low activity (0.9%). All prediabetic children exercise only once a week. There were three children (2.7%) including exercising less than 60 min and one child (0.9%) exercising more than 60 min. Prediabetic children who often snack as many as three children (2.7%) and do not snack as much as one child (0.9%). The habit of consuming fast food more than twice a week was 69 children (62.7%) but still in the

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Variable	п		HbA1c Level ^a			
		Normal		Prediabetic		
		n	%	n	%	
Nutritional status ^c						0.322
Overweight	49 (44.5%)	46	41.8	3	2.7	
Obesity	61 (55.5%)	60	54.5	1	0.9	
Culture						0 200
	80 (72, 2%)	78	70.9	2	1.8	0.277
Supportive	30 (72.2%)	70	25.5	2	1.0	
Supportive	50 (27.5%)	20	23.5	Z	1.0	
Activity						0.537
Low	19 (17.3%)	18	16.4	1	0.9	
High	91 (82.7%)	88	80	3	2.7	
Sport in a week						1.000
3 times a week	19 (17.3%)	19	17.3	0	0	
1 time a week	91 (82.7%)	87	79.1	4	3.6	
Dunation of months	· · · ·					1 000
Duration of sports	75 (10 20()	70		2	2 7	1.000
<60 min	75 (68.2%)	72	65.5	3	2.7	
\geq 60 min	35 (31.8%)	34	30.9	1	0.9	
Duration of watching TV						0.528
<2 h	88 (80%)	84	76.4	4	3.6	
≥2 h	22 (20%)	22	20	0	0	
Fating frequency						0.586
<pre></pre>	34 (30,9%)	32	29.1	2	1.8	
>2 times	76 (69.1%)	74	67.3	2	1.8	
						4 000
Breakjast		45	40.0	2	4.0	1.000
Ies No.	47 (4Z.7%)	40	40.9	2	1.0	
INU	63 (57.3%)	01	55.5	2	1.8	
Drink of milk						1.000
Yes	52 (47.3%)	50	45.5	2	1.8	
No	58 (52.7%)	56	50.9	2	1.8	
Snacking						1.000
Yes	71 (64.5%)	68	61.8	3	2.7	
No	39 (35.5%)	38	34.5	1	0.9	
Fraguency of soft drink	, ,					0 570
c2 times	97 (70, 1%)	02	75 5	1	2.6	0.578
>2 times	07 (79.1%)	20	20.0	4	5.0	
~zuilles	23 (20.9%)	23	20.9	0	0	
Frequency of fast food consumption						0.145
\leq 2 weeks	41 (37.3%)	38	34.5	3	2.7	
>2 weeks	69 (62.7%)	68	61.8	1	0.9	

^b Probability using chi-square test.

^c Nutritional status based on BAZ, BMI for age Z score (overweight > +1SD; obesity > +2SD).

normal HbA1c category, while children with prediabetes who
 consumed fast food more than twice a week were one child
 (0.9%).

151 Discussion

¹⁵² The study found that the tendency of HbA1c to increase in overweight and obese children with an average value was

at an HbA1c level of 5.23% and more in overweight children than obese children. Another study revealed that the value of HbA1c in children at risk of developing diabetes was 5.7-6.4%.²² The importance of HbA1c examination is an excellent predictor in identifying the risk of diabetes in children and can be used to identify prediabetes in children with type 2 diabetes.¹⁸ This study has illustrated that many HbA1c levels in overweight and obese children of school

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age have approached the prediabetes threshold, and it is
 proven that there are children who have prediabetes. Socio demographic, family cultural, lifestyle roles are factors that
 can increase the incidence of prediabetes in overweight and
 obese children of school age. ^{3,6,19}

Socio-demography has a role in the incidence of over-166 weight and obese children. This study shows that the trend 167 occurs in the HbA1c level, which is getting closer to the pre-168 diabetes threshold, namely the category 5.1-5.4% of which 169 is high family income. In line with other studies that found 170 that education and high parents' income play an impor-171 tant role in increasing HbA1c levels.²³ Other studies have 172 shown an increase in the incidence of obesity in children in 173 China who have high economic status due to the high public 174 purchasing power of obesogenic foods.²⁴ This is relevant to 175 other studies which reveal that traditional socio-culture and 176 beliefs are related to nutrition, and are mostly passed down 177 for centuries by mothers and grandmothers living in devel-178 oping countries.²⁵ This belief includes overweight and obese 179 children often said to have baby fat that parents believe 180 181 will disappear when they get older. Also, the culture of the 182 Bugis-Makassar tribe is typical of sweet foods that are always served on certain occasions, by families usually prepared as 183 a routine meal for their children at home which is a risk 184 factor for the incidence of prediabetes. 185

Based on gender, overweight and obese men have a higher 186 school age than girls. The results of this study are in line with 187 other studies conducted in Shenzhen, China, which found 188 that the prevalence of prediabetes was 13.01% for men and 189 11.15% for women.²⁶ Girls have a higher percentage of total 190 body fat during puberty, while boys have more central obe-191 sity, which is a risk factor for insulin resistance and type II 192 diabetes.27 193

In this study, children who have prediabetes have more 194 195 activity than low activity because there are other factors that can cause children to experience prediabetes, such as 196 exercise that is only twice a week, the duration of exercise 197 is also less than 60 min, frequency of eating more than two 198 times, high snacking habits, and frequency of fast food con-199 sumption more than twice a week. Other studies show that 200 children who snack more than one day per week have higher 201 HbA1c levels compared to children who are not snacking or 202 who are less than one day per week.²⁸ Most high-income fam-203 ilies tend to choose their food, especially fast food, and high 204 carbohydrate so that people experience excess food intake 205 and obesity or being overweight will be difficult to avoid.²⁹ 206

However, this study has limitations. This study did not 207 have an underweight and normal weight participant to 208 209 be compared with overweight children. Therefore, further research is needed on screening HbA1c in all school-age 210 children based on nutritional status and assessing the food 211 intake. However, this data provides significant findings, 212 including the high level of HbA1c levels that occur among 213 overweight and obese children, and its relationship with the 214 socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics of children. 215

216 Conclusion

The study found that overweight and obese children had prediabetes, and more than half of overweight and obese children had HbA1c level at the borderline of being prediabetes. Socio-demographic, family cultural, and lifestyle play a role in increasing the risk of prediabetes in school-aged overweight and obese children. 222

Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Uncited reference

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