

MALAYSIAN HEALTH LITERACY SURVEY (MHLS) 2023 – UPDATED SCORECARD OF THE MALAYSIAN POPULATION



Mohammad Zabri Johari¹, Masitah Ahmad¹, Nor Haryati Ahmad Sanusi², Komathi Perialathan¹, Ain Aqiela Azamuddin¹, Siti Nur Nabilah Mohd Yunos¹ & Teresa Yong Sui Mien¹

¹Institute for Health Behavioural Research, National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia

²National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION

- Health literacy (HL) refers, broadly, to the ability of individuals to “gain access to, understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health” for themselves, their families and their communities.
- Improving health literacy in populations provides the foundation on which citizens are enabled to play an active role in improving their own health, engage successfully with community action for health.
- The aim of the study was to assess the level of health literacy of the Malaysian population.

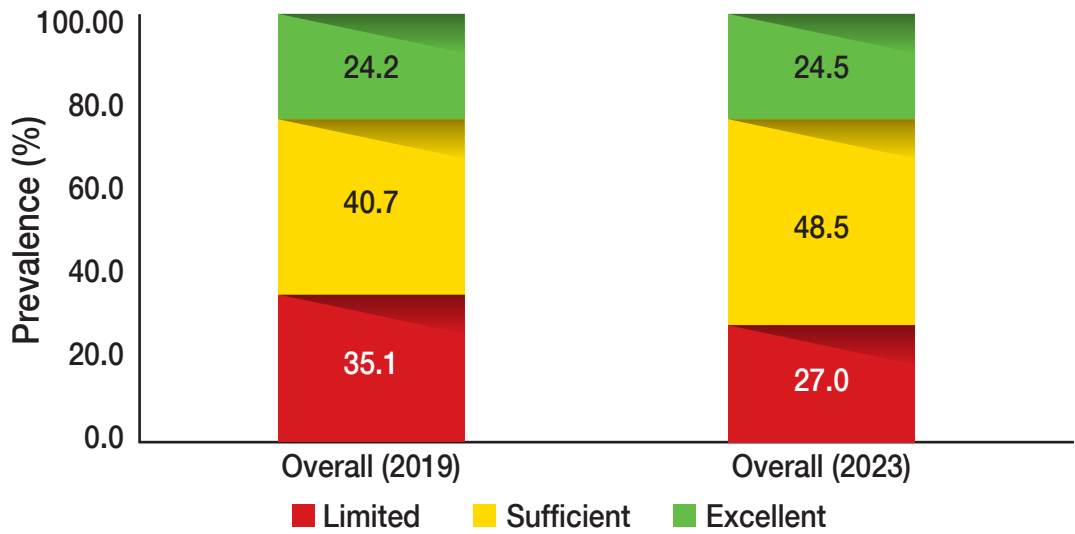
METHODOLOGY

- This was a nationwide cross-sectional; household survey conducted in parallel to the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2023.
- Target population were Malaysian adults that can read and write in Malay unassisted.
- The study employed a validated self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) - HLS-M-Q18 (adapted from HLS-EU-Q47) that was collected during home visits by the NHMS research team.
- Data was analyzed using weighted analysis to generate a national profile of health literacy in Malaysia and comparing it to the previous iteration of 2019.

RESULTS

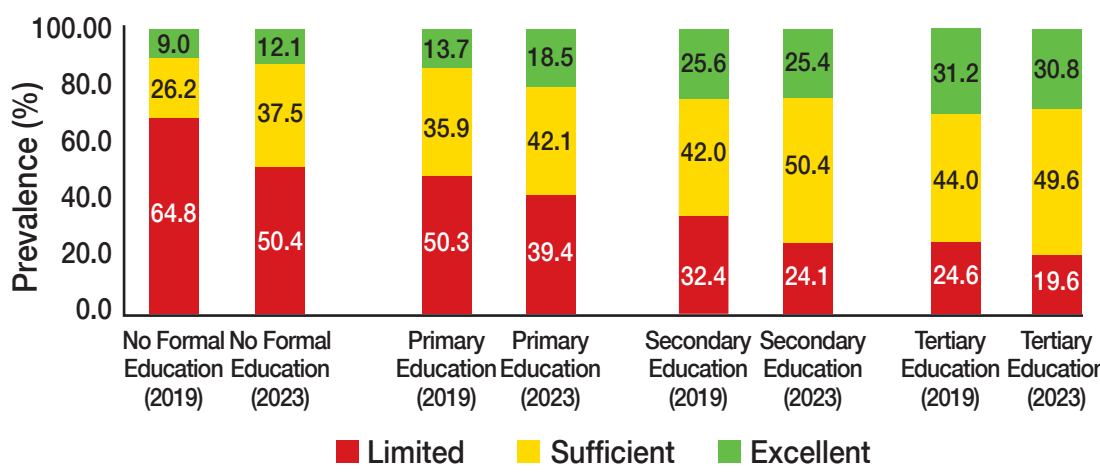
- Overall sufficient health literacy has improved by 7.8% and by extension reduced limited health literacy by 8.1%.

Prevalence Health Literacy by **OVERALL**



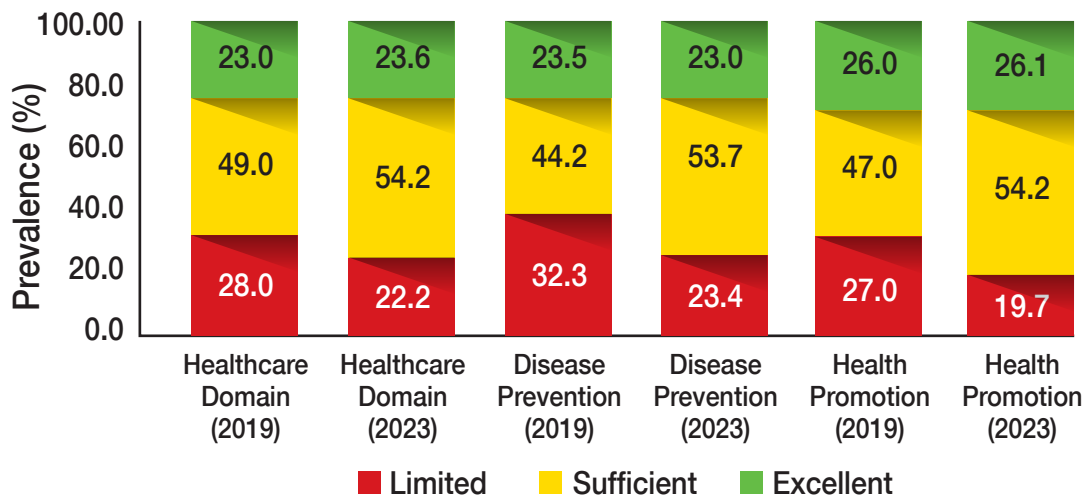
- Analysis by education levels (No Education – 11.3%, 14.4%; Primary Education – 6.2%, 10.9%; Secondary Education – 8.4%, 8.3%; and Tertiary Education – 5.6%, 5.0%).

Prevalence Health Literacy by **EDUCATIONAL LEVEL**



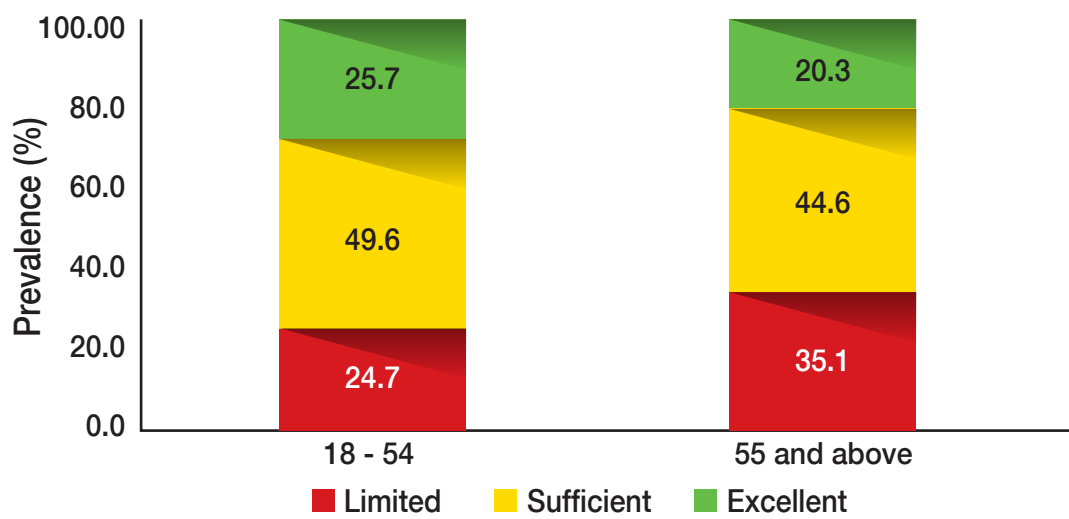
- This placed the Malaysian data above most countries using the same analysis profile as compared to 2019. Similar improvements in sufficient HL & limited HL were noted in all dimensions of HL - health promotion (7.2%, 7.3%), disease prevention (9.5%, 8.9%) and healthcare (5.2%; 5.8)

Prevalence Health Literacy by **DOMAIN**



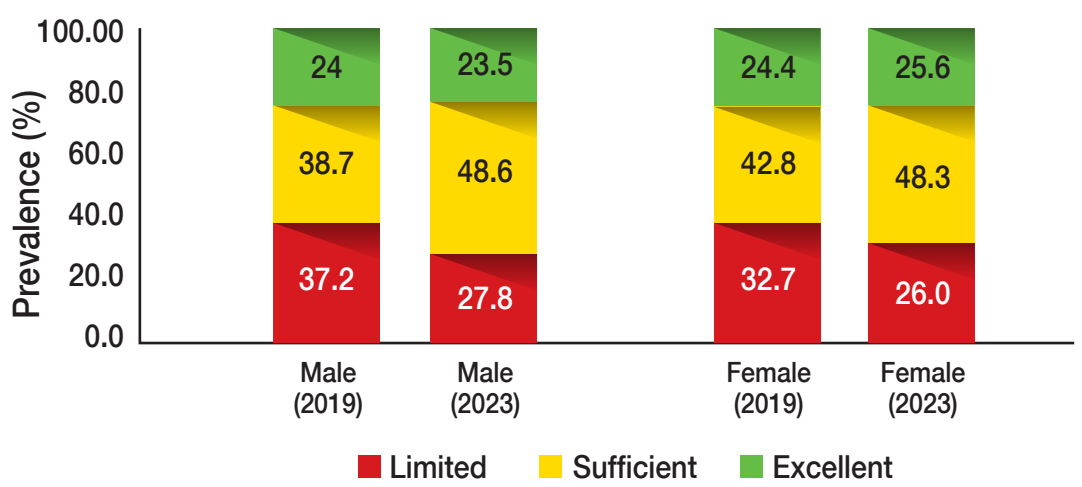
- Analysis by age revealed older Malaysians (above 55 years old) being more vulnerable to limited health literacy (35.1%).

Prevalence Health Literacy by **AGE GROUP**



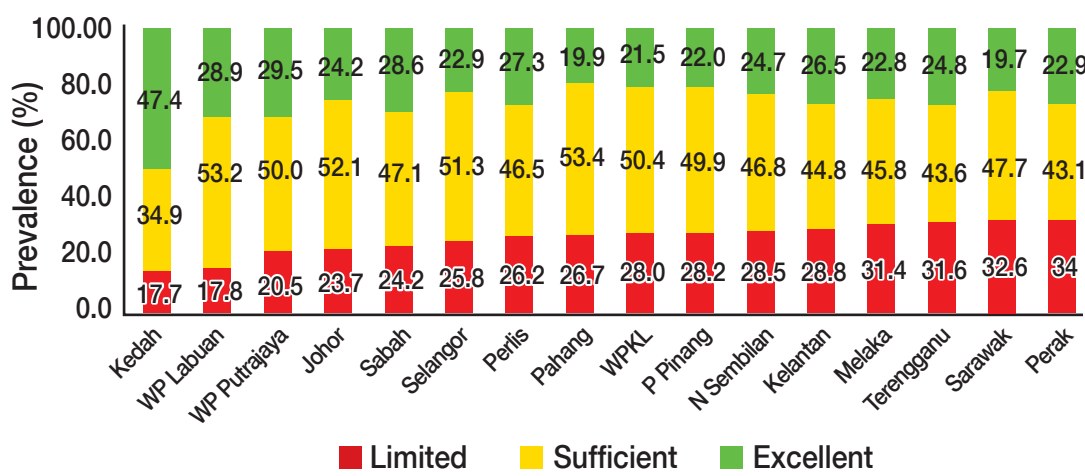
- Analysis by gender (Male – 9.9%, 9.4% and Female – 5.5%, 6.7%)

Prevalence Health Literacy by **GENDER**



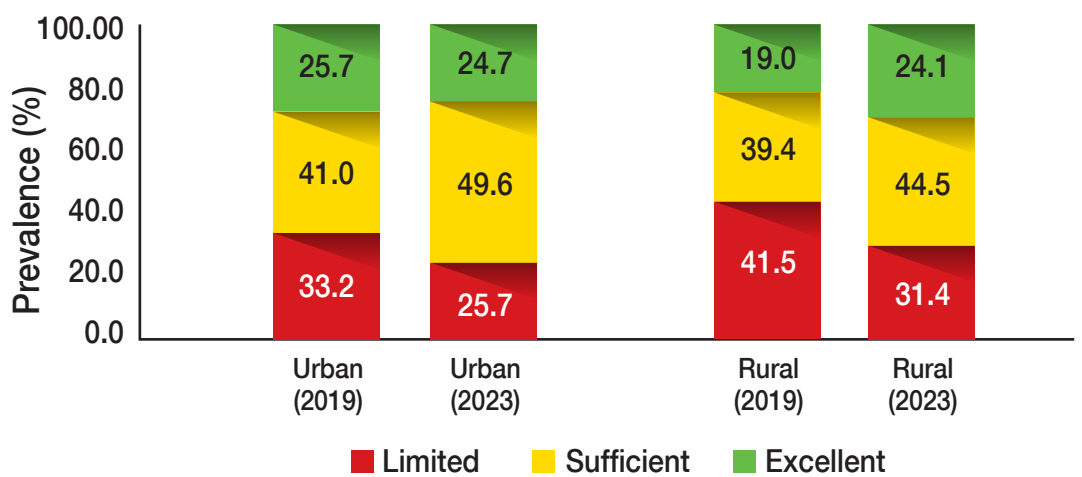
- Analysis by State revealed Kedah having the highest excellent HL (47.4%) and lowest limited HL (17.7%) while Sarawak has the lowest excellent HL (19.7%) and Terengganu (31.6%), Sarawak (32.6%) and Perak (34%) had the highest limited HL respectively.

Prevalence Health Literacy by **STATES**



- Analysis by locality (Urban – 8.6%, 7.5% and Rural – 5.1%, 10.1%)

Prevalence Health Literacy by **LOCALITY**



CONCLUSION

- There are improvements in the national health literacy profile in Malaysia but the changes are between limited HL and sufficient HL only; not the excellent HL.
- The core target of health literacy is achieving a higher change in excellent health literacy which the country still striving to achieve.

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