

Health Promotion Program on Prevention of Zoonotic Diseases among Aborigines in Peninsular Malaysia

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Abstract : Introduction: Indigenous people have an increased risk of contracting zoonotic infections due to their practices. Similarly, the aborigines in Peninsular Malaysia, the Orang Asli, have a higher risk too. This study aimed to empower the Jahai children on the prevention of zoonotic infections by implementing a health promotion intervention program. Methods: A non-experimental pre and post-test interventional study was conducted among the indigenous primary school children aged between nine and 12 years in Perak, Malaysia. A structured questionnaire was used to assess the pre-and post-knowledge and attitudes towards zoonotic infections and hand hygiene practice. This is followed by three sessions of the health promotion program. Ethical approval was obtained prior to the data collection. Data were analysed using SPSS software. Results: The knowledge on whether diseases can spread from animals to humans, transmission via saliva and faeces, types of organisms that can infect, and signs and symptoms increased significantly between pre and post. Significant improvements were observed in the attitude and practices too. Conclusion: The intervention program demonstrated improvement in the knowledge, attitude, and practice among the children. The continuous program needs to be conducted for a sustainable outcome.

Keywords : health promotion, zoonotic infections, aborigines, knowledge, practice

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