

A26 Factors associated with anaemia among Orang Asli children aged 2 to 6 years old in Negeri Sembilan

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There is limited data available on anaemia status of the Orang Asli (OA) pre-school children. The aim of this cross-sectional study was to determine the factors associated with anaemia among OA children aged 2 to 6 years old in Negeri Sembilan. This study included 264 OA children (50.9% boys and 49.1% girls) with a mean age of 4.04 years ($SD=1.21$ years) and their mothers from 14 OA villages in Negeri Sembilan. Mothers were interviewed to obtain information on sociodemographic background, food security, sanitation and hygiene status as well as dietary intake of their child. Anthropometry measurements were measured. Capillary blood haemoglobin level was used to determine anaemia status of both OA children and mothers. Children were screened for parasitic infection using stool samples. Data collection was conducted from April 2015 to January 2016. Findings showed that 21.6% and 38.3% of the children and mothers were anaemic, respectively. Approximately 28%, 34.9%, 6.4% and 35% of the OA children were underweight, stunted, wasted, and infected by parasites, respectively. Moreover, 8% of the mothers were stunted, 58.9% had abdominal obesity, and 61.7% were overweight and obese. Those OA children who were stunted ($\chi^2=5.75$, $p=0.017$), infected by parasites ($\chi^2=8.35$, $p=0.004$), low father's educational level ($\chi^2=9.50$, $p=0.023$), mothers with anaemic ($\chi^2=12.95$, $p<0.001$), not wearing sandal or shoes outside the house ($\chi^2=7.82$, $p=0.005$), not using soap during hand washing ($\chi^2=5.88$, $p=0.049$), did not achieve recommended intake for energy intake ($\chi^2=6.04$, $p=0.014$), Vitamin A ($\chi^2=4.61$, $p=0.032$), and iron intake from diet ($\chi^2=5.66$, $p=0.017$) were at risk of developing anaemia. In conclusion, good nutritional status as well as hygienic and sanitation status play important roles in determining haemoglobin level of OA children. There is a need to implement appropriate nutrition intervention to reduce anaemia problem among OA children.