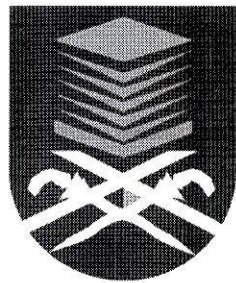


FACTORS INFLUENCING THE POOR NUTRITION INTAKE AMONGST PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY IN SPAOH DISTRICT, BETONG DIVISION, SARAWAK



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UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

**RESEARCH MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (RMI)
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
40450 SHAH ALAM
SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN
MALAYSIA**

BY:

KHAMRI BIN HJ. KATANG

JULY 2011



LETTER OF SUBMISSION

Date : 14 July 2011
Project File No. : 600-RMU/SSP/DANA 5/2(30/2010)

Prof. Dr. Abu Bakar Abdul Majeed
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Research Management Institute (RMI)
Universiti Teknologi MARA
40450 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

Yg Bhgia Prof,

**FINAL RESEARCH REPORT 'FACTORS INFLUENCING THE POOR NUTRITION
INTAKE AMONGST PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY IN SPAOH DISTRICT,
BETONG DIVISION, SARAWAK'**

Kindly refer to the above.

With reference to the above, submitted are two (2) copies and a CD of the Final Research Report entitled '*Factors Influencing the Poor Nutrition Intake Amongst Pre-School Children: A Case Study in Spaoh District, Betong Division, Sarawak*' by a researcher from The Faculty of Health Science, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Sarawak Campus.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

.....

KHAMRI BIN HJ. KATANG

Researcher

FSK UiTM Sarawak

ABSTRACT

Malnutrition is rampant amongst the pre-school children throughout the country especially in the rural population. As seen from the Sarawak Medical and Health Report from 2007 to 2009, more than 60% of the total districts in the state recorded SMC and MMC above (11.6%) the national standard of 5% IR (Incidence Rate). This warrant a serious concern and effort should be taken to investigate the possible factors that contribute to this vicious situation.

The community health survey report at Pusat Kesihatan Spaoh (PKS) for 2007 to 2009 recorded the consistent problem of moderately malnourished (MMC) and severely malnourished children (SMC) in its operational area. The status of socio-economy has the bearing on the influence of the incidence of malnutrition and the relationship to the dietary pattern and nutrition intake particularly amongst younger children (4 to 6 years old).

The study aims to appraise the role of socio-economic factors of the community in the area and how they can influence on the nutritional status of the pre-school children. An ecosystem conceptual framework was used as a guide for this study. Ten (10) communities in Spaoh Sub-District were selected that represent the major ethnic groups (Malays, Iban and Chinese). Respondents were heads of household with children age of 4 to 6 years. Structured and semi-structured questionnaire was used to interview the respondent. Secondary data were obtained from relevant literature review and official reports from relevant government's departments and agencies. Observations and inspections were carried out to capture data on living environment.

Five (5) percent of the households came under the hardcore poor category and 33% as poor; based on rural poverty line. Majority (33.3%) of the head of households earned a monthly income below RM600.00; mostly through self employed economic activities like farmings, gardenings and gatherings. From the 24-hours dietary recall, the intake of nutrients with the exception of carbohydrate were below the Malaysian Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA).

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Health and socio-economy is inter-related and has correlation in broadest sense of nature. The food intake of an individual can be influenced by many inter-related factors. Food consumption depends on the family's income, family size, awareness and knowledge of the care takers and most importantly, the present of nutritious food are made available by the family.

The household income is believed to be one of the influencing factors of nutritions that is essential for health, particularly for children who are naturally susceptible to diseases and illness. Therefore, this study is most opportune to look and explore on the related information and relationship pertaining to the pattern of diet and nutrition intake amongst pre-school children especially those residing at rural areas. Henceforth, the selected study area for this study was carried out at one agricultural based rural area of *Spaoh Sub-district in Betong Division, Sarawak* as an attempt to identify and address the factors that could influence the nutrient intake of pre-school children.

The development of the health sector is an integral part of socio-economic development. During the *Sixth Malaysia Plan* period (1991 to 1995), promotive and preventive health programmes such as health education, immunisation, control of both communicable and non-communicable diseases, environmental health and sanitation, nutrition, and occupational safety and health were implemented. As reported in the *Seventh Malaysia Plan* (1996 – 2000), the overall nutrition level in the country was satisfactory. However, there was a moderate under-nutrition among the children below six years old, iron deficiency anaemia among pregnant mothers and iodine deficiency among specific groups of the population. It was suggested in the report that was tabled during the budget sitting of the Dewan Rakyat by the then Prime Minister of Malaysia *Tun DR. Mahathir Mohammad* that in order to address these problems, nutrition programmes were incorporated as an integral component of the Poverty Community Development Program (*PPRT- Progam Pembangunan Rakyat Termiskin*)

The outcomes of the programme above had shown that these efforts had resulted in an improvement of the nutritional status of the children below six years, where 0.42% of these children had a body weight less than 60% of the standard in 1995 compared with only 0.50% in 1990. The report also stated that the supplementary food programme for the primary school children from low-income families was continued in all schools, which recorded to benefit more than 520,000 pupils (Medical Department Sarawak, 2005).