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New Frontiers in Health: Expecting the Unexpected

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title	Page
Oral Presentation	
Development of Loop-Mediated Isothermal Amplification (LAMP) for the Detection of <i>speB</i> Gene in Invasive <i>Streptococcus pyogenes</i> Clinical Isolates	1
Does Good Knowledge on Dengue Correlates to the Practice of Dengue Prevention? A Survey among a Rural Community in Negeri Sembilan	2
A Systematic Review: Public Health Policies on Zika Infection Surveillance for Malaysia	3
Spatial Analysis of Food Poisoning Cases and Its Environmental Relations in Sabah, Malaysia	4
Multiplex Real-Time RT-PCR Assay for Diagnosis of Dengue, Zika and Chikungunya Infections	5
Looking at Alcohol Differently: Harm Reduction in Cultures with a Strong Cultural Connection to Alcohol	6
The Correlation between Environment of Care, Patient Satisfaction and Willingness to Recommend in a Teaching Hospital Setting	7
What are the Barriers and Solutions to Renal Transplantation in Malaysia? A Qualitative Key-Informant Study	8
Blood Cholinesterase Activity and Associated Factors among Pesticide-Exposed Vegetable Family Farmers in Sabah Malaysia	9
Analysing Practice for Prosthetic Restoration among Major Lower Limb Amputees with Diabetes: From Northern Borneo Perspective	10
Early Childhood Development and Play: A Review	11
Needlestick Injuries – Incidence, Contributing Factors and Costs on Post Exposure Management at Tertiary Hospitals in Sabah	12
A Review on Illegals and the Stateless in Sabah	13
Assessment of Practical Science Communication Skills as a Core Competency of Admission to Undergraduate Medical Programmes: Nationwide Outcomes and Associated Factors	14
Evaluating Clinical Waste Management Done by the Concessionaire Company in Accredited Non-Specialist Government Hospitals in West Coast Division and Interior Division of Sabah	15
Factors Affecting Health Seeking Behavior among Male University Students in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak	16
Diabetic Hidden Gem: High Amylose Content in Sabah's Traditional Rice Germplasm	17
The Determinants of Total Fertility Rate in Selected Asian Countries: An Empirical Study Using Panel Data	18
Factors Associated with Uncontrolled Hypertension among Hypertensive Patients in Tuaran, Sabah, Malaysia: A Cross-Sectional Study	19
Does Maternal Health Literacy Affect Childhood Vaccination? A Study Among Mothers in Asajaya Sarawak	20
Vaccine Knowledge, Awareness, and Hesitancy among Malaysian Parents Attending Health Clinics in Sandakan, Sabah	21
Mutations Causing Streptomycin Resistance in <i>Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i> Isolates of Sabah	22
Associated Factors for Lymphatic Filariasis in Beluran, Sabah	23
Risk Factors of the Occurrence of Malaria Knowlesi in Ranau: A Case Control Study	24
Stigma Related to Tuberculosis Interventions to Improve Treatment Adherence in Developing Countries: A Systematic Review	25
Prevalence of Soil Transmitted Helminths among School Children in Northern Sabah	26
The Prevalence of Anaemia and Associated Factors among Pregnant Women in Tongod and Kinabatangan Districts	27
Occupational Burnout and Its Influencing Factors among Primary Health Care Providers under Tuaran Area Health Office	28
Application of Occupational Health Surveillance Program among Responder's During Chemical Incident at Pasir Gudang, Johor	29
Association of Smartphone Usage with Anxiety, Depression and Stress among Undergraduate Students in Universiti Malaysia Sabah	30
The Effectiveness of Probiotics, Prebiotics, and Dietary Fiber on the Lowering of Cholesterol Level and Improvement of Full Lipid Profile	31
Factors Associated with Occupational Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids among Healthcare Worker in a Government Hospital in Sabah	32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title	Page
Impact of Socio-Economic Status on Access and Outcome of Kidney Transplantation in Malaysia	33
Poster Presentation	
Prevalence of Cigarette Smoking and Its Associated Factors among Male Adolescents in Malaysia	34
A 3-Year Cross-sectional Study on Breast Cancer among Sandakan Indigenous Women: Do They Present Earlier?	35
Identification of Mycobacterium tuberculosis-Specific DNA Marker Using MAMA-PCR	36
Assessment of Risk Factors for Ovarian Cancer in UMS Students	37
Correlation of Mean Cycle Threshold Value of GeneXpert MTB/RIF and Time to Detection in Mycobacterium Growth Indicator Tubes for Mycobacterium tuberculosis Isolates of Kota Kinabalu, Sabah	38
Knowledge and Utilization of Laboratory Services among Employees of University Malaysia Sabah	39
Paddy, Piggy and Japanese Encephalitis in Kerian – A Case Series	40
A Case Series of Secondary Hemophagocytic Lymphohistiocytosis (HLH) Secondary to Dengue Infection Receiving Dexamethasone in a Tertiary Centre	41
Leading Factors and Consequences of the Violence against Women in Myanmar-Hospital Based Study	42
Identifying the Nurses' Knowledge and Practice on Preventing Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia in the Intensive Care Unit, Queen Elizabeth Hospital 2, Sabah	43
Understanding UMS Nursing Students' Perception of Caring Patients with MRSA	44
A Five-Year Retrospective Review on Malaria Incidence and Profile in Malaysia, 2013 – 2017	45
Association of Physical Activity Score with Cardio-Pulmonary Function Parameters and VO2 Max in Healthy Young Adults of Sabah, Malaysia	46
A Comparative Study of Aerobic Capacity – VO2 Max between Common Ethnic Populations of Sabah, Malaysia	47
Rational Use of Drugs: A Way to Improve the Quality of Health Care	48
Detection of All Four Dengue Virus Serotypes and Identification of Four Mismatched Nucleotides Between DENV4 Specific Primer rTS4 and DENV 4 Sequences in Sandakan and Kudat (2016-2017)	49
Global Health Film Club - Bringing Global Health Issues and Activism to Local Communities	50
Smartphone Apps as a Technological Innovation for Weight Reduction: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis	51
Process Evaluation of Student Health Promotion Programmes in Rural Sabah	52
A Case Report of Severe Ascariasis Infection in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Patient	53
Spatial Clustering of Cholera in Sabah, Malaysia	54
Knowledge and Awareness on Human Papilloma Virus Vaccination among Final Year Nursing and Medical Students in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Medical Centre	55
Amyotrophic Dermatomyositis Presenting with Interstitial Lung Disease	56
Effectiveness of Screening and Brief Intervention for Alcohol Misuse and Risky Drinking in Kota Kinabalu	57
Unresolved Pneumonia: A Case Report of Strongyloides stercoralis Hyperinfection in an Immunocompromised Patient	58
Health Benefits and Potential Risk of Tropical Herbs from the Leguminosae Family: A Review	59
Islamic Perspective on Elective Abortion of Zika Virus infected Pregnant Women	60
Association of Children's BMI and Physical Activity: A Cross Sectional Study	61
Huge Solitary Rectal Schwannoma Mimicking Malignant Polyp with a Successful Transanal Excision	62
Factors Associated with Glycaemic Control among Diabetic Patients at Hulu Terengganu in 2019	63
Development of In-House Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Genotype 3 Drug Resistance Genotyping Assay towards NS5A Inhibitor in Malaysia	64
Ethno-Medicine Survey of Medicinal Plants Used by Villagers in Kudat, Sabah, Malaysia	65
Tuberculosis and Biologics - A Glimpse of Sabah Rheumatology Patients	66
Clinical Impact of Implementation of a Dengue Outbreak Preparedness and Contingency Plan in a Tertiary Hospital	67
Lethal Complication of a Common Disease-Varicella Pneumonitis	68

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title	Page
Prevalence of Obesity with the Basic Health Consequences among the Preclinical Medical Students in Universiti Malaysia Sabah	69
A Rare Case of Riamet Induced Prolonged Corrected Qt Interval	70
Heterotopic Ossification in Stroke is Not that Rare: Lesson from Rehabilitation Standpoint	71
A Review on Climate Change and Malaysia's Actions	72
The Efficacy of Simulation Training in Airway Management during Resuscitation at Red Zone among Final Year Nursing Students Kota Kinabalu Training Institute	73
Prevention of Cervical Cancer by Human papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination and Early Detection through Effective Screening: A Review	74
A Rare Presentation of Gliosarcoma in a Young Adult	75
Smoking Among Male Villagers in Kampung Barambangon, Kudat, Sabah	76
Obesity and Weight Reduction: A Review on the Latest Weight Reduction Strategies	77
Milestone of Polio Environmental Surveillance in Malaysia Conjoining With the Polio Global Eradication Initiative	78
Innovative Models of HCV Testing Across Four Countries: Malaysia, Georgia, India and Myanmar – The HEAD-Start Project	79
Field Demonstration of the Usefulness of a Model of 3D Printed Mosquito Light Trap Made in Sabah	80
Dermatoglyphic Pattern among Kadazandusun and Bajau Ethnic Groups in Sabah	81
Ethnomedicine in Sabah: Past Trends and Future Perspectives	82
Ten-year Analysis of Filariasis in East-Coast Malaysia	83
Real Time Telecardiology System	84
Is It Safe to Prescribe Triple Drugs Therapy for Lymphatic Filariasis Infection in Epidermolysis Bullosa Patient? A Case Report	85
Are Bovine and Porcine Adenoviruses Distinctive From Other Adenovirus Strains?	86
Risk Perceptions and Acceptance towards the Uptake of Pertussis Vaccine amongst the Healthcare Workers in Sabah and Sarawak	87
Successful Implantation Via in Vitro Fertilization (IVF) in Hospital Wanita Kanak-Kanak Sabah: Single Centre Experience	88
Retrospective Descriptive Study of Patients with Dermatological Problems, at UMS Polyclinic, Kingfisher, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah	89
Relationship between the Levels of Nicotine Addiction with Psychosocial Factors among Registered Smokers at the Government Hospital Quit Smoking Clinic Services around Klang Valley	90
Echovirus Serotypes Circulating in Malaysia from 2014 to 2019	91
A Short Term Nutrition Education Programme Improved Nutrition Knowledge and Increased Preference for Fruits, Vegetables and Higher Intensity Physical Activity among Kindergarteners	92
Prevalence of Obesity, Hypertension, and Hyperglycemia among the Rural Community of Inanam Sub-district in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia: A Health Screening Program Findings	93
Central Scotoma at Near Top of Mount Everest – A Case Report of Bilateral High Altitude Retinopathy	94
A Malignant Looking Unilateral Enlarged Tonsil with Fungating Surface is Not Always Malignant: A Case Report	95
A Rare Case of TB Elbow Synovitis in a Patient with Rheumatoid Arthritis: A Case Report	96
Transudative Pleural Effusion in a Patient with Pleural Tuberculosis	97
Risk Factors, Prevalence, and Co-Morbidities of Hypertension in Adult Villagers in Kampung Tajau Laut, Kudat, Sabah, Malaysia	98
Prevalence and Sociodemographic Characteristics of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus among Pregnant Women in Tuaran District, Sabah: A Cross Sectional Study	99
Melioidosis Transfusion Transmitted Infection in Beta Thalassemia Patient's	100

Does Maternal Health Literacy Affect Childhood Vaccination? A Study Among Mothers in Asajaya Sarawak

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Childhood vaccination is proven as the most effective intervention to prevent and reduce children mortality caused by Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD). It is a major public health concern globally as there are still existences of vaccine incompleteness. Despite good immunization coverage, outbreaks of VPD are still reported from time to time with serious implications. The aim of this study is to assess the association between maternal health literacy with completion of childhood vaccination. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study design was conducted among mothers with children aged 5 years and below using a face to face interview questionnaire. Data entered and analyzed using SPSS version 22. Chi square was used to look for association between two categorical data. **Results:** Majority of respondents were mother's aged 30's, Malays (76.1 %), completed secondary education (74.8 %) unemployed (63.8 %). Study showed (98.99%) children completed vaccination however (1.01 %) had incomplete vaccination. There was significant findings on association between maternal education and partner's education, main language, employment status and household income with health literacy. The mean health literacy score among the incomplete vaccination group was slightly lower (36.9) compared to the completed vaccination group (39.4). The problematic health literacy was seen at (17.4 %) and the sufficient health literacy was (82.6%). **Conclusion:** The finding indicated that there is an association between maternal education, partner's level of education with health literacy. The health literacy score among those who completed vaccination was slightly higher. Initiatives focusing on maternal health literacy could further improve vaccination completion among children.

Keywords: Health literacy, Childhood vaccination, Sarawak, Vaccine preventable disease, Cross-sectional