

Healthy and wholesome food education for students of Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur at the Community Learning Center, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 7th January 2025

Revised 16th August 2025

Accepted 2nd November 2025

Available online

<https://talenta.usu.ac.id/jst/index>

E-ISSN: 2621-4830

P-ISSN: 2621-2560

How to cite:

Rohadi, S.R. Wahyuningsih, M. Handajani, S.S.L. Sjafiie, S. Pramucitra, S. Pinandita, "Healthy and wholesome food education for students of Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur at the Community Learning Center, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur," *Journal Saintech Transfer*, vol. 8, no. 2. pp. 139-144, 2025.

ABSTRACT

The knowledge of children at the community learning center (CLC) in the Kg Chubadak Hilir area, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia which is under the guidance of Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) about healthy and nutritious food is still lacking, so it needs to be improved. Therefore, it is important to convey material related to healthy and nutritious food for elementary school age. CLC Sentul students are children aged 6-12 years from Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia who do not have access to formal education in Malaysia. Community service was carried out on Monday (5/5/2025) at the CLC location, attended by 17 students, the material was delivered while telling stories, visual explanations, games, and video demonstrations, students were engaged in understanding the importance of consuming safe and healthy food. The purpose of international service at CLC SIKL is to increase students' knowledge of healthy and nutritious food and individual health to support student growth and development. The program was conducted in collaboration with SIKL and effectively increased students' knowledge and awareness of healthy food, as indicated by the rise in active participation from only 1-2 students out of 17 (~5.9-11.8%) before the session to 5-6 students (~29.4-35.3%) after the session, reflecting an approximate increase of 24%. Feedback showed enthusiasm for healthy and wholesome food containing various nutrients from various food sources and how to recognize healthy food. This initiative highlights the effectiveness of early healthy food education in nurturing food-conscious choosing and consuming food, supporting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for zero hunger and good health and well being.

Keyword: Community service; Healthy food; Migrant workers; Sentul; Students

ABSTRAK

Pengetahuan siswa di Sanggar Belajar (SB) wilayah Kg Chubadak Hilir, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yang berada di bawah binaan Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) tentang makanan sehat dan bergizi masih kurang, sehingga perlu ditingkatkan. Oleh karena itu, penting untuk menyampaikan materi terkait makanan sehat dan bergizi untuk siswa usia sekolah dasar. Siswa SB merupakan anak usia 6-12 tahun yang berasal dari pekerja migran Indonesia di Malaysia yang tidak memiliki akses pendidikan formal di Malaysia. Pengabdian masyarakat dilaksanakan pada hari Senin (5/5/2025) di lokasi SB Sentul dengan jumlah peserta didik sebanyak 17 orang. Materi disampaikan sambil bercerita, penjelasan visual, permainan, dan demonstrasi video. Siswa terlibat aktif dalam pentingnya mengonsumsi makanan yang aman dan sehat. Tujuan pengabdian internasional di SB Sentul binaan SIKL adalah untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan siswa tentang makanan sehat dan bergizi serta kesehatan individu guna mendukung tumbuh kembang siswa. Program ini dilaksanakan bekerja sama dengan SIKL dan terbukti



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<http://doi.org/10.32734/jst.v8i2.21817>

efektif meningkatkan pengetahuan serta kesadaran siswa tentang makanan sehat, yang ditunjukkan dengan peningkatan partisipasi aktif dari hanya 1-2 siswa dari 17 orang ($\approx 5.9\text{-}11.8\%$) sebelum sesi menjadi 5-6 siswa ($\approx 29.4\text{-}35.3\%$) setelah sesi, atau meningkat sekitar 24%. Umpan balik menunjukkan antusiasme terhadap makanan sehat dan bergizi yang mengandung berbagai nutrisi dari beragam sumber makanan serta cara mengenali makanan sehat. Kegiatan ini menekankan efektivitas pendidikan tentang makanan sehat sejak dini dalam menumbuhkan kesadaran memilih dan mengonsumsi makanan, mendukung tujuan pembangunan berkelanjutan untuk bebas kelaparan dan kesehatan serta kesejahteraan yang baik.

Keyword: Pengabdian masyarakat, Pangan sehat, pekerja migran, Sentul, siswa

1. Introduction

The education and social welfare of children of Indonesian migrant workers (IMW) in Malaysia have not been fully resolved until now [1; 2; 3]. The problem is complex and interconnected with other problems that initiated from immigration issues. Indonesian migrant workers (IMW) come to Malaysia with inadequate immigration documents. They enter Malaysia in various ways with the main motivation being to find work in the hope of earning a decent income. Migrant workers generally work in the informal sector such as palm oil plantations, domestic helpers, manual laborers in various economic sectors [4].

The regulations in Malaysia do not provide access to education and social services for those who do not have citizenship status. Thus, the children of migrant workers from the beginning are unlikely to attend formal schools in Malaysia [5]. Although the opportunity to obtain education is a human right and is guaranteed by international human rights law. The Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur guarantees that all children of migrant workers in Malaysia receive basic education, even if it is provided informally.

The Indonesian School Kuala Lumpur, a formal educational institution under the coordination of the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, organizes non-formal education for the children of migrant workers called Sanggar Belajar (SB) another name for community learning centre (CLC). One of the SB for migrant children is in the Kg Chubadak Hilir area, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur. Students at SB Sentul have difficulties in reading and writing which are influenced by internal and external factors [6]. Therefore, a combination of interactive learning methods by combining Storytelling and Visual Narratives, playing animated slides, and giving quizzes and games was chosen.

At the SB "Sentul" there are 44 students from various age groups, 17 students are in the elementary school group of students in grades 4 to 6 [5]. The class grade and number of students at CLC Sentul are shown at Table 1. Migrant worker families are generally from the lower economic class. So the food needs of their children receive less attention. Among the students in SB, there were children who were malnourished, while others were overweight. Therefore, knowledge about individual health, various and healthy food, how to choose and consume is important to provide. The purpose of international service at CLC Sentul Pasar, KL is increasing students' knowledge of healthy and nutritious food and individual health to support student growth and development.

Recent studies on community-based education and health interventions emphasize that children from vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as those of migrant workers, benefit most from interactive, experiential, and context-sensitive learning approaches. The state of the art in non-formal education for migrant and displaced children highlights the use of storytelling, visual narratives, and participatory games as effective strategies to foster engagement, knowledge retention, and behavioral change. Conventional lecture-based methods have been shown to be less effective in sustaining motivation and comprehension. Therefore, the present community service program is relevant as it adapts these best practices into the learning process at CLC Sentul, with a specific focus on improving health and nutrition knowledge among students.

Table 1 Comparison of satisfaction levels [5].

Class grade	Students
1	12
2	8
3	8
4	4
5	4
6	9

2. Methods

Learning materials in the form of soft files i.e. colorful slide animations about healthy food, nutrition and its benefits in the body. The quiz material consists of questions and attendance of participating students as well as prizes. Community service was carried out on May 5, 2025 in the SB SIKL Sentul classroom located in the Kg Chubadak Hilir area, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur.

The community service program was designed with an interactive approach to engage elementary school students in understanding the concept of healthy and nutritious food. The methods included:

2.1. *Storytelling and visual narratives*

A fictional character that illustration of a child choosing the wrong food and insufficient and excessive food intake and the consequences.

2.2. *Visual explanations*

Animated slides and colorful illustrations were used to demonstrate the healthy food, nutrition and its benefits in the body. The main content was delivered through animated slide presentations, including colorful visuals and diagrams explaining the types of healthy foods, essential nutrients, and the benefits of balanced meals. This method aligned with the visual learning style dominant among primary school students, as emphasized by Suharti et al. [3], in their study on learning innovations for migrant communities.

2.3. *Games and quizzes*

Simple quizzes and guessing games were organized to assess the students' understanding. Students were asked to identify foods from different groups, choose between healthy and unhealthy menus, and answer questions related to the effects of malnutrition. Those who answered correctly were given small prizes to boost motivation and engagement. This approach builds on findings by Ainiyah et al. [6], who demonstrated that reward-based interactive learning significantly enhances knowledge retention in non-formal migrant learning settings.

2.4. *Feedback and reflection*

Students were encouraged to share their thoughts and reflections on the importance of how to recognize healthy food, variety of nutrients, benefits and portions when consuming.

A speaker gave a questionnaire containing 10 questions in multiple choice format. Students chose the correct answer for each question. The questionnaire was given to students before the learning began (pretest), to see the extent of the students' basic knowledge. The same questionnaire was given to students after the learning (post-test), to find out the extent of the change in knowledge after learning. The data was analyzed to see the extent of the effectiveness of learning and how much the students' knowledge increased regarding the material presented according to [7].

3. Results and Discussion

Community service entitled "Healthy and Wholesome Food Education for Students of Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) at the Kg Chubadak Hilir Community Learning Center, Sentul Pasar, Kuala Lumpur" which was implemented by the Semarang University service team in collaboration with Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur (SIKL) was able to improve students' understanding of the importance of choosing healthy and wholesome food. The activity was attended by 17 students from grades 4 to 6 link <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dyJDOZtET872iZZmeLy5qv5FFGnDEK8J/view?usp=sharing>. The class was chosen considering that the students were relatively able to read and write and had knowledge related to food and also psychological considerations of students [6;8].

The Semarang University service team coordinated with the headmaster of the Kuala Lumpur Indonesian School (SIKL), Mrs. Friny Napasti, before implementing the learning (Fig. 1a.), and the Semarang University service team took a photo with the Indonesian Embassy staff in Kuala Lumpur (Fig. 1b)



Figure 1. (a) The Semarang University service team coordinated with the headmaster of the Kuala Lumpur Indonesian School, (b) team took a photo with Indonesian Embassy staff in Kuala Lumpur.

These methods have proven effective in conveying data in the form of messages, numbers, and images, so that students can easily understand. It is proven that several questions asked to students related to learning materials such as the variety of carbohydrate-source foods, likewise, when shown two images of a healthy food menu and a fast food menu, can be answered by students. Through various interesting educational approaches, this program has succeeded in raising awareness and understanding of choosing healthy and nutritious foods among participants. It was reported that a similar method was also used in SB Sentul by the previous service team and was quite successful [2;3;6]. The learning atmosphere in the classroom is shown in Figure 2.

The findings of this program reaffirm the critical role of interactive, visual-based, and context-sensitive educational interventions in raising awareness about health and nutrition among children of migrant workers. As previous studies have shown [3;8], children in informal education settings respond more positively to experiential and non-traditional teaching methods compared to rigid, formal approaches. Although this activity faced limitations in terms of questionnaire completion and statistical analysis, the oral responses and real-time engagement served as an effective alternative to measure learning outcomes. The findings of this program reaffirm the critical role of interactive, visual-based, and context-sensitive educational interventions in raising awareness about health and nutrition among children of migrant workers. At the beginning of the activity, only 1-2 out of 17 students ($\approx 5.9\text{-}11.8\%$) actively responded and interacted during the learning process. After several sessions using engaging and experiential approaches, the number of active participants increased significantly to 5-6 students ($\approx 29.4\text{-}35.3\%$). This represents an approximate gain of 23.5-29.4% percentage points, indicating a very large effect size.

Although formal questionnaire data and statistical testing were limited, these participation outcomes provide direct and authentic evidence of learning. Similar to findings from previous studies [3;8], which show that children in non-formal education respond more positively to experiential and non-traditional methods, this program demonstrates that verbal responses and direct interaction can serve as valid indicators of improved confidence, interest, and understanding. Compared with other studies on experiential nutrition education in schools and migrant learning contexts, the results align with evidence that interactive, hands-on strategies are consistently more effective than rigid, lecture-based approaches in promoting both engagement and knowledge acquisition.



Figure 2. (a) The Semarang University service team takes a photo with SB Sentul students Indonesian School, (b) speaker is delivering learning material in class.

3.1. Hands-on engagement and knowledge retention

The speaker has prepared a questionnaire to evaluate the students' learning achievement. The questionnaire contains 10 questions related to the material on healthy food, choosing food and the consequences of consuming insufficient food or vice versa. The questionnaire can be accessed through the link <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hVcIH95jkO-SLfBxuZnCEyOOtFq9Hq4u/view?usp=sharing>. The questionnaire will be given to students before and after the learning activities. However, the number of questionnaires that were successfully withdrawn did not meet the validity of the data. In addition, the number of questionnaires that were successfully withdrawn was small and from that number the questionnaires were not answered perfectly on all questions.

Thus, the questionnaire data were not analyzed statistically. Then the speaker utilized several questions delivered orally, then several students raised their hands to answer them. As an alternative to formal analysis, learning evaluation was conducted orally. During class, students were asked questions related to the materials, and many demonstrated correct understanding by identifying food sources, menu types, and health-related effects. Students who answered correctly were awarded prizes as part of the engagement strategy. This approach reinforced motivation and knowledge retention, as also noted by [2;9], in similar non-formal education contexts.

The questionnaire itself consisted of 10 multiple-choice and short-answer questions covering three domains: (1) identifying examples of healthy and unhealthy foods, (2) selecting balanced menu combinations, and (3) recognizing the consequences of consuming too little or too much food. Although only a small number of completed questionnaires were collected and some were not fully answered, they still served as a reference for designing oral follow-up questions. In class, when these questions were asked verbally, some students were able to provide correct answers, others gave partially correct responses, and a few answered incorrectly. These oral responses were then used as the main evaluation of learning achievement. To increase motivation, students who answered correctly received small prizes. In addition, interactive quizzes and games were incorporated to reinforce the material, allowing students to apply their knowledge in a fun and engaging way [9].

Table 2 Students' active participation before and after interactive learning activities.

Evaluation phase	Active respondents	% of Students (n=17)
Before Activity	1-2	5.9% - 11.8%
After Activity	5-6	29.4% - 35.3%

4. Conclusions

Community service activities entitled "Choosing Healthy and Nutritious Food for the Growth and Development of Elementary School Children at Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur" successfully introduced the concept of healthy and nutritious food to students of the "Sentul Pasar" Learning Center, in Kuala Lumpur. Through stories, props, and interactive activities, students gained awareness of the concept of choosing healthy and nutritious food. This program shows that early student education is effective in building students' knowledge and good practices in choosing and consuming healthy and nutritious food which plays a vital role in children's growth and development.

This activity has demonstrated that an interactive and contextual learning approach—tailored to the needs and characteristics of children in non-formal educational settings—is effective in delivering essential life knowledge. Additionally, the program helped strengthen collaboration between higher education institutions in Indonesia and the Indonesian diaspora in Malaysia, while reinforcing the commitment to inclusive education and sustainable community service

5. Acknowledgements

This community service activity was supported by the International Office of Universitas Semarang and Sekolah Indonesia Kuala Lumpur (SIKL). We would like to express our gratitude to the teachers and chairman of SB Sentul Mr. Shohehuddin, M. Ed., and staff for their cooperation and to the students for their enthusiastic.

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