

ALCOHOL USE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL CORRELATES AMONG ABORIGINE IN CENTRAL MALAYSIA

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This study surveyed Malaysian aborigine people to determine the prevalence of alcohol abuse dependence, psychiatric morbidity and psychosocial correlates among Malaysians aborigines. Studies among minority group in developed nations repeatedly showed severe drinking problems (Lomnitz, 1976; Gordon, 1978; Karno *et al*, 1987; Yamamoto *et al*, 1993). Household survey with informed consent taken. Selected household were chosen and orang asli (aborigines) age 18 above were interviewed in Kuala Betis areas. Alcohol screening used AUDIT questionnaires and Psychiatric morbidity measured by MINI. Odds ratio was used as measures of the association for the variables. The data analysis was done using SPSS version. 276 orang asli were interviewed during the study. Majority are within age group of 18-29 years of age (37%) with the mean age 36.51 years old. The M: F (50.7% and 49.3%). Senoi ethnic group is the majority (97.8%). 28% has no formal education and 58% received primary school education. Majority are married (82.2%). Half of them are employed and more than half received less than RM 500 monthly (USD 150). Types of alcohol use mainly beer and whisky. 90.24% have AUDIT score less than 7. Multivariate analysis showed only those employed are significantly associated with alcohol problems, Odds ratio= 0.089, 95% CI (0.033-0.246), $P < 0.001$. Prevalence of alcohol use among orang asli is comparable with general population. Employed people may have more money to buy alcoholic beverages. Orang asli probably need more attention on awareness program and further interventions.