

## Changes in Personal Hygiene Practices among Orang Asli Temuan in Hulu Kuang Orang Asli Village, Selangor

Muhammad Aqil Sharullizam<sup>1</sup>, Muammar Ghaddafi Hanafiah<sup>2</sup>,  
Mohd Yuszaidy Mohd Yusoff<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i4/25143> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i4/25143

Published Date: 07 April 2025

### Abstract

Cleanliness is an essential element of human life and must be given due attention. It is not only practiced to prevent diseases but also serves as a symbol of progress for a society and a nation. However, the global perception of the Orang Asli concerning cleanliness remains unchanged where most Orang Asli are perceived as less aware or less concerned about its importance. This study aims to examine the forms of changes in personal hygiene practices and the factors driving these changes. This qualitative study adopts an ethnographic approach. The research instrument involves focused interviews with two village residents. The interview results were analysing using thematic analysis and categorized into a several parts of body. Participant observation was also employed to obtain detailed and in-depth information by engaging with the community being studied. The research data is further supported by secondary sources through library research. The data analysis using a Wilbert E. Moore's (1965) theory of social change. The findings reveal that the form of changes is on the technology and believe for their personal hygiene practices. This study contributes to enhancing understanding of the changes in hygiene practices, particularly among the Temuan indigenous community in Hulu Kuang. Therefore, further research on the level of acceptance of modern hygiene practices among the Orang Asli should be expanded to other sub-ethnic groups.

**Keywords:** Practices, Temuan Tribe, Hygiene, Body, Change

### Introduction

Cleanliness is a fundamental principle that must be instilled in the lives of every community. Maintaining cleanliness is a key factor in preventing dangerous diseases that can effect health and even lead to death. In general, cleanliness is a method or behaviour that must be practiced to maintain personal health. According to Water Aid (2012) in Arwansyah Kirin et al. (2023), cleanliness is defined as conditions and practices that help maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) (2006) states that personal hygiene encompasses all body parts, such as the face, hair, body, feet, and hands. Nur Ashikin Azizi et al. (2021) explain that the basics of hygiene include washing hands with soap and water, avoiding touching the eyes, nose, and mouth, always covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and cleaning frequently used surfaces or equipment. These body parts are often exposed to various risks when neglected. Changes in personal hygiene practices can further facilitate the planning of effective strategies.

The aspect of cleanliness is very important to emphasize because it serves as one of the catalysts for the progress of a nation. Mohd Muhiden Abd. Rahman (1997) believes that cleanliness should not only be practiced to prevent diseases but also serves as a symbol of progress for a society and a nation. In the context of the Orang Asli, practicing inappropriate hygiene will further increase the incidence of infectious diseases. This is because the Orang Asli community resides in rural areas that are more exposed to diseases such as dengue, skin diseases, infections, and others (Abdul Ghafar et al., 2018). The Orang Asli Health Survey (OAHS) data from July to September 2022 involving 15,950 respondents, including the Senoi, Proto-Malay, and Negrito ethnic groups found that the majority of Orang Asli were unaware that they were suffering from non-communicable diseases (Farah Marshita Abdul Patah, 2024). If this aspect of hygiene is not emphasized, then health issues among the Orang Asli will never be resolved.

The important of this study can be seen from academic, social, and governmental aspects. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the literature on cultural changes among the Orang Asli community, particularly concerning hygiene practices. The use of social change theory will help explain how changes occur within traditional communities. This also contributes to the fields of anthropology, sociology, and public health. From a social perspective, this study can raise awareness among the Orang Asli community about the importance of hygiene practices and how to improve their quality of life. The traditional practices obtained can be documented for future generations' reference so that they are not lost. In addition, the findings of this study can be used by government agencies and non governmental organizations (NGOs) in planning more effective strategies to improve the cleanliness level of this community in line with the changes occurring.

The objective of this study is to identify the forms of changes in hygiene practices among the Temuan indigenous community in Hulu Kuang, focusing on body parts (including the hands, and genitals), face, hair, teeth, ears, and feet. This aspect is crucial to observe so that the Orang Asli can also adopt proper hygiene practices. The focus on the form of cleanliness is emphasized to explain how a practice is carried out and how it changes according to the suitability of the times. The study's analysis will explain the the forms of changes in hygiene practices. The findings of this research can help reduce negative perceptions toward this community, particularly in the aspect of full-body hygiene and subsequently bring positive impacts to their well being.

#### *Orang Asli Temuan In Malaysia*

The term "Orang Asli" was officially adopted in 1960 to replace the term "sakai," which was previously given by colonial rulers to this group (Muhamad Sayuti Hassan @ Yahya & Rohaida Nordin, 2018). They are among the earliest groups to explore the Malay Peninsula (Mohd

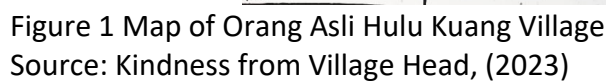
Mizan Mohammad Aslam & Shuhairimi Abdullah, 2004). The Orang Asli community comprises 18 ethnic sub-groups categorized into three main groups based on their ethnography which is Senoi, Negrito, and Proto-Malay. The population of the Orang Asli community has shown significant growth. According to Colin (2000), the Orang Asli were a minority group with a population of 106,131 in 1997 accounting for 0.5% of Malaysia's total population. The Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA) reported that this number continued to increase, reaching 215,215 by the end of December 2023. Based on the census data released by JAKOA on 31 December 2023, the Temuan tribe is the fourth largest among the 18 Orang Asli sub-groups in Malaysia with a population of 34,661.

The Temuan tribe falls under the Proto-Malay category and is among the earliest groups to inhabit the Nusantara region before the arrival of the Malays. The term "Temuan" is believed to derive from the word "temu," referring to the meeting point of all paths and mountains in the forest (Faridah Nazir, 2023). According to Rohani Mohd Yusof and Noor Hasnoor Mohamad Nor (2014), before the arrival of the Malays classified as Deutero-Malays, the Proto-Malays had already settled in this country after the arrival of the Austroasiatic groups (Senoi and Negrito). In terms of civilization, they were more advanced than the Negrito community. They lived by farming but still practiced a nomadic or migratory lifestyle. The Temuan tribe established settlements in several states including Selangor, Melaka, Pahang, Johor, and Negeri Sembilan.

#### *Orang Asli Temuan In Hulu Kuang, Selangor*

Selangor is the third state with the highest distribution of Orang Asli population in Malaysia, after Perak and Pahang. According to Mohamad Naufal Mohamad Idris (2021), the Chairman of the Selangor State Standing Committee for Tourism, Environment, Green Technology, and Orang Asli Affairs stated that there are 75 Orang Asli villages in Selangor. To safeguard the rights of the Orang Asli community, the state government has gazetted 29 villages located in districts such as Kuala Langat, Sepang, Hulu Langat, Hulu Selangor, Gombak, and Klang (Portal Rasmi Dewan Negeri Selangor, 2021). This gazettelement is an effort to ensure that Orang Asli settlements are secure and not affected by nearby development.

Regarding the Temuan tribe, 15,667 residents have been recorded across various districts in Selangor (JAKOA, 2023). The Temuan tribe is the largest Orang Asli sub-group in Selangor compared to the Mahmeri and Semai tribes. One of their settlements is located in the Gombak area, specifically in Kuang. They are among the earliest communities to explore and build settlements in Kuang. The selection of the Temuan community in Kampung Orang Asli Hulu Kuang was made to document the culture that is still practiced, serving as guidance for future generations. The Temuan community in Hulu Kuang has maintained good relations with the local community and the Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA). According to the village head, the Temuan community began establishing the settlement in 1954. Tok Batin Hitam and his son, known as "Cat" has explored the Kuang area to build a settlement.



Several public facilities have been built in the village for community use, including a community hall, football field, surau, and a mini library known as the Reading Promotion Center. Despite being in a natural environment, the Temuan community here also engages in trade activities. Several small shops can be seen when entering the Orang Asli settlement.

This indirectly demonstrates that they have a high level of resilience and are capable of sustaining their livelihood.

### **Problem Statement**

The Temuan Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang has long practiced a traditional way of life deeply rooted in their ancestral beliefs, encompassing various aspects of daily living, including personal hygiene and healthcare. Their hygiene practices have been heavily influenced by natural resources used to maintain bodily cleanliness. However, these practices have undergone changes due to several factors, including exposure to the outside world, technological advancements, and broader social interactions.

These changes raise key questions regarding the nature of transformation in the hygiene practices of the Temuan Orang Asli. Do these changes merely involve the adoption of modern materials and technology, or do they also reflect a shift in their beliefs and perceptions of cleanliness. Hence, this study aims to examine the nature of changes in hygiene practices among the Temuan Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang using Wilbert E. Moore's (1965) Theory of Cultural Change.

Through this study, a deeper understanding can be gained of how the Temuan community adapts to changes in their hygiene practices. The findings of this research can also have implications for more effective policy or program planning to enhance hygiene awareness among the Orang Asli community without disregarding their cultural sensitivities.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, the literature review is divided into two themes encompassing the Temuan tribe and hygiene. This approach is taken to help the writer identify relevant literature suitable for this study.

#### *Temuan Tribe Literature Review*

Mohd Taufiq Aqmal (2009) wrote about the music of the Temuan Orang Asli by highlighting the need to develop a knowledge-based prototype to ensure that Temuan music is preserved and passed down to future generations. His findings revealed that a portal-shaped prototype was successfully developed as a platform to document the traditional music of the Temuan Orang Asli. H. C. Ong et al. (2011a) successfully documented 56 species of plants used for medicinal purposes by the Temuan community in Kampung Jeram, Kedah. The study found that the most frequently used parts of the plants were roots (51.8%), stems (17.9%), leaves (16.1%), and the entire plant (5.4%).

Additionally, H. C. Ong et al. (2011b) once again conducted research focusing on the forms of plants used by the Temuan community in their traditional medicine. The study found that 85 plant species were used for medicinal purposes. The researchers also highlighted that the Temuan community possesses extensive traditional knowledge of plants, which is crucial to be inherited by future generations. Muhammad Haziq Mohd Rohir and Mohd Yuszaidy Mohd Yusoff (2020) studied the "Jerat Sembat" (a traditional snare) used by the Temuan Orang Asli community in Kampung Gapam, Melaka. The findings indicated that Jerat Sembat holds significant cultural value and must be preserved. This study also revealed that the tradition and indigenous knowledge of the Orang Asli community could serve as a reference



for society. Jamalunlaili Abdullah et al. (2015) Analyse the current state of the Temuan Orang Asli in Bukit Lanjan, Selangor, after undergoing a relocation process. The findings showed that the Temuan Orang Asli could adapt to new changes and became more confident in interacting with the local community.

### *Hygeine Literature Review*

Regarding hygiene-themed studies, Liyanatul Najwa Zakaria and Halimatus Sakdiah Minhat (2020) discussed hygiene practices among Orang Asli caregivers of three-year-old children in Malaysia. The study found that the Orang Asli caregivers practiced good hygiene. Nur Nabila Khalid, Muhamad Sayuti Hassan, and Mohd Syariefudin Abdullah (2022) examined the legal framework related to the health rights of the Orang Asli in Malaysia, focusing on the Federal Constitution. The study highlighted several issues including health problems and knowledge of health rights. The findings indicated various challenges in maintaining the health of the Orang Asli community such as limited health care knowledge, well-being, and poverty issues.

At the international level, Julian Trujillo et al. (2023) investigated the hygiene practices of the indigenous community in Colombia. The study aimed to understand the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the indigenous population regarding trachoma, an infectious disease that affects the eyes. Among the 357 household heads involved, 45.1% linked trachoma to poor hygiene. A total of 94.7% believed that maintaining hygiene, such as daily bathing and using commercial soap, could prevent trachoma. Additionally, 93% reported cleaning their children's faces and eyes more frequently when they experienced conjunctivitis. However, 66.1% cleaned their eyes only with clothes or towels, and 52.7% shared towels among family members.

Hartini Yusof and Mohamed Kamel Abd. Ghani (2009) discussed Entamoeba histolytica infection among Orang Asli children in Pos Lenjang, Pahang. This disease is a fecal-borne infection resulting from poor hygiene practices. The water source in the village was unfiltered, and there were no proper toilets. The study found that the intestinal protozoa infection rate among Orang Asli children in Pahang was 22.5%, which is considered high. Another study by Vivien W.C. Yew, Saiful Farisin Md Ramlan, and Mohd Rusydi Ahmad (2019) examined the quality of life among the Orang Asli in Pahang. The study aimed to develop specific criteria to assess the quality of life of the Orang Asli community. Data collection involved qualitative methods through interviews with 16 informants. The study found that four aspects shaped the quality of life criteria for the Orang Asli community in Pahang: infrastructure, socioeconomics, education, and health.

Wan Afizi Wan Hanafi et al. (2015) studied women's health issues, particularly among the Orang Asli community in Cameron Highlands. The research examined health issues at different levels, such as knowledge, understanding, and health practices. The findings showed that the beliefs of the Orang Asli community in Cameron Highlands had shifted from traditional medicine to modern medical systems. They had also changed their lifestyle to prioritize personal health. Based on previous studies, there is a gap where the nature of changes in hygiene practices among the Temuan community has not been thoroughly discussed. Conducting research on hygiene is crucial to identify areas that need improvement.

Moreover, it can serve as a guide to enhance the health and hygiene standards of the Orang Asli community through contemporary programs and initiatives.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative approach using ethnography to examine personal hygiene practices among the Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang. According to Nur Faizah Md Adam and Mohd Sharifudin Yusop (2020), ethnography is described as an exploration of a culture or way of life within a community that explains a particular culture or any of its aspects. The cultural aspect emphasized in this study is the personal hygiene culture of the Temuan Orang Asli community. The study employs participant observation in the Orang Asli village of Hulu Kuang, Selangor, for one week. As stated by Rozmi Ismail (2023), this method is carried out to obtain detailed and in-depth information by engaging directly with the community being studied. This approach indirectly helps the researcher observe the practices and living conditions of the Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang.

The study also uses focused interview techniques by selecting two authoritative residents from the Orang Asli village which is the village head and a resident of Hulu Kuang Orang Asli Village. The selection of these two informants is based on their communication skills and knowledge of the community. According to Liamputton (2009), the purpose of selecting a focused group is to understand the meaning and perception of specific issues from the perspective and interpretation of selected individuals. Some of the questions developed pertain to hygiene practices followed in the past and present. The interviews were conducted separately to avoid mutual influence on the information provided by the two informants.

The data collection tools used include audio recordings, a digital camera, and a notebook to document additional information. The data obtained will be analysed using thematic analysis to categorize the information according to the study's relevance. The findings will then be interpreted through Wilbert E. Moore's (1965) theory of social change.

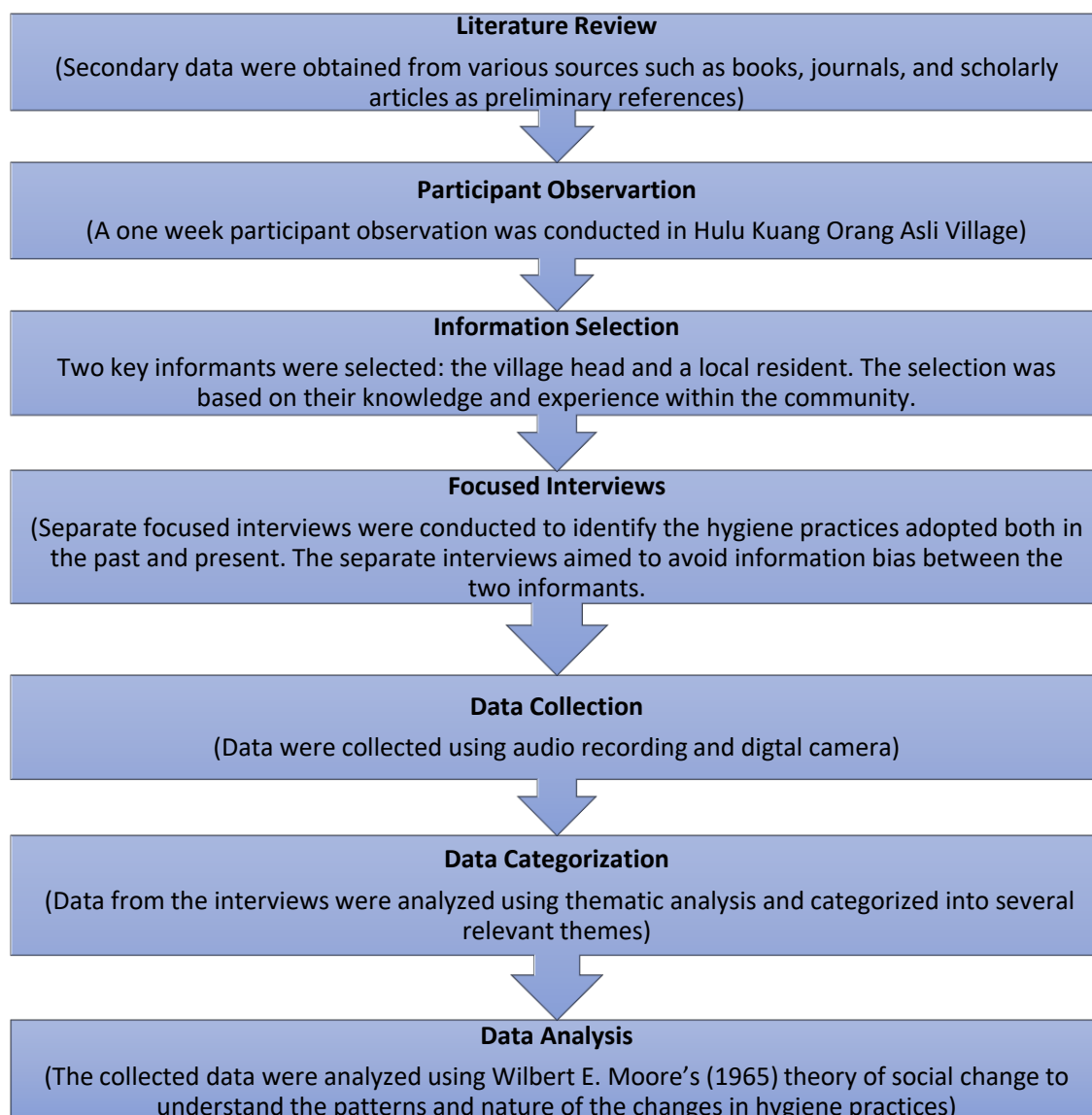


Figure 3 Methodology chart

*Theory of Social Change*

Change refers to the transition from traditional activities or behaviours to modern ones within a society. This transformation elevates the community to a different level of life. Wan Hashim (1986) stated that social change is classified as the adjustments that occur in patterns of interaction among individuals as social units within a society. Such phenomena are not surprising, as differences exist between planned and unplanned levels of change (Hazil Abdul Hamid, 1990). Mohd Salleh (2007) added that one characteristic of social change is its controversial nature. These scholarly views share a common understanding that social change can occur either intentionally or unintentionally.

One of the prominent scholars who discussed social change is Wilbert E. Moore (1965). Therefore, this study employs Moore's perspective to explain the social changes occurring within the Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang. This theory is deemed suitable as it explains how a culture can change when it interacts with another culture. In the context of this study, the changes in hygiene practices among the Temuan Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang can be understood as part of the social change taking place.



According to Moore (1965), social change is the transformation of social patterns, institutions, or relationships that influence how society functions. In his book *Social Change* (1965), Moore explained that changes occur due to internal and external factors. The interactions among communities further facilitate this cultural change. Moore emphasized that these interactions occur through imperialism, war, religious propagation, migration, trade, tourism, diplomatic relations, and the transfer of labor. One of the key principles used to explain change is the concept of cultural contact. Under this principle, Moore described several forms of change that occur in society. Figure 2 will briefly illustrate the forms that will be used to analyze the data collected.

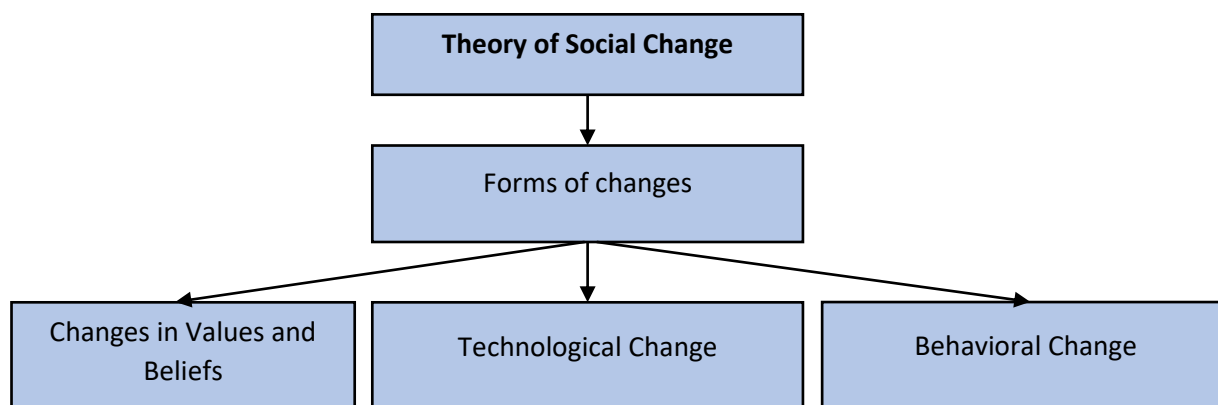


Figure 4 Theoretical Framework

Source: Adapted from Wilbert E. Moore (1965)

### Findings and Discussion

Based on the conducted interviews, the findings were categorized into several parts of body. This categorization was carried out using thematic analysis to ensure alignment with the study's discussion. This analysis is essential in providing a general interpretation of the hygiene practices of the Orang Asli community. Fundamentally, physical cleanliness involves an individual's body. It is a crucial element in maintaining personal health. Since this study focuses on changes in hygiene practices, these aspects were divided into several body structures, starting from the upper, middle, and lower parts of the body.

#### Body Hygiene

The body is the most critical area that reflects a person's external condition. This includes hands, nails, and private parts. In the past, the Orang Asli Temuan community relied on water from nearby rivers for personal hygiene. Most cleaning activities were conducted at the nearby river. During the field study, the river water in this village appeared clean and safe for daily use.

The next body part is nails, which reflect a transition from traditional to modern methods. According to the village head, past villagers used sharp tools like knives to trim their nails. This method was not only dangerous but also made the cleaning process more challenging. This practice changed when they started using safer nail clippers. According to the village head, he was taught to maintain good hygiene, such as bathing, handwashing, and nail trimming. To enhance body hygiene further, several leaves from the surrounding area were used as a substitute for soap. These leaves were crushed until they produced foam resembling soap.

Based on this data, a shift in body hygiene practices has taken place. Technological advancements have altered the community's traditional norms of using river water for personal hygiene. They previously had to go to the river to obtain water for daily use. Hartini and Mohamed Kamel (2009) explained that the Orang Asli used river water for daily activities like washing, bathing, cooking, and drinking. Without a proper water filtration system, they were exposed to contamination. Field observations revealed that most houses now have access to clean water, with several water tanks provided to the community. This technology certainly makes it easier for the community to maintain a proper personal hygiene. They also no longer use inappropriate tools such as knives to trim their nails. The use of nail clippers signifies a positive change in their personal hygiene practices. Additionally, using leaves for body cleansing is no longer the primary alternative due to the availability of commercial products such as soap and shampoo.

#### *Facial Hygiene*

In terms of facial hygiene, there has been a shift from traditional materials to modern products. According to the village head, rice water was once used by his family to maintain facial beauty. Cleaning the face with rice water was believed to help cleanse and enhance skin appearance. It was thought to whiten and brighten the complexion. According to the official website Hello Doktor (2022), one of the key ingredients in rice water is ferulic acid, an antioxidant agent that helps enhance facial radiance. This practice was also commonly done by mothers after childbirth. According to Shaifullah Tayep (2016), the benefits of rice water for personal hygiene and health include minimizing pores, eliminating acne, and whitening the face. However, this practice is less common nowadays as most people have started using modern commercial products available in the market.

Based on this information, a technological shift has occurred in facial hygiene practices. This change is attributed to the rapid growth of modern product marketing that offers scientific formulations and ease of use. The use of modern products such as soap or facial cleansers has gained widespread exposure, leading to a transition from traditional to modern materials. The emergence of modern products serves as a benchmark for the changing facial hygiene practices among the Orang Asli community. However, traditional materials are still used by some individuals to this day, complementing modern methods and allowing both approaches to coexist without undermining each other's roles.

#### *Hair Hygiene*

According to an interview with the village head, he once used traditional materials such as hibiscus leaves and coconut oil. The use of hibiscus was a common method for hair cleansing in the past. This material was also effective in addressing hair loss issues. According to scientific research, the mucus found in this flower contains nutrients that help relieve scalp itching and moisturize the hair (Fatin Hafizah Mohd Shahr, 2017). An interview with a village resident revealed that there has been a change in the use of these materials today. He has started using modern products such as shampoo and hair conditioner to cleanse his hair. Moreover, modern products are considered easier to use and provide positive effects on hair health.

The analysis of the data indicates that the most suitable form of change depicted is technological change. The shift from traditional to modern materials demonstrates that

technological transformation has occurred in hygiene practices within the community. In this context, technological change involves the replacement of traditional tools or methods with more efficient alternatives, such as the transition from hibiscus to shampoo. The emergence of modern technology has created a cultural shift where the community has started turning to commercial products that are more accessible and yield positive results. A study by Bhushan and Chen (2006) proved that shampoo cleanses hair while conditioners leave a soft texture on the hair. Kementerian Kesehatan Malaysia (2017) also recommends the use of shampoo twice a day as part of hair hygiene maintenance. With this exposure, the adoption of new technology is more easily accepted and practiced, especially among the Orang Asli community.

### *Ear Hygiene*

The Orang Asli community is known for its modest way of life. In an interview with the village head, he mentioned that the ears are often neglected in personal hygiene practices. According to him, he had witnessed the earlier generation using small wooden sticks to clean the inside of their ears. This traditional method emerged due to a lack of exposure to proper ear-cleaning techniques. However, this practice has changed as the current generation no longer uses such tools. They have shifted to safer and more appropriate tools, such as cotton buds.

The changes in body hygiene and personal care practices among the Temuan Orang Asli in Hulu Kuang can be analysed through the concept of technological change. According to Moore (1965), technological change refers to the transition from traditional methods to more modern and innovative approaches in society. In the early stages, the Orang Asli community relied heavily on natural resources such as plants for body cleansing.

Regarding ear hygiene, the earlier generation used small wooden sticks to clean the inside of their ears. Interviews with the village head revealed that the use of such traditional tools resulted from a lack of exposure to safer methods. Technological advancements and the dissemination of information about proper hygiene have led the community to switch to safer methods. They are now using cotton buds to clean their ears. This shift is attributed to hygiene awareness programs conducted by the Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These efforts have had a positive impact on the Orang Asli community. This demonstrates how hygiene technology innovations have transformed the community's personal care practices from traditional methods to modern products.

### *Dental Hygiene*

The next aspect of hygiene is oral care. According to an interview with the village head, the community practices chewing betel nuts. This activity may seem unusual to some, but the Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang believes that chewing *buah pinang* (betel nuts) strengthens and maintains oral health. This traditional oral care method is believed to enhance dental strength and is still practiced by some people.

According to Mutahir Ade and Hairudin La Patilaya (2017), betel nuts contain Arecaidine or Arecaine, which has astringent and hemostatic properties. These elements are highly beneficial for strengthening the gums and eliminating bad breath. However, excessive use of betel nuts can also damage teeth. A study by Irma Yulianisma (2019) found that

frequent chewing of betel nuts has negative effects on dental health. Nevertheless, modern oral hygiene practices, such as brushing teeth with a toothbrush, are also adopted, especially by the younger generation.

This situation reflects the accessibility of materials used for oral care. In the past, the use of toothbrushes was not widespread or prioritized among the community. Consequently, chewing betel nuts indirectly helped strengthen their teeth. However, changes over time have altered dental hygiene practices, especially among the younger generation. Observations indicate that free dental check-up programs are conducted in the village. These check up are often carried out by the Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA) in collaboration with NGO. Proper toothbrushing techniques have also been taught to all members of the Orang Asli community.



Figure 5 Dental check up program  
Source: Field study, (2023)

In the context of oral care, the Orang Asli community traditionally believes that chewing betel nuts helps strengthen teeth and maintain oral health. This belief has been passed down through generations and is still practiced by some members of the community. This belief is also supported by the chemical research of betel nuts such as “*Arecaidine*” or “*Arecaine*” which has astringent and hemostatic properties that can help to strengthen and eliminate bad breath. However, a shift in belief occurred when the community became exposed to the negative effects of excessive betel nut chewing. This was evidenced in Yulyanisma's (2019) study which showed that the habit could damage dental health in the long term. Exposure to the information, along with easier access to modern oral care products such as toothbrushes and toothpaste has changed the belief of a significant portion of the community as a more effective method for maintaining oral hygiene.

#### *Foot Hygiene*

The village head also shared some personal hygiene practices related to foot care. One such practice involves not wearing shoes or slippers during activities. This is not a new practice and is still practiced by some individuals today. Field observations revealed that the Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang now wears at least slippers during activities. However, the

traditional practice is still maintained and is believed to have its own benefits. In an interview with the village head, it was stated that direct contact between the soles of the feet and the ground or earth's surface is believed to promote healthier and stronger feet.

This belief is not only held by the Orang Asli community but also by the Malay community. The health philosophy behind this practice is believed to offer various benefits through unity with nature. According to Wan Nordini Hasnor Wan Ismail (2023), all living beings receive energy (in the form of electrons) from the Earth's electrical and magnetic forces for survival, provided they come into direct contact with surfaces such as soil, sand, grass, and stones without any barriers. Additionally, field observations found that the soles of their feet become resilient and strong, allowing them to carry out activities in the forest without shoes or slippers.

However, this practice can also pose health risks. Exposing the soles of the feet increases the risk of encountering various forms of germs that can eventually lead to negative health effects. According to the World Health Organization (2009), people are encouraged to reduce exposure to soil by wearing shoes or boots. This matter is viewed from a safety perspective where exposure to risky environments can occur if they don't wear any protective equipment to protect the feet.

### **Conclusion**

The overall physical hygiene of the Temuan Orang Asli community studied, including hair, body, teeth, ears, and feet, has shifted from traditional to modern methods using modern products as explained. The hygiene practices of the Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang have undergone positive changes, transitioning toward more practical hygiene practices. The identified forms of change involve technology and beliefs. In terms of physical hygiene, the use of plants to clean hair and the body has evolved toward commercial products such as shampoo and soap. Changes in beliefs have also occurred, where practices such as chewing betel nuts and using small wooden sticks have been replaced with safer methods.

The current era requires the Orang Asli community to keep pace with change. Such change is essential to improve their quality of life. This study contributes to enhancing the understanding of hygiene practice changes, particularly among the Temuan Orang Asli community in Hulu Kuang. Therefore, further studies on the acceptance level of modern hygiene practices among Orang Asli should be extended to other sub-ethnic groups.

### **Corresponding author**

Muhammad Aqil Bin Sharullizam is a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student in Performance Arts and Management at Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). (Email: P153395@siswa.ukm.edu.my)

Dr. Muammar Ghaddafi Hanafiah is a Senior Lecturer at the Pusat Kajian Bahasa, Kesusasteraan dan Kebudayaan Melayu (BITARA MELAYU). His expertise in Islamic Malay Culture and Thought & Arabic Literature at Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

Dr. Mohd Yusaidy Mohd Yusoff is a Senior Lecturer at the Pusat Kajian Bahasa, Kesusasteraan dan Kebudayaan Melayu (BITARA MELAYU). His area of expertise is Heritage and Museum,



and Socio-cultural Management at Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

## References

- Don, A. G., Ismail, A., Aini, Z. (2018). *Pemeriksaan Kesejahteraan Hidup Orang Asli Di Malaysia*. Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Bhushan, B. & Chen, N. (2006). AFM Studies Of Environmental Effects On Nanomechanical Properties And Cellular Structure Of Human Hair. *Ultramicroscopy* 106 (9): 755-764.
- Colin, N. (2000). *The Orang Asli and The Contest for resources: Indigenous, Politics, Development and Identity in Peninsular Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Vinlin Press Sdn. Bhd.
- Patah, F. M. A. (2024, October 28). Dua Jawatankuasa Penentu Sosial Kesihatan Orang Asli Akan Ditubuhkan. *Berita Harian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2024/10/1317033/dua-jawatankuasa-penentu-sosial-kesihatan-orang-asli-akan-ditubuhkan>
- Nazir, F. (2023). Pengaruh Bahasa Ibunda Dalam Pertuturan Murid-Murid Asli Suku Temuan Ketika Pembelajaran Bahasa Melayu. *LSP International Journal*. 10 (1): 73–90.
- Shahar, F. H. M. (2017). Bunga raya atasi masalah rambut. *Berita Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.bharian.com.my/wanita/rias/2017/09/324113/bunga-raya-atasi-masalah-rambut>
- Hamid, H. (1990). *Sosiologi Pendidikan: Dalam Perspektif Pembangunan Negara*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Yusof, H., & Abd. Ghani, M. K. (2009). Infeksi Entamoeba histolytica di Kalangan Kanak-kanak Orang Asli di Pos Lenjang. Pahang, *Jurnal Sains Kesihatan Malaysia* 7 (1): 59-64.
- Ong, H. C., Ahmad, N., & Milow, P. (2011). Traditional Medicinal Plants Used by the Temuan Villagers in Kampung Tering, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. *Ethno Medicine*. 5(3): 169-173
- Doktor, H. (2022). Manfaat Air Beras Untuk Kesihatan Kulit Wajah. Retrieved from <https://hellodoktor.com/pemakanan/fakta-nutrisi/manfaat-air-beras-untuk-kecantikan/>
- Asli, J. K. O. (2023) Taburan Etnik Orang Asli Mengikut Negeri. Retrieved from <https://www.jakoa.gov.my/orang-asli/>
- Abdullah, J., Borhan, M. A., & Ahmad, C. B. (2015). Orang Asli Resettlement in Urban Environment at Bukit Lanjan, Selangor, Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 201: 71 – 79
- Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia. (2017). Mari Mandi Dan Cuci Rambut. Retrieved from <https://infosihat.moh.gov.my/penerbitan-multimedia/lain-lain/item/mari-mandi-dan-cuci-rambut.html>
- Idris, M. N. M. (2021, December 8). 29 Perkampungan Orang Asli Di Selangor Sudah Diwartakan. *Kosmo Digital*. Retrieved from <https://www.kosmo.com.my/2021/12/08/29-perkampungan-orang-asli-di-selangor-sudah-diwartakan/>
- Liamputton. (2009); Aizan Sofia Amin, Ezarina Zakaria & Norulhuda Sarnon. (2023). *Penulisan Tesis Kajian Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif*. Bangi: Penerbit UKM.
- Zakaria, L. N., & Minhat, H. S. (2020). Sociodemographic determinants of good hygiene practices among the indigenous primary caregivers of under three children in Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences* 16(1): 215-220
- Abd. Rahman, M. M. (1997). Kebersihan Alam Sekitar Mengikut Perspektif Islam. *Jurnal Usuluddin* 175-86

- Aqmal, M. T. (2009). *Orang Asli Temuan Music Portal*. Bachelor Degree, Universiti Teknologi Petronas
- Hassan @ Yahya, M. S., & Nordin, R. (2018). Kedudukan Orang Asli pada Era Penjajahan. *Jurnal Undang-Undang dan Masyarakat* (SI), 128-142
- Rohir, M. H. M., and Yusoff, M. Y. M. (2020) Pemuliharaan jerat sembat Orang Asli Suku Temuan di Kampung Gapam, Jasin, Melaka. *Jurnal Melayu*, (SI), 663-679.
- Khalid, N. N., Hassan, M. S., & Abdullah, M. S. (2022). Isu dan Cabaran Hak Kesihatan Orang Asli di Semenanjung Malaysia. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)* 7 (11): 1-14.
- Selangor, P. R. D. N. (2021). Status Terkini Pewartaan Kampung Orang Asli Di Selangor. Retrieved from <https://dewan.selangor.gov.my/question/status-terkini-pewartaan-kampung-orang-asli-di-selangor/Village> Head. Kampung Orang Asli Hulu Kuang. Interview. 15 March 2023. Local Resident. Kampung Orang Asli Hulu Kuang. Interview. 10 December 2022.
- Yusof, R. M., & Nor, N. H. M. (2014). Bahasa Orang Asli Melayu-Proto: Bahasa atau Dialek Melayu?. Kearifan Tempatan Conference (RCLK), Universiti Sains Malaysia, Kuching, Sarawak, 12-13 Oktober.
- Ismail, R. (2023). *Metodologi Penyelidikan Teori dan Praktis*. Bangi: Penerbit UKM.
- Tayep, S. (2016, September 16). Manfaat Air Cucian Beras Untuk Kecantikan. *Berita Harian*. Retrieved from <https://www.bharian.com.my/bhplus-old/2016/09/193056/manfaat-air-cucian-beras-untuk-kecantikan?m=1>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2002). Personal Hygiene Fifth Standard. Retrieved from <https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org/library/documents/shape-school-based-healthy-living-and-hiv-aids-prevention-education-middle-and>
- Hashim, W. (1986). Perubahan sosial : Teori-teori Klasik dan Modern. *Jurnal Antropologi dan Sosiologi* 14: 1-39
- Ismail, W. N. H. (2023). Perspektif Berkaki Ayam – Amalan Lama Yang Kian Dilupakan, Impak Tinggi Pada Kesihatan Manusia. Magazine of Pusat Pengajian Biologi UiTM CNS Retrieved from <https://ir.uitm.edu.my/id/eprint/81190/>
- Moore, W. E. (1965). Social Change. New Delhi. Prentice Hall of India. Retrieved from <http://125.22.75.155:8080/handle/123456789/13495?mode=full>
- World Health Organization. (2009). Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/teams/control-of-neglected-tropical-diseases/lymphatic-filariasis/podoconiosis-endemic-non-filarial-elephantiasis>
- Yulianisma. (2019). Gambaran Kebiasaan Mengunyah Pinang Dan Status Kebersihan Gigi Dan Mulut Pada Remaja Di Kampung Burokup Kabupaten Biak Propinsi Papua. Diploma Studies. Politeknik Kesehatan Kementerian Kesehatan Yogyakarta. Retrived from <http://eprints.poltekkesjogja.ac.id/936/1/KTI%20sampai%20Bab%20V%20fixed.pdf>