

***DOKTOR MUDA AS HEALTH PROMOTION AGENTS FROM PEERS’  
PERSPECTIVES: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY IN SEKOLAH KEBANGSAAN  
GOMBAK SETIA, SELANGOR***

**ABSTRACT**

*Doktor Muda* acts as role models to empower school children with knowledge and skills on health in order to improve the health status of themselves and their peers. *Doktor Muda* was trained to implement health information dissemination activities to their peers. This study was conducted to explore peers’ perspectives on the effectiveness of *Doktor Muda* as health promotion agents. The effectiveness was assessed in terms of process and impact of health information dissemination activities to peers. FGD was used as the primary method of exploring perspectives of their peers. *Doktor Muda* in SK Gombak Setia, Selangor were successful in strengthening and influencing their peers’ positive health beliefs, attitudes and practices at a moderate level. Compliance with health practices among their peers were also strengthened the dissemination of health information to family members as a result of composite elements of positive health beliefs, attitudes and practices. Peers’ interest of becoming a member of the *Doktor Muda* themselves also showed a positive impact of the programme. Peers found it comfortable to discuss about health with *Doktor Muda*. *Doktor Muda* is still listed as credible individuals in influencing peer health practices, inferring *Doktor Muda* as a credible source among their peers. Credibility of the *Doktor Muda* depended on the appointment process, health knowledge, communication skills, leadership characteristics and similarities in terms of social status. Thus, *Doktor Muda* appointment and competencies in health knowledge, interpersonal communication skills and leadership are important aspects in determining the success of the programme.