

# Assessing the reliability and validity of a questionnaire on knowledge, perceptions, and practices regarding hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) among Malaysian parents: A pilot study

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a common viral infection that primarily affects young children under 5 years old. The disease can spread rapidly through close contact, making it crucial for parents to have adequate knowledge and adopt appropriate preventive measures. To address this gap, a comprehensive questionnaire was developed to evaluate knowledge, perceptions and practices related to HFMD among Malaysian parents. Before conducting the main study, a pilot study was deemed necessary to assess the feasibility, reliability and validity of the questionnaire. **Objective:** The primary objective of this pilot study was to determine the reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire items, ensuring they effectively measure the intended constructs related to HFMD. **Materials and Method:** This study involved 38 parents who provided informed consent to participate. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which was subsequently analysed for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha via SPSS software. Each domain of the questionnaire; knowledge, perception and practice was analysed separately to derive Cronbach's Alpha values, with a minimum acceptable threshold set at 0.7 for reliability. **Results:** The analysis revealed varying levels of internal consistency across the domains. The knowledge section, consisting of 20 items, yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.638, indicating moderate reliability. Notably, three items were excluded due to zero variance, while the perception section achieved a high reliability score of 0.797, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The practice section also showed good reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.747. **Conclusion:** The findings suggest that while the knowledge section requires refinement, the overall instrument shows promise for further research into HFMD awareness and prevention among Malaysian parents.