

FSSH

Research Review



**“Bridging Communities,
Research and Policy”**

RESEARCH UPDATE

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities Research Review 2019

The number of people infected with HIV continues to increase globally, despite recent advances in treatment and prevention. Statistics show that an estimated 36.9 million people around the world were living with HIV in 2014, with 2 million people became infected with the illness (UNAIDS, 2014). To aggravate matters, people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) continue to face many forms of stigmatization throughout their lives, despite the various measures/initiatives taken by themselves and others to minimize them. Such measures/initiatives, as studies show, include a community participation intervention (Apinundecha et al., 2007) and context-specific strategies (Mukolo et al., 2013) created by others to help PLWHAs reduce the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS.

However, little has been done on examining the creation of newly invented identities as an equally important measure/initiative taken by PLWHA and others (i.e., caregivers), to lessen stigmatization and gain the support that they direly need. Moreover, little is known about the awareness of human rights among PLWHA and their caregivers and the extent which they integrate this awareness into the creation of their newly invented identities. This is the gap that this study seeks to address, given its significant contribution to the literature on HIV/AIDS, especially where stigma reduction measures/initiatives are concerned.

Using ethnographic methods to collect data in the form of face-to-face interviews and participant observations, the study explores the newly invented identities created by PLWHAs and their caregivers, how they develop and express them, and the ways in which they integrate human rights awareness into the creation of these identities. Approximately 17 (N17) selected PLWHAs and caregivers mainly from Kuching were interviewed. The data is transcribed in verbatim and back translation used to preserve originality. The outcomes are then translated into stigma reduction initiatives from the perspective of PLWHA and their caregivers, which they can use to address and minimize stigmatization and gain support in the process.

Demographically, this research involved 17 research participants, comprising of 10 caregivers and 7 sufferers @ bearers of HIV/AIDS. They are 13 males (including 1 transsexual) and 4 females (including 1 pengkid/ / tomboy); aged between 18 years to 65 years old of age. Based on their ethnicity, it is discovered that 13 respondents are Malays, two (2) of them are Bidayuh and another two (2) are Iban.

This study was completed in March 2019. From the findings, we conclude that participants did create certain initiatives to reduce stigma and discrimination that they had faced. These initiatives however did not apply to everybody related but more towards individuals' efforts. Among the initiatives they have performed are maintaining identities that are deemed positive in the eyes of the society, avoiding the effort to

DEVELOPING A STIGMA REDUCTION INITIATIVE THROUGH NEWLY INVENTED IDENTITIES: INSIGHTS FROM PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS (F06/SpSTG/1399/16/41)

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look for social support, avoiding disclosure, reforming new identity by moving to the new area and so forth. Few interesting findings were, although most of the participants were among the most stigmatized group, they still disagree that human rights is what they were fighting for. To them, asking for a right worsens their survival efforts.

Findings suggest few practical solutions to the problems such as the opportunity for employment, enhancing the roles of NGOS as direct intervention, improving the roles of government agencies in educating the society, the establishment of HIV/AIDS clinic in locality, and the enforcement act to seek support. We also anticipate that this study will have policy implications. In Malaysia, in particular, where HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programmes most probably concentrate on and address sufferers/patients, this study (once it has been forwarded to policy makers) is hoped to be capable of suggesting that the existing policies and programmes, which originally targeted specific groups should be reviewed and reconsider caregivers as members of the target groups.

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GIS IN EPIDEMIOLOGY: A CASE STUDY OF HAND FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (HFMD) IN KUCHING, SARAWAK

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Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a common disease infecting young children and infants. Although HFMD is a common disease, it can be fatal if it is not properly treated. Hence, this research aims to evaluate and analyze HFMD reported cases within the Kuching North City Council and Kuching South City Council areas in Kuching Division. The assessment and analysis are conducted based on the reported cases registered with the Sarawak Health Department between 2014 and 2018. The main objective of this study is to identify the hotspot area of HFMD within the two local council areas by using Geographic Information System (GIS) technique. Two methods are used in this study, namely the Getis-Ord G_i^* and Thiessen (Voronoi) polygon. The Getis-Ord G_i^* statistics is used to identify the hotspot areas within the case study area while the Thiessen (Voronoi) polygon method is used to create an influencing boundary for each village within these two case study areas. Thiessen Polygon was introduced in this study since there is no gazetted boundaries to represent each village. Therefore, Thiessen polygon acts as a reference to represent the boundary for each village. Initial analysis reveals that between 2014 to 2018, the hotspot areas were confined to Rampangi Fasa 2 and Semariang Pinggir in the Kuching North City Council area, and Kampung Stampin and Kampung Stutong Baru in the Kuching South City Council area. The findings from this study may help the local authorities, public health officers, and epidemiologist to focus more attention at the identified hotspot area.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM



ANALYZING THE PROPERTY CRIME HOT SPOTS. CASE STUDY: KUCHING, SARAWAK

NORITA JUBIT AND TARMJI MASRON

Crime is one of the key factors in influencing individuals' perceptions of crime and causes fear of crime within society. In Malaysia, property crime is one of the most dominant and most frequently reported crime. The question is where is the property crime hot spot? This study aims to detect crime hot spot areas in Kuching, Sarawak. Data used in this study includes police station boundary and police station sector boundary, and road data, while attribute data consists of property crime cases for the period of 2015-2017, types of property crimes, addresses of events and cases by police stations. The data is obtained from the Royal Malaysian Police of Kuching, Sarawak. The crime data was analyzed using the Getis Ord G_i^* through ArcMap 10.3 application. The findings show that there are five sectors that were classified as property crime hot spots between 2015 to 2016 involving Gita, Satok and Sekama police stations. In 2017, the analysis found that the hot spots were reduced to four sectors under the administration of the aforementioned police stations. The study helps to detect the changes in property crime hot spots within 3 years. Furthermore, it has enabled an assessment of the effectiveness of crime prevention measures in the study area, and, thus, enabling the police to take action to prevent property crime in hot spots area and create a safer city. This study shows that the GIS approach helps in understanding the phenomenon of crime in the context of space. In particular, the Getis Ord G_i^* is capable of detecting property crime hot spots and the density clustering of crime can be identified through the hot spot confidence level.