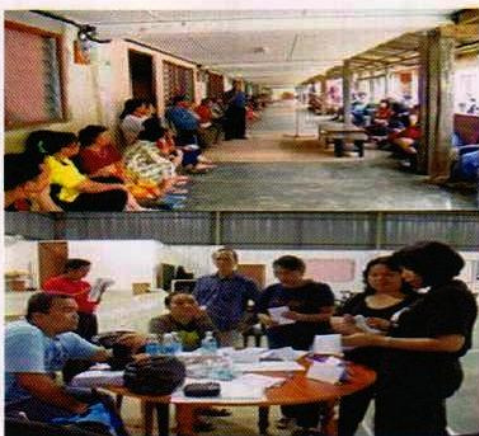


First Year Update on the FRGS Research Project “Constructing Prevention Framework about Pan- demic Influenza Outbreak for Rural Communities”

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The overall aim of this project is to investigate the impact of informational products and communication strategies about pandemic influenza A (H1N1) risk and prevention to indigenous communities in Sarawak. This study is guided under Systems Theory (ST) particularly the philosophical assumptions proposed by a prominent German philosopher, Niklas Luhmann (2006). Using ST, this study specifically investigates how health information products pertaining to H1N1 risk and prevention are being communicated to and processed by the indigenous communities and how the understanding of the communities with regard to the prevention measures is constructed and contributed to the positive health practices. It further examines how the interaction and relationship between multiple systems (family, community, healthcare entity and others), and the dissemination and communication of health information can positively impact on the individual understanding and awareness about the H1N1 risk and prevention. Inarguably, this can further promote self-care practice.

Our research team comprises of members from three different faculties as follows: Dr Rohaya Mohd Nor (leader), Constance Rinen Justin Wah, Nordiana Nordin and Prof Dr Ernest Cyril de Run are from the Faculty of Economics and Business; Dr Samuel Lihan is from the Faculty of Resource Science and Technology; Rose Nanju, Dr Sidiah John Siop and Rekaya Vincent Balang are from the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences. Our research students, Rudy Ujang and Liew Yu Mei, now are moving into their final year of their Master study.



Our earlier research works in February 2012 that involved the Serian community marked the first phase of the project. We obtained many interesting and important findings using focus group and survey methods.

Madam Rose Nanju presented some of these findings at the local conference in May 2012. The preliminary research outcomes using Serian setting serve as a baseline to prepare for the second phase of our research, which took place in Rural Baram.



The Baram research expedition began on 14th of May 2012 until 18th of May 2012. The expedition permitted us to obtain data at four locations in Rural Baram, i.e., Marudi, Long Lama, Long Bedian and Long San. Via Borneo Post (<http://www.theborneopost.com/2012/05/31/research-team-from-unimas-completes-study-in-baram/>), we managed to disseminate our research activities in Baram to the public. Our article at Borneo Talk (<http://www.borneotalk.com/vol26/vol26.pdf>) further described this exciting journey and the wonderful Baram communities. Dr Samuel will present some of the findings in this coming December at a local conference.

Also, in early March 2012, our first attempt (Dr Rohaya, Nordiana and Constance) to participate in UNIMAS R&D Competition 2012 under the project title “Constructing Risk Communication Toolkit for Rural Areas in Sarawak” has won us a Bronze. We aim to participate again in 2013 UNIMAS R&D Competition with a serious attempt to enhance the concepts, and hopefully we can manage to come up with a tangible product. Our project now is moving to its second year, and we have planned many more productive research activities to ensure that we achieve all the research objectives and actively publish our research works.