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## Constraints Affecting the Increase of Sago Production: A Case of Melanau Rural Youth's Participation in Sago Industry in Sarawak, Malaysia

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### Abstract

Sago industry which comprises sago cultivation, processing and sago-based food entrepreneurship has its own youth participation challenges. Consequently, the study aimed at determining constraints factors affecting rural youth sago producers. The constraint factors, namely internal and external factors are developed from modelling reason action theory. Data were collected from 200 youth sago producers in Mukah Division via face-to-face interview using a close-ended questionnaire. The data were analysed by means of descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis and binary logistic regression model. The descriptive statistic showed the pattern of youth participation in the sago industry. The result of exploratory factor analysis identified six constraints factors affecting youth sago producers; commodity price, new knowledge, physical infrastructure, income, assistance and training. The result of binary logistic regression showed that the low participation of part-time to full-time participation of youth sago producers is significantly influenced by new knowledge, physical infrastructure and training constraint factors. The study suggests rural youth requires technological advancement in the sago industry. In addition, the findings may provide useful information to the relevant stakeholders to re-evaluate the assistance and support programs to increase the participation and productivity of the Melanau youth. Furthermore, encouragement be given to more non-Melanaus to participate in sago industry.

**Keywords:** Sago Industry, Youth, Work, New Knowledge, External-Internal Constraints Model, Factor Analysis

### Introduction

Sago palm is an indigenous crop of rural communities in Asia and the Pacific Region. Specifically, rural communities in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Malaysia respectively are the main producer of sago commodity. The economic activity of sago has played an essential role in sustaining rural livelihood either for subsistence, trading at the local and domestic market as well as for export. In