

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORANG ASLI IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract — The establishment of Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA) is now known as the Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA) in 1954 has shown the government was pay attention to the development of indigenous people called Orang Asli in Malaysia primarily from socio-economic aspects. Government through the ministry has also taken the initiative in improving the quality of life in terms of health, education and communication. Gazetting of the forest as a national park also has been impact on their socio-economic improvement. This paper is an analysis of the literature review that focuses on the development transformations of Orang Asli. The main objective of this paper is to describe the theoretical framework of sustainable change to the advancement of Orang Asli. Socio-economic problem such as low awareness, limited finances and expertise, position of village and also poor environmental management poverty that occur will be explained. The result will expected to ensure the sustainable socio-economic development of Orang Asli in Malaysia.

Keywords—*Indigenous People, Socio-Economic, Transformations, National Park, Sustainable*

I. Introduction

The Orang Asli is the indigenous minority peoples of Peninsular Malaysia. Word of the ‘Orang Asli’ is refers to original peoples or first peoples. The Orang Asli is consist of the 18 sub-ethnic groups generally classified for official purposes under Negrito, Senoi and Proto-Malay.

The development implemented by government has been impact on the entire community in Malaysia. The Orang Asli is no exception to trace it that eventually resulted in the transformation of their

socio-economic. The socio-economic aspects include the demographic, employment, and also formal and complex organizations (Rahimah Abd Aziz, 2001).

Socio-economic of the Orang Asli now has changed over the last 20 years where their economy is more modern now and not primitive as before. However, in the rapid development now less impact on them as expected due to the poor planning and lack of carefully rigged to take the real aspirations of readiness factors and these groups (Ali @ Zainalabidin 2006). Although changes to the advancement was happen, but the changes occurs in a slow pace. There is still have the impact such as poverty, lag in education and migration among indigenous peoples.

The main objective of this paper is to describe the theoretical framework of sustainable change to the advancement of the Orang Asli. Previous studies found that the Orang Asli’s community has been changes as a result of the development programs have been implemented.

II. Issues

Economy is the main system in a community that influent the other system in a community. Economy refers to a social system that includes production, distribution and consumption of goods and services (Rohana Yusof, 2010)

The Orang Asli are a vulnerable community by development. The forest that synonym with indigenous become smaller. Their traditional culture

also found erosions effect from diffusion of mixed and grow culture. Eco-tourism is one of the best ways has found can increasingly economic impact to the orang Asli without affects their traditional culture. In addition to providing substantial returns to the economy, this sector also contributed to the supply of employment opportunities as well as to improve the standard of living of the local population (Zanisah Man et. Al, 2009).

Structural functionalism theory assumes that the various parts of the society has its own functions that are closely interrelated and dependent to achieve harmony, unity, stability and balance in the community development process (Pip Jones, 2003). To achieve balancing in the system, a change in any part will cause changes in other parts. In civil society institutions actually equipped with a function to keep stability (Rohana Yusof, 2010). In the context of the development of the Orang Asli, there are two parties involved, namely the developing and the developed.

The issue has always been a concern among researchers on the Orang Asli is the impact of the transformation that occurs as a result of the development program. Zuriatunfadzliah et al. (2009) found that the Bateq, one of the Orang Asli sub-ethnic has experienced a change in culture as effects of ecotourism activities in the national park. The changes divided into four cultural aspects of language, food, clothing and handicrafts. From the aspects, the aspect of the dress only changed immediately without preservation of traditional culture. This is different from simply changing nutritional aspects and still partly mixed with the original culture.

In other research, Er Ah Choy et al. (2010) has found that economic activities of the Orang Asli in Bukit Lagong forest still shaped self-sufficiency and subsistence. However, the research also found the changes in their economic activities from findings of recent quarters near the forest only to sourcing on participation in government and the private sector. Their educational level has also increased. The increasingly also occurred among the natives in Malaysia. It is one of the efforts by Department of The Orang Asli Advancement (JAKOA) to raise awareness about the importance of education. Table 1

shows the educations status of the Orang Asli from 1997 to 2008.

TABLE 1 : THE EDUCATIONS STATUS OF THE ORANG ASLI FROM 1997 - 2008

Educations Status			
YEARS	IPTA	Secondary	Primary
1997	10	3,306	16,806
1998	19	4,186	19,033
1999	26	4,653	21,131
2000	30	5,971	21,704
2001	35	5,239	20,871
2002	42	6,219	22,098
2003	112	6,675	23,607
2004	73	7,754	25,354
2005	62	8,488	26,210
2006	49	8,774	26,464
2007	61	9,600	26,791
2008	63	9,738	27,176

Source : Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA, 2008)

The development of the Orang Asli's process can provide well-being, security and integrate them with other people in line with the Wawasan 2020 and the New Economic Policy (DEB). To achieve the goals, the programs has designed and implemented according to the following guidelines:

- i. Act 134 of the Orang Asli Act 1954 (revised 1974),
- ii. Aboriginal Administrative Policy 1961,
- iii. 1977 Cabinet decision on Plan Community Gathers scattered Orang Asli living under Regrouping Plan (RPS),
- iv. The Orang Asli guides development tasks in modern society 1978.

Table 2 shows the development of the performance provided by the government to the Orang Asli's community in 2008 that aims to expedite the processing of their everyday lives. The components involved electricity, water supply and access roads to the Orang Asli's village.

TABLE 2: THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ORANG ASLI'S DEVELOPMENT, 2008

Component	Total villages	Blanketing Villages	Percentage (%)
Electricity	852	526	61.7
Water	852	651	76.4
Road	852	727	85.3

Source : Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA, 2008)

The Orang Asli's development programmes by JAKOA consist of Structured Settlements

Programme, Economic Development Programme and Social Development Programme. Structured Placement Programme consists of several programmes that Regrouping Plan (RPS), Village Restructuring (PSK), Natural Disaster, New Village Plan (RKB) and Land Development. By Economic Development Programme, JAKOA also provide the Economic Development, Course Development Programme, Entrepreneur Guidance, Phase II of the State Land Development, Construction Retail Space and Rural Tourism. Under the Social Development Programme, JAKOA (2008) has approved an allocation of RM58,540,000 to implement social development of the seven components of the Hardcore Poor Housing Programme, Housing Community Leader, Infrastructure and Public Utilities, Health and Medical, Family and Community Development, Facilities Administration JAKOA and Mind Development Programme. In terms of health facilities of two clinics planned to be built at Kelantan and Pahang. While the two transit centers and administrative at Grik, Perak and Gua Musang, Kelantan and also several treatment stations will be built to improve the health status of the Orang Asli (JAKOA, 2008).

Government through the Ministry of Education (MOE) also remains committed to closing the gap of education, socioeconomic level and the ability of the Orang Asli's students. Accordingly, the government introduced the Orang Asli's Educations Transformation Plan (PTPOA) who set their achievements in the five years from 2013 until 2017. The plan emphasizes the objective of empowering the Orang Asli progress concomitant with the advancement of the people in Malaysia (Utusan Malaysia, January 14, 2013).

To enable the Orang Asli's community in particular enjoy gain more information in a quick, Ministry of Information, Communications and Culture has launched Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) Broadcasting Expansion Programme to the Orang Asli's area (Utusan Malaysia, 31 Januari 2013). The programme is capable of providing television coverage to better serve the nearly 300 of Orang Asli's community in the areas with the provision of television sets and also decoder for free Astro Njoi to them.

III. Problems

Their seriously involvement in the development progress are able to keep and maintain their traditional culture while improving their socio-economic. Among the problems identified :

A. *The Low Awareness*

Since JHEOA (now JAKOA) be founded, its officers and its staff have been entrusted to care for, protect and develop the Orang Asli's community, including awareness of the importance of education and skills in order to ensure their survival in the future guaranteed. However, their awareness still low. According Aminudin Mohamed, coordinator of Adult Classes For Parents of the Orang Asli and Peribumi Students (KEDAP) in a research shows that the problem of their community are living backwardness is often associated with the following :

- i. Development and education of the Orang Asli is quite slow compared to other communities.
- ii. The Orang Asli's community has largely indifference education and practice in education.
- iii. Way of life that does not care about the progress around them. Easier and close to wilderness.
- iv. Lower yourself to socialize with other people.
- v. Lack of self-discipline and can not find the direction of their lives on a regular basis.

B. *Financial and Expertise Limited*

Financial factors and expertise is essential concern to ensure that the overall absorption of the Orang Asli in the mainstream development. Robert Bernt Anderson (2001) in their study suggested that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (RCAP) has recorded an estimated total cost incurred by the Government of Canada for their aboriginal development in 1996's goal of \$4.6 billion, equivalent to Rs 14.8 billion. Anderson added that the amount does not include the cost of adjustment for the differences in income among them.

C. Indigenous Villages position

The Orang Asli's village position is also very important in the maximum impact on the socio-economic population. With the facilities in terms of access to the city or town area is enough to develop the community. Mustafa Omar (2008) state that, one of the Regrouping Plan (RPS) to the development of successful indigenous reduction activities which include shifting cultivation among the population and replace it with a form of permanent agriculture. In addition, the RPS also increase networking with community residents outside of the city or a nearby town. Road interconnection systems also can increase and goods transactions mempermudah locals produce pemborang or outside retailers.

D. Poor Environment Management

Environmental management problems often occur among indigenous peoples. This is because they still have not been able to assimilate their culture to the modern situation and more structured and organized. Although it was placed with various facilities, they not manage it prudently. This is due to the availability of new forms of challenges faced by them. They seem to be under pressure due to a new form of sudden changes that should be incorporated within themselves and their lives (Suki Mee et. Al, 2009). It also shows that their knowledge management environment among them remains low.

iv. Impact

Based on the problem has caused some impact on indigenous communities which includes :

A. Poverty and Backwardness

United Nations (2012) in Urban Indigenous Peoples and Migration: Challenges and Opportunities noted that although the majority of indigenous peoples around the world live in rural areas, but the longer they began to move into urban areas, whether voluntary or forced cause of land grabbing, poverty, military, natural disasters, lack of employment opportunities, the decline of traditional life and the prospect of better opportunities in the cities. Seen

limited economic opportunities eventually led to the migration problem outside of indigenous village. The Table 3 shows the number of KIR in hardcore poor and poor is decreasing. However, this amount was still more and this shows that there are still many more among them are in poverty.

TABLE 3 : POVERTY STATUS OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD (KIR) OF THE ORANG ASLI'S POPULATION, 2000 - 2008

Years	Head of Household (KIR)				Total
	Poor Hardcore	Poor	Poor Prone	Not Poor	
2000	11,046	10,085	2,085	2,121	25,337
2001	10,749	10,428	2,268	2,753	26,198
2002	10,788	11,732	2,599	3,357	28,476
2003	10,532	12,435	2,914	3,992	29,873
2004	18,027	6,673	-	-	24,700
2005	12,917	6,673	-	-	19,590
2006	9,003	4,942	-	-	13,945
2007	9,003	4,942	11,141	2,755	27,841
2008	9,003	4,942	11,141	2,755	27,841

Source : Department of Orang Asli Affairs (JHEOA, 2008)

B. Endangered Tradition Values

Limitation of hunting and collecting forest products has further aggravated the situation, particularly on the economy and culture of the Orang Asli. This is a great concern and will cause problems in terms of continuity of traditional culture in the long term. It is well known that the young people who will inherit the cultural, economic and social future.

Norlida et al. (2012) from her research on the impact of tourism development to the Orang Asli at Ruil River, Cameron Highlands indicate that they beginnings to openness and accept the development. However, there are still has part of communities that reject the development. This refusal stems from concerns about the disruption of their social life while changing and destroying the traditional culture of the local community.

v. Recommendations for Improvement

The problems that occur on the issues of socio-economic of the Orang Asli can actually be solved by a several approaches such as :

A. *Payment for Environmental Services (PES)*

Ecotourism is one of the efforts to achieve a balance between economic exploitation of natural resources and cultural heritage of the Orang Asli's community without causing any damage or threat of its existence (Zuriatunfadzliah Sahdan et. al 2009). Payment for environmental services (PES) is one of the measures to ensure the life of nature. By creating a payment for every service provided is believed to increase the quality of management and care. As in Infierno, Peru, their indigenous communities are was sign a contract with the Posada Amazonas Lodge Manager for 20 years in 1996. The contract is for the finance division of PES results for sponsorship purposes, construction management and other infrastructure, and the remaining 40% is given to the Aboriginal community (Jessica et. Al, 2011).

B. *Entrepreneurship and Skills Courses*

According to Lorenzo Cherubini (2012), indigenous in Canada is expected to receive an education program more efficient and effective learning system that involves significant cultural connection. It is believed that can contribute their academic, socio-economic and also socio-cultural. He also suggested that indigenous children and youth indigenous in public schools around Ontario will connect cultural identity and their knowledge of the mainstream school system.

vi. Conclusion

Before implementing the development programs, the Orang Asli's community should have the high endurance social, economic and moral so that they can compete and determine the vision in line with the current environment and are ready to face many challenges. Therefore, the development process can

be a catalyst for the transformation of human and physical environment of better quality as well as to maintain the socio-economic and culture has long been practiced.

The close relationship between them and forests now is not a cultural tradition, but a necessity in making it a source of food and income for them. Their economic activities, which include the collection of the forest resources should be implemented. It is important to maintain the sustainability of natural wealth as well to meet the needs and desires of the next generation.

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