

Socioeconomic Challenges of Indigenous People: A Case Study of Malaysia

Norasmah Othman¹, Nor Hafiza Othman^{1&2}, Sarmila Md Sum¹, Radin Siti Aishah
Radin A. Rahman¹, Shahril Mod Husin³, Nurul Darsani Amat Darbis³

¹National University of Malaysia, Bangi Selangor, Malaysia

²Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, 16300 Bachok, Kelantan.

³TNB Research Sdn. Bhd, Kajang Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract

Indigenous people worldwide, including those in Malaysia, are often marginalized and face socioeconomic challenges. Indigenous people in Malaysia, a minority group comprising only 0.5% of the country's population, are classified as poor. This study employed a mixed-methods approach and conducted a case study of the Indigenous people in Malaysia to determine their socioeconomic status and the issues faced in boosting their socioeconomic well-being. It focuses on Indigenous people living in two villages, Post A and Post B, in Kelantan, Malaysia. The findings revealed that the income of Indigenous households falls below the Malaysian poverty line, and most heads of Indigenous households have low educational achievements and work as rubber tappers. The results also revealed that a huge barrier to the socioeconomic empowerment of Indigenous people is their attitude. Their ways of life and contentedness with their situation also contribute to their current socioeconomic status. It was concluded that the Indigenous community has one of the lowest incomes in the country, with low education and employability. Therefore, community engagement programs that raise awareness about the importance of education and employability are crucial for improving the present and future of Indigenous people.

Keywords: Attitude, Education, Indigenous, Socioeconomic, Malaysia