

**Family Addressing System in the Border Malay Community of Telok Melano:
A Review**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the Family Addressing System within the Malay community of Telok Melano, Sarawak, influenced by the Malay culture of Sambas in West Kalimantan. The limited scholarly attention to family addressing systems in this geographical context underscores a critical research gap. The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively document and analyse the practices of family addressing prevalent in Telok Melano. Employing qualitative research methods, particularly in-depth interviews, the study engaged 10 informants – comprising five elderly and five younger individuals from Kampung Telok Melano – to systematically collect data. The analysis draws on theoretical frameworks of bilateral family addressing systems articulated by Millar (1983) and Sorensen (1993), supplemented by comparisons with addressing systems in Sarawak and West Kalimantan. The findings underscore significant parallels with the addressing practices observed in the Malay Sambas community, evidenced by the usage of terms such as 'Pak Long' and 'Mak Long', indicative of the enduring influence of Sambas cultural norms. Furthermore, nuanced distinctions between the family addressing systems in Telok Melano and Kuching, Sarawak were discerned. This study contributes valuable insights into the cultural practices of the Malay community in Telok Melano, serving as a foundational documentation effort particularly relevant amidst socio-cultural

transformations following the opening of the Telok Melano-Sematan stretch of the Pan Borneo Highway in 2019.

Keywords: Family Addressing system, Malay Community, Telok Melano, Sambas Malay Culture, Infrastructure Development, Border Community

INTRODUCTION

The National Family Policy (2010) defines family as a fundamental social unit contributing significantly to development and ensuring the continuity of future generations. The concept encompasses a group of individuals who live together, whether through blood ties, marriage, or adoption (Gullota et al., 1986; Coleman & Cressey, 1993). Traditionally, a basic family unit consists of grandparents, parents, children, and grandchildren. In the context of the Malay community in Telok Melano, their family structure is based on bilateral concepts as articulated by Millar (1983), aligning with Sorensen's (1993) view that a bilateral family system determines membership through both maternal and paternal sides. This system is also reflected in the family structure of Sarawak Malays described by Abang Yusuf (2008), categorising families into three groups: immediate family, close relatives, and distant relatives, with "others" referring to those outside these classifications. The existence of such family systems in Sarawak Malay society also maintains the tradition of family addressing systems, which are integral to the culture of Telok Melano's Malay community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on family addressing systems among the Malay community in Malaysia has been extensively investigated by Amat Juhari (1985), Nor Hashimah et al. (2005), Ab Razak et al. (2018), Alizuddin & Nik Mohd Arif (2020), and Yusoff & Abdul Wahab (2021). In Borneo, studies focusing on addressing systems among indigenous communities have been conducted by Salbia & Dayang Sariah (2007), specifically exploring addressing and forms of addressing within the Melanau community. Additionally, Endang & Asmah (2017) examined the social meanings of addressing in the Malay community in Sambas. These studies collectively illustrate that addresses serve as markers of status, rank, age, and gender for those addressed. However, there remains a notable gap in research specifically addressing addresses among the Malay community in border regions of Sarawak, such as Telok Melano. This study is pivotal for bridging this gap in knowledge, particularly concerning addresses in a Malay