UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU

UMT

4th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(ICSED 2023)

Good Governance on Social & Economic Development

PROGRAM BOOK

14 - 15 NOVEMBER 2023

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu
Convention Centre (UMTCC)

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU

PROGRAM BOOK

ICSED 2023

14 – 15 November 2023
Terengganu, Malaysia

'Good Governance on Social & Economic Development'

Organized by:

Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU
21030 Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, Malaysia

In collaboration with:

Officiated by

Dr. Abdul Razak Ahmad
Chairman
Education Malaysia Global Service

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MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR,
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA

Selamat Datang and Welcome to the 4th ICSED 2023!

To begin with, I want to express my gratitude to the organizing committee of the 4th International Conference on Social and Economic Development (ICSED) for extending an invitation to me to deliver welcoming remarks in this conference program book. I would like to extend my congratulations to all of you for your participation in this conference, and I sincerely hope that you will derive value from the event in terms of knowledge sharing and the expansion of our professional networks.

This year, we find ourselves in a situation where life is gradually returning to normal, providing us with better opportunities to engage with people across various aspects of our lives. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, we were limited to hosting events in virtual settings. Now, we are truly fortunate to be able to host this conference in a hybrid format. This format allows many of us to attend, present our research, and reconnect with friends in person once again. For those who cannot join us physically, we still have effective virtual platforms available for interaction within this conference.

Navigating the economy and society toward a more prosperous post-crisis era necessitates comprehensive solutions that harmonize social and economic considerations. There is a wealth of knowledge from brilliant minds within both academic institutions and industries that we can leverage to stimulate the development of practical and tangible frameworks for this endeavor.

The 4th ICSED serves as a timely and valuable platform for bringing together brilliant minds to collaborate and exchange knowledge grounded in evidence and data. This is essential for achieving a profound understanding of the multifaceted effects of the Covid-19 crisis on social and economic development. I have learned that the conference's agenda spans a variety of topics, including Economics, Counselling and Psychology, Social and Policy Studies, and other contemporary issues.

I sincerely anticipate that, by the conclusion of this conference, all participants will have gained a deeper understanding of these subjects through keynote addresses and working paper presentations. The presence of esteemed guest speakers from both local and international institutions will undoubtedly enhance our knowledge and enrich our experiences.

Finally, I wish to seize this moment to express my gratitude to the dedicated efforts of the organizing committee in arranging the 4th ICSED. I extend my congratulations to the host, the Faculty of Business, Economics, and Social Development (FBESD) at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, and all the collaborators for their efforts in bringing together ICSED 2023. I am hopeful that the Faculty of Business, Economics, and Social Development at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu will maintain this proactive spirit and continue to collaborate in organizing future iterations of the ICSED.

Thank you.

Professor Dato' Dr. Mazlan Abd Ghaffar, FASc
Vice Chancellor
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

MESSAGE FROM DEAN,
FACULTY OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome every one of you to the 4th International Conference on Social and Economic Development (ICSED2023), which is proudly organized by the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development (FBESD), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. First and foremost, I would like to extend my warmest welcome and sincerest respect to all keynote speakers, presenters, and participants. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to our collaborators as well as to reviewers, and all judges.

ICSED2023 serves as a platform where academics, professionals, and postgraduate students can come together to share and discuss their current research findings and ideas. The theme for ICSED2023 is 'Good Governance on Social & Economic Development.' Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, a significant portion of the global population has become more vulnerable. The economic impact of the pandemic has been more extensive and profound compared to previous recessions, affecting nearly every sector of the economy and impacting social aspects of our communities.

This crisis has brought forth a multitude of socio-economic challenges, exacerbating existing issues such as poverty, inequality, and household debt. From a socio-economic perspective, the post Covid-19 crisis demands a closer examination of new challenges and opportunities for policymakers and society at large.

Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this conference provides a golden moment for us to come together and discuss current socio-economic issues and potential solutions. We are privileged to have distinguished speakers from academia and industry joining us over the two days of this conference. I eagerly anticipate engaging in thought-provoking discussions and dynamic exchanges of ideas regarding innovative solutions or models that can assist policymakers in reshaping the post-crisis economy in a more sustainable and inclusive manner.

Lastly, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the dedicated and enthusiastic members of the ICSED2023 organizing committee for their hard work and commitment in bringing this conference to fruition. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy the opportunity for knowledge sharing and networking during these two conference days.

Thank you.

Professor Dr. Suriyani Muhamad
Dean
Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

International Conference on Social and Economic Development 2023 (ICSED2023) is organized by Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development (FBESD), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT). ICSED2023 is the 4th series of ICSED. ICSED2023 is scheduled to be held in a hybrid mode on November 14-15, 2023, at the Universiti Malaysia Terengganu Convention Centre (UMTCC) and via the Webex application.

The aims of ICSED2023 are not only to provide a platform for academia and practitioners around the globe to share ideas and knowledge, but also to deepen the multidisciplinary nature of social and economic development research in a broad range of areas including public policy, sociology, communication, human ecology, economics, social well-being, counselling, community development, political science, rural development, ICT, and many others. The 2-day ICSED2023 will also feature prominent keynote speakers to share their expertise of knowledge, ideas, experiences and practices related to ICSED2023 theme.

The theme of ICSED2023 is 'Good Governance on Social & Economic Development'. We do believe that integration of ideas and actions will boost better innovation and solutions. We also believe that all challenges will lead to a better opportunity.

ICSED2023 will no doubt be proven to be exciting and educative. ICSED2023 team cordially invites you to participate in this event and together we flourish it into a most memorable experience. Thank you for your support and participation.

Conference Theme:
"Good Governance on Social & Economic Development".

Themes & Sub-themes:

A. Economics (Ekonomi)

- Agricultural Economics (Ekonomi Pertanian)
- Development Economics (Ekonomi Pembangunan)
- Environmental Economics (Ekonomi Alam Sekitar)
- Energy Economics (Ekonomi Tenaga)
- Financial Economics (Ekonomi Kewangan)
- International Economics (Ekonomi Antarabangsa)
- Islamic Economics (Ekonomi Islam)
- Natural Resources Economics (Ekonomi Sumber Alam)
- Poverty & Development (Kemiskinan & Pembangunan)

B. Counselling & Psychology (Kaunseling & Psikologi)
- Multicultural Counselling (Kaunseling Pelbagai Budaya)
- Counselling Process (Proses Kaunseling)
- Career Counselling (Kaunseling Kerjaya)
- Family Counselling (Kaunseling Keluarga)
- Developmental Psychology (Psikologi Perkembangan)
- Organizational Psychology (Psikologi Organisasi)
- Social Psychology (Psikologi Sosial)
- Health Psychology (Psikologi Kesihatan)

C. Social & Policy Studies (Pengajian Sosial & Polisi)
- Anthropology (Antropologi)
- Sociology (Sosiologi)
- Community Development (Pembangunan Komuniti)
- Environmental Management (Pengurusan Alam Sekitar)
- International Relations (Hubungan Antarabangsa)
- Public Administration (Pentadbiran Awam)
- Political Science (Sains Politik)
- Policy Studies (Pengajian Polisi)
- Rural & Urban Development (Pembangunan Bandar & Luar Bandar)
- Social Well-Being & Quality of Life (Kesejahteraan Sosial & Kualiti Hidup)
- Media & Communication (Media & Komunikasi)
- Leadership (Kepimpinan)

D. OTHER related Issues

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Patron
Prof. Dr. Mazlan Abd Ghaffar, FASc
Vice Chancellor, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

Chair I
Prof. Dr. Suriyani Muhamad
Dean, Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

Chair II
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yusri Ibrahim, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

Members
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosyidah Muhamad, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Zikri Muhammad, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Yulita, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Mohd Shazwan Bin Mohd Ariffin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Nor Fatimah Che Sulaiman, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Abdul Rahman Abdul Latip, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Muhamad Rias K V Zainuddin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Jumadil Saputra, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Siti Hajar Kamaruddin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Olawole Olanre Fawehinmi, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Siti Munirah Mauzud, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Hazaila Hassan, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Hakimah Nur binti Ahmad Hamidi, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Siti Balqis Md Noor, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Norfatiha Othman, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Noorhaslinda Kulub Abdul Rashid, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Zuhda Husain, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Rohana Ahmad, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Roshanim Koris, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Siti Aisyah Saat, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Fazliyaton Ramley, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Ts. Dr. Latifah Abdul Ghani, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Rahaya Md Jamin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Dr. Mohd Radzi Tarmizi A Halim, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mr. Azan Harun, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mr. Muhammad Syazli Sulaiman, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Rozita Binti Muhamad Nawi, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Miss Wan Zawati Wan Jaafar, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Nur Nadia Amira Noley, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Nor Shazleen Zuraimi, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Roziana Arifin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Norashikin Mohd Yusof, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Nabila Huda Baharin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia
Mdm. Norrizan Awang, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Chair
Prof. Dr. Suriyani Muhamad
Dean, Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

Members
Sub-Theme: Counselling & Psychology
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Madihah Binti Mohamad Shukri
Dr. Siti Salina Binti Abdullah
Dr. Jasmi Bin Abu Talib

Sub-Theme: Social & Policy Studies
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nor Hayati Binti Sa`at
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Yusri Bin Ibrahim
Dr. Zikri Bin Muhammad
Dr. Siti Aisyah Sa'at
Dr. Roslina Ismail
Ts. Dr. Latifah Abdul Ghani
Dr. Yulita
Dr. Norfatiha Binti Othman
Dr. Abdul Rahman Bin Abdul Latip
Dr. Siti Hajar Binti Kamaruddin
Dr. Olawole Olanre Fawehinmi
Dr. Siti Munirah Binti Mauzud
Dr. Mohd Shazwan Bin Mohd Ariffin

Sub-Theme: Economics
Dr. Muhammad Najit Bin Sukemi
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Azlina Binti Abd. Aziz
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zairihan Binti Abdul Halim
Dr. Mohd Nasir Bin Nawawi
Dr. Zuraini Binti Anang
Dr. Roseliza Binti Mat Alipiah
Dr. Jaharudin Bin Padli
Dr. Noorhaslinda Binti Kulub Abdul Rashid
Dr. Hazman Bin Samsudin
Dr. Nizam Bin Ahmat
Dr. Nor Ermawati Binti Hussain
Dr. Noor Haslina Binti Mohamad Akhir
Dr. Moe Shwe Sin
Dr. Jumadil Saputra
Dr. Nor Fatimah Binti Che Sulaiman
Dr. Roshanim Binti Koris
Dr. Muhamad Rias Bin K V Zainuddin
Dr. Hakimah Nur binti Ahmad Hamidi

Mr. Abdul Hayy Haziq Mohamad

Sub-Theme: Other Related Issues
Dr. Waleed Mutahar Abdulhadi Abdulgabbar
Prof. Dr. Yusliza Binti Mohd Yusoff
Dr. Mohd. Suhaimi Bin Shamsudin
Dr. Norakma Binti Abd Majid
Dr. Abdul Hafaz Bin Ngah
Dr. Khalid Farooq
Mr. Sattorov Abbos Bakhriddinovich

Judges For The Best Paper Award

Dr. Jumadil Saputra (Economics)
Dr. Hakimah Nur Binti Ahmad Hamidi (Economics)
Dr. Siti Hajar Binti Kamaruddin (Social & Policy Studies)
Dr. Norfatiha Othman Kamaruddin (Social & Policy Studies)
Dr. Siti Munirah Binti Mauzud (Social & Policy Studies)
Dr. Hazaila Binti Hassan (Psychology & Counselling)
Dr. Siti Balqis Binti Md Nor (Psychology & Counselling
Dr. Muhamad Rias Bin K V Zainuddin (Other Related Issues)
Dr. Olawole Olanre Fawehinmi (Other Related Issues)

KEYNOTES

Keynote 1

Dr. M. Samsuri, S.Pd., MT.
Director of LLDIKTI 4
West Java and Banten, Indonesia

Dr. M. Samsuri received his doctorate degree from the University of Indonesia. His area of expertise is chemistry. In 2022, he was appointed as the Head of LLDIKTI Region IV, covering West Java and Banten in Indonesia. His earlier career began in 2003 with the Ministry of Research and Technology. Dr. M. Samsuri was also a visiting researcher at the Korea Institute of Science and Technology Evaluation and Planning (KISTEP) in Korea from 2010 to 2011. Over the past five years, he has authored eight high-impact journals.

Keynote 2

Professor Dr. Ir. Bob Foster
Rector
Universitas Informatika & Bisnis Indonesia
Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

Prof. Dr. Ir. Bob Foster is currently the Rector of Universitas Informatika & Bisnis, Indonesia. In 2021, Prof. Foster received the Adjunct Professor award from our Faculty of Business, Economics & Social Development at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. He obtained his doctorate degree from Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia, in 2005. His area of expertise is in business management. Prof. Dr. Ir. Bob Foster has numerous high-impact publications, which can be found in international refereed journals. He is also actively engaged in social and religious activities.

Keynote 3

Professor Dr. Ir. Ai Komariah, MS.
Rector
Universitas Winaya Mukti
Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

Prof. Dr. Ir. Ai Komariah was born in Bandung and currently serves as the Rector at Universitas Winaya Mukti, Indonesia. She obtained her doctorate degree from Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia, in 2003. Her areas of interest include agriculture and horticulture. In 2019, she received an award from the Indonesian government for her excellent service over 30 years. Prof. Dr. Ir. Ai Komariah has been involved in three research programs as a chairman and has authored 17 research papers and five books in the past five years. She has also been an active member of the Soil Science Society of Indonesia since 2010.

Keynote 4

Professor Dr. Clevo Wilson
Queensland University of Technology
Australia

Professor Clevo Wilson is currently a professor in the Faculty of Business and Law at Queensland University of Technology in Australia. He obtained his doctorate degree in economics from the University of St. Andrews in the United Kingdom. His specialization encompasses various areas, including environmental, ecological, agricultural, tourism, transport, energy, and development economics. He has conducted research and published papers on diverse topics, such as tourism, aquaculture, energy and water conservation, agriculture, transport, natural disasters, the impact of major projects, pollution on property values, environmental sustainability, and wildlife conservation. He has been successful in securing several competitive research grants and consulting projects. In 2012, he co-authored a book titled 'Nature-Based Tourism and Conservation: New Economic Insights and Case Studies'.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Day 1: Tuesday (14th November 2023)</th></tr>
<tr><td>08.00AM
–
08.30AM</td><td colspan="4">Registration</td></tr>
<tr><td>08.30AM
–
10.00AM</td><td colspan="2">Special Session with Keynote Speakers:

Dr. M. Samsuri, S.Pd., MT.
Director of LLDIKTI 4
West Java and Banten, Indonesia

Professor Dr. Ir. Bob Foster
Rector
Universitas Informatika & Bisnis Indonesia
Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

Professor Dr. Ir. Ai Komariah, MS.
Rector
Universitas Winaya Mukti
Bandung, West Java, Indonesia</td><td colspan="2">Webex link:

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–
10.30AM</td><td colspan="4">Morning tea break</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30AM
–
12.30PM</td><td colspan="2">Opening Ceremony

Welcoming Remarks
Professor Dato` Dr. Mazlan bin Abd Ghaffar
Vice Chancellor
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu

Opening and Keynote Speech
Dr. Abdul Razak bin Ahmad
Chairman of Education Malaysia Global Services</td><td colspan="2">Webex link:

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02.00PM</td><td colspan="4">Lunch break</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">02.00PM
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03.30PM</td><td colspan="4">Parallel session I</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social & Policy Studies

Convention Hall 1</td><td>Social & Policy Studies

Convention Hall 2</td><td>Social & Policy Studies

Seminar Room 1</td><td>Social & Policy Studies

Seminar Room 2</td></tr>
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04.00PM</td><td colspan="4">Afternoon tea break</td></tr>
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Convention Hall 2</td><td>Economics

Seminar Room 1</td><td>Counselling & Psychology

Seminar Room 2</td></tr>
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10.00AM</td><td colspan="4">Parallel session III</td></tr>
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Convention Hall 1</td><td>Counselling & Psychology
Convention Hall 2</td><td>Other Contemporary Issues
Seminar Room 1</td><td>Social & Policy Studies

Seminar Room 2</td></tr>
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<tr><td>10.00AM</td><td colspan="4">Morning tea break</td></tr>
<tr><td>10.30AM
–
11.30AM</td><td colspan="2">Keynote Speech
Professor Dr. Clevo Wilson
Queensland University of Technology
Australia</td><td colspan="2">Webex link:
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01.00PM</td><td colspan="4">Parallel session IV</td></tr>
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Convention Hall 1</td><td>Social & Policy Studies

Convention Hall 2</td><td>Economics

Seminar Room 1</td><td>Other Contemporary Issues

Seminar Room 3</td></tr>
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<tr><td>01.00PM</td><td colspan="4">Lunch break</td></tr>
<tr><td>02.00PM
–
04.00PM</td><td colspan="4">Parallel session V (Physical)
Economics - Convention Hall 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>04.00PM
–
05.00PM</td><td colspan="3">Closing Ceremony
Profesor Dr. Suriyani binti Muhamad
Dean
Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu</td><td>Webex link:
https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=m05002fb7f15c18fbde255144e08d10c8</td></tr>
<tr><td>05.00PM</td><td colspan="4">Afternoon tea break</td></tr>
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PARALLEL SESSIONS

Day 1: Tuesday, 14th November 2023				
Parallel Presentation Session 1				
Theme and venue	**Social & Policy Studies** **Convention Hall 1**	**Social & Policy Studies** **Convention Hall 2**	**Social & Policy Studies** **Seminar Room 1**	**Social & Policy Studies** **Seminar Room 2**
Mode	**Physical**		**Virtual**	
Webex link	-		https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=m765c00449b5c683f6ded1ce5119d4eef	https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=m765c00449b5c683f6ded1ce5119d4eef
Moderator	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosyidah Muhamad	Dr. Siti Hajar Kamaruddin	Dr. Munira Mhd Rashid	Dr. Haspinor Teh
2.00-2.15PM	Political Literacy Among University Students in East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia *Mohd Yusri Ibrahim*	Development of Financial Reporting of Private Tahfiz Institution in Malaysia *Sri Wahyu Sakina Ahmad Sanusi*	Grand Design Orbit Digital Governance: Case Study Poverty and Development in Brebes *Titi Rahmawati Nazhir*	The Challenges of Property Management Companies in Managing High-Rise Residential Buildings During Covid-19 Pandemic *Fatin Umaira Muhamad Azian*
2.15-2.30PM	Pengurusan Kewangan Generasi Milenial: Perbandingan Gender *Zaimah Ramli*	Investigating the Impact of Corporate Governance on Project Performance: The Mediating Role of Institution Pressure in The Construction Industry of Pakistan: A Conceptual Paper *Rohana Ahmad*	Implementation of Village Government in Openness Public Information as A Form of Government A Good Village in Sumur Bandung Village *Abu Sidik*	Understanding Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviour of the Local Community in Redang Island Towards Sustainable Waste Management *Nurul Farhana Abdul Razak*
2.30-2.45PM	Ending Child Labour: Does Conditional Cash Transfer Matter? Evidence from Indonesia *Romi Bhakti Hartarto*	Unlocking the Potential of Idle Land Through Waqf *Azima Abdul Manaf*	A Boon or A Bane of Ebelia Rahmah: A Qualitative Approach *Kavitha Subaramaniam*	An Exploratory Study on Statelessness among Undocumented Population in Sarawak *Dayang Hajyrayati Binti Awg Kassim*
2.45-3.00PM	Religious Harm in Aceh Indonesia Province: Study of Regions That Implement Islamic Sharia	Cabaran Keusahawanan Agro Belia: Kajian Kes Usahawan Program Agropreneur Muda Terengganu	Exploring Consumer Single-Use Plastic Reduction Behaviour Among Young Urban Youth: A Conceptual Framework	Tahap Indeks Kesediaan Komuniti Terhadap Pembangunan Persekitaran Semulajadi Tasik

	Solikhah Muslich	*Siti Hajar Kamaruddin*	*Farah Merican*	Kenyir *Ihsan Alwi*
3.00-3.15PM	Perbahasan Isu Kemiskinan Di Dewan Undangan Negeri Terengganu *Rosyidah Muhamad*	-	Keujreun Blang Customary Institutional System in Aceh: What, Who, When, Why, Where and How Oriented in Public Policy *Nellis Mardhiah*	Sumatera Ekspres Media Framing Analysis on The Issue of the 2024 Presidential Election *Arif*
3.15-3.30PM	-	-	Factors Affecting Mental Health of Frontliners Post pandemic in India *Pooja Khurana*	The Significant Element of Social Aspect on Practice by Corporation in Malaysia: An Islamic Perspective *Ahmad Abdul Rahman*
Parallel Presentation Session II				
Theme and Venue	**Social & Policy Studies Convention Hall 1**	**Economics Convention Hall 2**	**Economics Seminar Room 1**	**Counselling & Psychology Seminar Room 2**
Mode	**Physical**		**Virtual**	
Webex link	-		https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=m765c00449b5c683f6ded1ce5119d4eef	https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=m765c00449b5c683f6ded1ce5119d4eef
Moderator	Dr. Siti Aishah Saat	Dr. Noor Haslina Mohd. Akhir	Dr. Nor Fatimah Binti Che Sulaiman	Dr. Raba'Aton Adawiah Yusof
4.00-4.15PM	Indigenous Forest Designation Policy: Realization of Recognition of the Role of Indigenous Peoples Facing the Climate Crisis in Indonesia *Anti Mayastuti*	An insight on Community Credit Borrowing in Malaysia *Md. Shahin Mia*	Changing Lifestyle and Consumption Pattern on Food in Malaysia *Nor Asmat Bt Ismail*	Psychological Well-Being: A Way Back to Normal *Sini Jose Veluthavarkey*
4.15-4.30PM	Women's Retirement Planning Behaviour: Evidence from the East Coast Malaysia *Nurasyikin Jamaludin*	Keunikan Warisan Budaya dan Inovasi Dalam Pembangunan Industri Batik Malaysia *Ahmad Farhan Zaini*	Willingness to Pay (WTP) For Natural Attractions Conservation: The Case of Tasik Kenyir *Farrah Waheeda Azan*	Kebimbangan Ibu Bapa Terhadap Pendidikan Tahfiz Anak-Anak Di Maahad Tahfiz Al-Ummah *Norazizah A. Aziz*

4.30-4.45PM	Sustainability Solid Waste Management in Malaysia and Ecological Modernization Theory *Siti Aisyah Saat*	The Relationship of Income Level, Employment Risk, Modern Lifestyles and Male Fertility: A Conceptual Paper *Nur Fatma Hasni Majid*	Determinants of Poverty in Rural and Urban Philippines *Chez Miguel Zarsuelo*	Dampak Negatif Gadget Dalam Pola Asuh Orang tua Terhadap Komununikasi Anak (Perspektif Teori Komunikasi Dalam Displin Ilmu Psikologi) *Muhammad Sukron*
4.45-5.00PM	State-Non-State Symbiosis: Fostering Agricultural Resilience in Terengganu, Malaysia *Roslina Ismail*	Are Urban People Willing to Buy Electric Vehicles? The Case of Banda Aceh Municipality, Aceh, Indonesia *Aliasuddin Aliasuddin*	Shaping Womens Work Patterns: The Role of Digital Tools and Employment Hours in the Formal Sectors in Indonesia *Yunisvita Yunisvita*	Kualiti Hidup Penagih Dadah Yang Menjalani Program Rawatan Terapi Metadon *Kamarul Md Shah*
5.00-5.15PM	-	Impact of Fintech Adoption on Financial Performance of the Commercial Banks in Pakistan: A Moderated Mediation Analysis of Social Influence and Competitiveness *Md. Shahin Mia*	Factors Influencing Affect the Quality of Fishermens Life *Haspinor Binti Teh*	-
5.15-5.30PM	-	The Impact of World Market Conditions on The Performance of The Indonesian Coffee Industry *Deassy Apriani*	How Does the Human Capital and Technology Diffusion Affect the Development of Malaysian Manufacturing Industries? *Aiza Liyana Anuar*	-
5.30-5.45PM	-	Impak Pendemik Covid-A9 Terhadap Perniagaan Kecil Dan Sederhana Di Pantai Timur *Muhammad Najit Sukemi*	-	-

Day 2: Wednesday, 15 November 2023				
Parallel Presentation Session III				
Theme and Venue	**Economics** **Convention Hall 1**	**Counselling & Psychology** **Convention Hall 2**	**Other Contemporary Issues** **Seminar Room 1**	**Social & Policy Studies** **Seminar Room 2**
Mode	**Physical**		**Virtual**	
Webex link	-		https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=maaa356c68830e4aa620c1cffe659eaad	https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=maaa356c68830e4aa620c1cffe659eaad
Moderator	Dr. Nor Aishah Awi	Dr. Suhaili Arifin	Dr. Olawole Olanre Fawehinmi	Dr. Moe Shwe Sin
8.30 – 8.45 AM	Improving Employee Green Behaviour Millennial Generation through Green Human Resources management *Lenny Christina Nawangsari*	Mental Health and Attitude Toward Seeking Counselling Help among Malaysian University Students *Suhaili Arifin*	Employee Turnover and Retention Issues in Bangladesh from 2010-2021: A Bibliometric Trend Analysis *Shamsel Arifin*	Measuring the Effect of Suri@Home Program on Alleviating Poverty among Women in Terengganu *Abdul Rahman Abdul Latip*
8.45 – 9.00 AM	Households Preferences of Domestic Water Conservation Using Choice Modelling: A Systematic Literature Review *Nurshafiqah Abdul Malek*	Linking psychosocial safety climate and service climate to work engagement and leader-rated employee performance: A multilevel diary approach *Yulita*	Teacher Communication Patterns in Improving Learning Abilities in Disabled Students at Lubuklinggau State Slb (Study of Deaf and Speech Impaired Students) *M. Alam Kesuma Alam*	Spread the Word: Coalescing Inter-/Trans-sectionality in Championing Transformative Social Policy Towards Disability Inclusiveness *Sayed Mawismi bin Sayed Mohamad Mustar*
9.00 – 9.15 AM	Kos Sara Hidup Mempengaruhi Kebahagiaan Penduduk di Malaysia *Muhammad Shauqi Abd Halim*	Self-management from the Perspective of Abraham Maslow: a case study of a Freshman at Darussalam Gontor University, Indonesia, with a Contrasting Intellectual Background *Tito Rifiyansyah*	Examining the Prevalence of Interpersonal Conflict on Suicidal Ideation among Male Drug Addicts in a Rehabilitation Centre in Malaysia *Norshahira Binti Osman*	Economic Development through Agricultural Practices for Temiar Tribe at Nenggiri Hydroelectric Project, Jajahan Gua Musang *Azilah Ishak*
9.15 – 9.30 AM	The Perspective of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises	A study on Long Distance Relationship Conflicts and Coping	Impact of Government Support on Entrepreneurial	Wildlife inventory prior to logging activities at Blokc A at

	(SMEs) on the Adoption of Blockchain-based Applications *Syamsul Hidayat*	Mechanism through Womens Perspective *Norwati Mansor*	Education And Entrepreneurial Intention Among The Pakistani University Students: A Comprehensive Review *Ghulam Mujtaba*	future Nenggiri Hydroelectric (NHEP) project Reservoir *Nur Syuhadah binti Shafie*
9.30 – 9.45 AM	Hubungan Dinamik Antara Inflasi Dan Pertumbuhan Ekonomi Terhadap Pengangguran Di Malaysia *Nizam Ahmat*	Motivasi Kendiri dan Komunikasi Interpersonal Dalam Kalangan Anak OKU Penglihatan di Daerah Marang *Zuhda Husain*	Communication Between Working Mothers and Adolescents Girls About Sex Education (Case Study Kompleks DPR ACEH) *Rahma Hidayati Rahma*	Community Awareness About Direct and Indirect Benefits of Merchang Mangrove Forest, Terengganu, Malaysia *Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal*
9.45 – 10.00 AM	-	-	Waste Recycling Through Local Authority Initiatives: A Case Study of Sustainable Centers in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah *Mohammad Tahir Mapa*	-
Parallel Presentation Session IV				
Theme and Venue	**Other Contemporary Issues** **Convention Hall 1**	**Social & Policy Studies** **Convention Hall 2**	**Economics** **Seminar Room 1**	**Other Contemporary Issues** **Seminar Room 2**
Mode	**Physical**		**Virtual**	
Webex link	-		https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=maaa356c68830e4aa620c1cffe659eaad	https://umt.webex.com/umt/j.php?MTID=maaa356c68830e4aa620c1cffe659eaad
Moderator	Dr. Norfatiha Binti Othman	Dr. Roslina Binti Ismail	Dr. Mohd Nasir Nawawi	Dr. Rohila @ Norhamizah Binti Awang
11.30 – 11.45 AM	Understanding How Transformational Leadership, Digital Transformation and Work-Life Balance Affect Employee Performance in Pakistan's Public Sector: Mediated by Employee Motivation *Muhammad Hammad*	Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhi Kesihatan Mental dalam kalangan Komuniti B40 di Malaysia *Roshanim Koris*	Bribery, corruption, and fraud controversy: Impact on the financial performance of Malaysian Companies *Siti Nurain Muhmad*	1MDB, Jho Low and Professional Intermediaries *Zaharul Abdullah*

11.45 – 12.00 PM	The Main Actors Understanding of Sustainability Initiatives: A Case Study of Malaysian Public-listed Companies *Azlina Abdul Aziz*	Enhancing Local Government Services through Public Engagement *Zikri Muhammad*	New Product Development Success in Islamic Banking: Does Human Capital Competencies Support? *Mirza Tabrani*	Aligning Agribusiness, Agrotourism, and Sustainability at Seriacre Field Agro Farm: A Proposal to Meet Business, Employees, and Community Needs *Mokthar Ismail*
12.00 – 12.15 PM	The Acceptance and Use of Virtual Reality Technology and Its Implication Towards Learning Attitude Among University Student in Subang Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia *Aris Abdul Rahman*	Investigating Perceived Ease-Of-Use, Perceived Usefulness, Intention-To-Use of The Users of Augmented Reality Application Among Parents and Teachers of Special Needs Children: Regression Analysis *Mohamad Suhaimi Ramli*	A Brief Review of ESG and Portfolio Performance *Syarifah Nur Samihah Syed Ismail*	The effects of Shariah Governance on Takaful Performance of Takaful Operators in Malaysia *Nurul Nazlia Jamil*
12.15 – 12.30 PM	Impact of Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction on Male Fertility and Job Performance *Nur Fatma Husna Majid*	Understanding the Threat of Radical Religious Extremism Influence Among Malaysian Muslim Cyber Users *Fakhratu Naimah Muhad*	Does Debt Necessary to Local Government Fiscal Independency? (Case of Provincial Level in Sumatera) *Putri Bintusy Syathi*	A Review of Tax Risk Management for Chinese Real Estate Enterprise *Rohila @ Norhamizah Awang*
12.30 – 12.45 PM	Revitalizing Traditional Medicines and Midwifery Practices *Khatijah Omar*	Dispute Resolution for Vaccine Injury Compensation in Malaysia: A Qualitative Study *Fahirah Syaliza Mokhtar*	Determining the Quality of Public-Private Partnership in Environmental Management *Mohd Nasir Nawawi*	Factors Influencing Employee Retention Among Public Sector in Terengganu: Way Forward for Pitas2030 *Azlinzuraini Ahmad*
12.45 – 1.00 PM	-	-	The Readiness of Malay Hawkers towards the New Norms of Retail Performance for Endemic COVID-19 *Muhammad Abi Sofian Abdul Halim*	Socio-Economic Characteristics on the Utilization of Basic Application Livestock Management among Low-Income Small Ruminant Farmers in Terengganu *Hayuni Mazlan*

Parallel Presentation Session V	
Theme and Venue	**Economics** **Convention Hall 1**
Mode	**Physical**
Moderator	Dr. Noorhaslinda Kulub Abd. Rashid
2.00-2.15PM	Palm Oil Trade Restrictiveness Index and Its Impact on World Palm Oil Exports *Hakimah Nur Ahmad Hamidi*
2.15-2.30PM	Revisiting Okuns Law in Malaysia From the Perspectives of National Unemployment and Graduates Unemployment *Muhamad Rias K V Zainuddin*
2.30-2.45PM	Religious Factors in Measuring Multidimensional Poverty and Household Life Satisfaction: A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) *Siti Nur Fatin Atirah Binti Rosli*
2.45-3.00PM	Kesan Limpahan Nilai Sumber Perikanan Marin Tangkapan Laut Dalam Di Pulau Layang-Layang *Roseliza Binti Mat Alipiah*
3.00-3.15PM	Krisis Kos Sara Hidup Masa Kini: Perbelanjaan Wasatiyyah Terhadap Keutamaan Keperluan Dan Kehendak *Noorhaslinda Kulub Abd. Rashid*
3.15-3.30PM	Impact of Political Instability on Financial Development, Economic Growth, Economic Volatility, and Financial Stability *Ahmad Shauqi Haji Mohamad Zubir*

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- All conference times are based on Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Time (UTC +8 hours).
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  - you're using your full name in Cisco Webex.
  - your video and audio quality are good - wearing headphones can eliminate background noise.
  - you have stable Internet access.
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- Link to access the virtual sessions are provided in the conference schedule in the Program Book.
- Each session runs for 1 hour and 30 minutes and consists of 4 – 6 presentations. 10 minutes are allocated per presentation followed by 5 minutes for discussion.
- Each session will be conducted within the allocated time, to allow theparticipants to move between sessions to listen to papers of their interest.
- To ensure the smoothness of the sessions, please:
  - be in the respective rooms 5 minutes prior to the start time.
  - mute your microphone if you are not presenting and unmute if you would like to ask questions during the Q&A session.
  - reserve your questions at the end of the presentation

PREPARING FOR YOUR VIRTUAL SESSION

Presenter

Before the session:

- Please make sure to join the virtual session 10 minutes prior to the start. The Session Chair will then introduce every speaker as required.
- When entering the session, make sure to identify yourself to the Session Chair.
- Please note that you will be live as soon as you turn on your microphone and/or your camera after being introduced by the Session Chair.

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- The Chat Box tool will be used by the registered attendees to ask questions. The Session Chair will select questions for the presenter to answer.
- The Chat Box tool will be used by Session Chair to privately contact the presenters and participants if needed. Should you need technical assistance, kindly inform the Session Chair using this tool.

- Tips: Test your audio and video as you join; keep your microphone muted when not speaking; Position your webcam appropriately and make contact with audiences as much as possible.

Session Chairs

- A Session Chair who acts as **a moderator** will be assigned to each virtual session to ensure smooth transitions between presentations (pre-recorded and live). The Session Chair is also required to introduce speakers, facilitate the running of the session, and manage Q & A session.
- **Keep time**. Each session runs for 1 hour and 30 minutes and consists of 4 – 6 presentations. 10 minutes are allocated per presentation followed by 5 minutes for discussion. Remind presenters when 5 and 2 minutes are left via the Chat Box tool. Chair can politely mute speaker when time for presentation or discussion is up.
- Please do not take more time for the presentation or for the Q & A session, to allow attendees to move to the other parallel sessions at the end of the last paper. As participants may want to move between sessions to listen to papers of their interest, please follow the order of the program as much as possible.
- Session Chairs will be assigned the role of Co-host during the session. This gives you the permission to do almost anything that the host can do, e.g. mute participants, ask participants to unmute themselves, etc.

Tips and Tricks

- Sharing your slides as a pdf file instead of PowerPoint can save your computer memory and reduce the chance of interruptions in your audio/video.
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- Before sharing your screen, make sure that the only applications open on your computer are Cisco Webex and your slides.
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- If someone from the technical team is presenting your slides, please say "Next Slide" when you are ready to move to the next slide.
- If you plan to share any video clips in your presentation, select <Share computer sound> if the clip has sound and <Optimize screen share for video clip>.
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Should you require any technical assistances during the event, please do not hesitate to contact our technical team. Their details are as follows:

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Mr. Muhammad Syazli Sulaiman	syaz@umt.edu.my	+6011 26079935

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An Exploratory Study on Statelessness among Undocumented Population in Sarawak

Dayang Hajyrayati Binti Awg Kassim [1]*, Noor Azlan Bin Mohd Noor [2]
[1, 2] Sociology and Anthropology Department, International Islamic University Malaysia, Selangor, MALAYSIA.
[1] Anthropology and Sociology Department, University Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan, MALAYSIA.
*Corresponding Author: akdhajyrayati@unimas.my

ABSTRACT

Introduction:
Indigenous communities in Sarawak are at risk of statelessness due to their inability to comply with National Registration Department birth registration regulations. Given the severity of statelessness in Sarawak, there are limited studies on this subject.

Background and purpose:
This article provides a preliminary examination of the causes of statelessness among undocumented Sarawak's indigenous population. Hence, the primary aims of this paper is to identify structural and contextual causes that contributes to statelessness among the indigenous community living in Sarawak from the perspective of multiple stakeholders, including stateless people themselves**.**

Methodology:
This study was conducted using a qualitative research design between June 2021 and February 2023. The study utilizes existing secondary sources of information and incorporates the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders through in-depth interviews and participant observation. In-depth interviews were conducted with ten stakeholders, including one government official, one human rights activist, one academician, 3 local NGOs representatives, and 4 stateless individuals and their families.

Results:
The preliminary findings of the study reveal instances of "unintentional" statelessness caused by an inconsistency between the people's understanding of the law (or the lack thereof) and what is required by the systems. In this note, administrative barriers and gaps in nationality law emerge as major structural causes. Meanwhile, infrastructural barriers, cross-border marriages, and marriage customs according to *adat* were identified as contextual causes that contribute to the stateless condition.

Conclusion:
This paper calls for renewed efforts toward a formulation of more efficient intervention and inclusive policies, legal reforms, and the establishment of good practice in human rights advocacy aimed at reducing statelessness and its negative effects.

Keywords: statelessness, legal limbo, Sarawak, indigenous community
Themes: Social and Policies Studies (Anthropology)

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1. Introduction

Statelessness is a phenomenon that transcends international borders and continues to have a global impact on the lives of stateless people. Several international non-governmental organizations addressing statelessness provide varying estimates of the number of stateless populations. In 2005, Refugees International estimated there were 11 million stateless persons worldwide, while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated there were 5.8 million at the end of 2006 (Van Waas, 2008). According to UNHCR data, there were 3,9 million stateless persons at the end of 2018 (Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, 2018).

According to studies, statelessness can occur in two contexts: migratory statelessness and statelessness in situ (Gyulai, 2012; Liew, 2019). Although Malaysia is home to more than 1.9 million undocumented migrants, Liew (2019) argues that not all cases of statelessness in the country are linked to migration; his research shows that it also occurs among those who have significant or stable ties to Malaysia through birth, long-term residence, or birth to a parent with citizenship. While stateless people in a migratory context are migrants or have a migratory background, statelessness *in situ* may affect indigenous people, who refer to any Malaysians who identify as Orang Asli, Orang Ulu, or Bumiputera ethnic minorities Sabah and Sarawak. As a result, the author proposes that because people who are stateless *in situ* have ties to the country in which they reside yet have no significant connection to any other country, citizenship should be granted to them. The aforementioned statement reflects the fundamental right to citizenship, as articulated in Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 6 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which is applicable to all individuals, irrespective of their racial or religious affiliations.

While stateless societies often remain hidden and unnoticed, studies have highlighted the increased vulnerability of indigenous communities to statelessness situation (Berma et al., 2006; Jayasooria, 2014; Duraisingam, 2016; Liew, 2019). And even though the natives of Sabah, Sarawak, and the Orang Asli have bumiputra status, their access to bumiputra privileges is limited (Nah, 2007). Due to their inability to comply with National Registration Department (NRD) regulations for birth registration, some members of these communities are also at risk of *de facto* statelessness. According to UNHCR, while being undocumented is distinct from statelessness, lack of birth registration can lead to statelessness because a birth certificate is necessary to prove where a person was born and who their parents are, which is important for establishing nationality. Hence, indigenous people often faced socio-economic disparities, cultural norms, and institutional constraints, resulting in their relative marginalization when compared to the dominant majority groups. Therefore, it is important to pay special attention to their situation. Relevantly, the connection between the inherent marginalization of Sarawak's indigenous communities and the prevalence of statelessness among them requires further scholarly investigation.

Historical Context and Contemporary Realities of Statelessness in Sarawak

Based on the most recent statistical data provided by the Sarawak Premier's Department, a total of 9,314 individuals residing in the state have been identified as lacking official identity documentation.[1] Department the National Registration Department

[1] '*Special task force to handle issue of 'stateless' people in Sarawak'*, The Star, published on 25/7/2023, accessed at:

Sarawak reported that a total of 6,784 applications were received from 158 outreach programs carried out statewide to resolve identity documentation issues from 2015 to 2017[2]. Altogether, 4,554 applications were received for processing, while the remaining 2,230 applications were denied for a variety of reasons (SUARAM, 2017). The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) also announced that in between 2017 to 2022, a total of 9,259 citizenship applications for minors under the age of 18 were submitted from Sabah and Sarawak, with just 198 applications approved in 2022[3]. Meanwhile, as of 2019, the Sarawak Special Committee on Citizenship had received 723 applications. A Special Committee on Citizenship (SCC) was founded in 2016 to address the issue of statelessness in Sarawak, and as of 2023, 900 citizenship cases received under the committee were still pending. It should be noted that the SCC was not created for an extended period, as it was given until December 2017 to resolve the documentation issues, and the committee would investigate the details of applications, such as documentary evidence or other materials that prove the applicant's citizenship is genuine. The committee would consider two crucial requirements for accepting applications: the candidates and their parents were born in Sarawak.

Statelessness is deeply rooted in the colonial and postcolonial histories of many nations, and Sarawak is no exception. Sarawak's development has been historically hampered by its remote location because in the past, living in remote areas provided security and protection due to tribal warfare among the indigenous community (Windle & Cramb, 1997). Furthermore, the biased development approach introduced during the Brooke colonial regime in Sarawak mainly focused on developing profitable urban areas, resulting in spatial and development inequality (Echoh, Md Nor & Masron, 2015). Hence, indigenous groups in rural Sarawak are known to suffer a longstanding history of development disparity and unable to enjoy economic benefits to improve their quality of life at par of other groups in urban areas (Jayasooria, 2014). About 75% of the rural population in Sarawak is spread out across rural areas, while the remaining 25% live in major cities such as Kuching, Miri, Sibu, and Bintulu (Walton, 1990; Sarawak Economic Planning Unit, 2007). Not only does remoteness and development inequality limit rural communities' access to social and economic benefits, but it has also resulted in greater poverty and a widening income disparity between urban and rural populations (Minos, 2000; Berma, 2004). According to statistic in 2002, 36.4% of Iban, 33% of Melanau, and 28% of Other Bumiputera, continue to live below the official poverty line in comparison to 16.5% of Malays and 4.3% of Chinese, (Berma, Shahadan, & Gapor, 2006). As a result, various reports and research have linked indigenous community citizenship issues to rural poverty (Berma et al., 2006; Jayasooria, 2014; Duraisingam, 2016; SUARAM, 2017; Liew, 2019).

In spite of the government's efforts to address matters pertaining to identity documents such as identity cards, marriage certificates, and birth certificates, through the establishment of a specialized task force in 2015, and the subsequent formation of a temporary task force in

https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2023/07/25/special-task-force-to-handle-issue-of-stateless-people-in-sarawak

[2] '*Not true JPN officers only sit in office*', The Borneo Post, published on 15/02/2018, accessed at:http://www.theborneopost.com/2018/02/15/not-true-jpn-officers-only-sit-in-office/

[3] '*Minister: 198 of 9,259 citizenship applications for under 18s in Sarawak, Sabah approved since 2017*', MalayMail, published on 16/08/2022, accessed at: https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2022/03/16/minister-198-of-9259-citizenship-applications-for-under-18s-in-sarawak-saba/2047786

2016 to expedite the processing of birth certificates for stateless children, it has been argued that these efforts are perceived as insufficient to reach population living in the utmost interior of Sarawak (SUARAM,2017). The implementation of temporary task forces was criticized for being ad-hoc and activists have emphasized the government task force's failure to adequately publicize its efforts to rural areas, as well as the arbitrary and selective manner in which government registration drives are conducted. As an illustration, the processing of Mykad applications typically follows a case-by-case approach or is facilitated through government initiatives that focus on specific places and designated dates. New cases continue to arise due to a rigid approach towards the situation of rural people in Sarawak and a lack of education on proper procedures in rural communities. It can be argued that obtaining identity document that should be considered as fundamental right, has turned into a luxury and privilege among the indigenous population in Sarawak. As a result, this issue has become a vicious cycle in which not only does statelessness affect one generation, but it also affects the generations that follow, leaving entire families concerned about their future.

The devastating effects of statelessness not only contribute to the further marginalization of the indigenous and rural population, but also to the denial of basic human rights, such as the right to work, to receive an education, to have access to adequate health care, to marry, to vote in elections, to travel abroad, to register births, to purchase property, and even to start a business. Due to the limited number of studies conducted on the context of Sarawak, there is still a lack of clarity on this issue, given the immensity of statelessness problems among this population. This study's preliminary analysis clarifies the perpetual effects of this situation on the lives of indigenous peoples in Sarawak and emphasizes the need to strengthen proactive measures to protect the rights and identity of the indigenous peoples. Consequently, the study has the following objectives:

a. To identify structural and contextual causes that contributes to statelessness among the indigenous community living in Sarawak from the perspective of multiple stakeholders, including stateless people themselves

b. To understand the lived experiences of statelessness as narrated by the undocumented individuals in Sarawak

2. Literature Review

Although there has been no academic literature or comprehensive research pertaining to the statelessness situation in Sarawak to date, with the exception of a report produced by The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), there are various studies that delve into the situation particularly in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah. It is noteworthy that most research began by looking at the issues from a legal framework because the problem of statelessness is widely recognized as a legal problem. In Malaysia, there have been several academic works that have examined the issue of statelessness within the legal framework (Afandi,2012; Razali, Nordin & Duraisingam, 2015; Razali,2017; Saman & Affandi, 2018; Dusuki, 2018; Liew, 2019; Selvakumaran et.al, 2022). The study conducted by Liew (2019) is considered the most extensive qualitative research on the topic. The study examined the causes and effects of statelessness in six different categories of stateless population in Malaysia. The first category consists of people who have lived in the country since before independence, as well as their descendants. This category of statelessness is associated with a large population of Indian Tamils who resided in rural

plantations prior to Malaysia's independence. Persons who lack important documents such as birth certificates or marriage certificates to obtain citizenship are the second group identified by the study. While the third category comprises of abandoned or "foundling" children and adopted children. The fourth category asserts that statelessness among children results from their parents' mixed marriages or lack of legal status. The fifth category consists of indigenous people, while the sixth includes refugees and the offspring of migrant workers. It is important to note that in this study, five out of six categories of stateless people have genuine and effective ties to Malaysia and are not necessarily migrants or foreigners.

The lack of sufficient documentation presents a significant obstacle in the process of obtaining citizenship, and this has been extensively acknowledged as a key factor contributing to the issue of statelessness in Malaysia (Allerton, 2014; Razali, 2017; Liew, 2019). According to a study conducted by Baltazar et al. (2019) among migrants of Filipino descent in Sabah, research participants stated that their children are left without proper legal documentation or are exposed to the risk of statelessness due to factors such as incomplete documents, a complex and inflexible application process, and lengthy procedures. Meanwhile, a study by Duraisingam (2016) elaborates on the internal and external factors that contribute to Malaysia's alarming statelessness crisis. This research examines four distinct stateless communities with long histories in the region. These groups include Filipino migrants in Sabah, Indian Tamil laborers, Rohingya from Myanmar, and Orang Asli in West Malaysia. According to the author, internal factors refer to the stateless person's innate disposition, traits, or circumstances, which are associated with a lack of awareness regarding the documentation process and its significance. Meanwhile, External forces, on the other hand, conceal a range of influences that arise from conditions beyond the direct control of stateless persons but primarily within the jurisdiction of governmental authority (Duraisingam, 2016).

A comprehensive body of academic research has thoroughly investigated a range of factors pertaining to the issue of statelessness among children in Malaysia. The complex situation at hand arises from a combination of various factors, including gaps in nationality laws and the prevalence of unregistered marital unions, among other contributing elements (Afandi, 2012; Razali, 2017; Yusoff, Afandi, Hashim, & Hak, 2019; Allerton, 2017; Baltazar et al., 2019). A study indicates that in many cases, foundlings (children born to unknown parents), children who were separated from their parents without any proof of paternity, and children who were born outside of wedlock all continue to experience statelessness (Razali, 2017). It has been argued that the root of this problem lies in the implementation of the *jus sanguinis* principle governing Malaysian citizenship law. According to Razali (2017), this fundamental principal mandates that in order for a child to be eligible for citizenship, their birth must occur within the territorial boundaries of Malaysia, with both parents being legally married and at least one parent possessing Malaysian citizenship or permanent resident status. Accordingly, the legal consequences that arise from unregistered marriages and mixed marriages have the potential to significantly impact the legal status of the children (Duraisingam, 2016).

On the other hand, the relationship between statelessness and migration in Malaysia has been examined in various publications (Nah, 2007; Razali et al., 2015). The study by Razali et al. (2015), in particular, shows how cross-border migration has led to a statelessness situation among irregular labor migrants and refugees in Malaysia. This situation is mostly caused by an influx of migrants to Malaysian borders from poorer and nearby nations such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka. According to the study, forced and irregular migration has increased the vulnerability of three groups of migrants to statelessness: irregular migrants, victims of trafficking, and refugees. Razali et al. (2015) also examined three traditional causes of statelessness. The conflict in nationality laws is the first traditional cause. This conflict is a result of a situation where a child is born in a state that follows the jus sanguinis nationality law but

whose parents originate from a state that follows the jus soli nationality law. The second traditional cause is gender-based law that discriminates based on gender, race, and political viewpoint. The third traditional cause is territorial changes such as the dissolution or merger of a particular state.

In the context of Sarawak, Jayasooria (2014) briefly presents a SUHAKAM micro-level case study report of the Penans in Ulu Belaga to illustrate a relationship between development issues in Sarawak and statelessness. The Penan of Long Singu and Long Jaik demonstrated an extreme case of poverty that had an impact on their life, such as difficulties accessing civil registration. Without any legal documents such as identity cards or birth certificates, they're considered stateless and have limited access to public health, education, and welfare services. Recognizing the development disparity experienced by Sarawak's indigenous people, the author advocates for a critical shift toward human rights-based empowerment and a needs-based strategy aimed at reducing barriers to equal opportunities and developmental access. Another study on poverty alleviation among the Bumiputera minority in Sarawak indicated that the citizenship challenges faced by the rural poor have a detrimental impact on their access to employment, scholarships, financial aid, and educational opportunities, which not only trapping them in a cycle of poverty, but also have an intergenerational impact because children may inherit statelessness from one or both of their parents (Berma, 2006).

Despite the abundance of literature in the field, there is a dearth of research that concentrates on the issue of statelessness among the indigenous population, particularly in the Sarawak region. In this regard, there is no empirical evidence that provides a comprehensive and contextual analysis of the extent of the statelessness problem among the indigenous and marginalized population in rural Sarawak. And given the increasing prevalence of statelessness issues among the rural population in Sarawak, this study not only aims to examine the causes and effects of statelessness in the region, but also to dispel the common misconception that statelessness in Malaysia only affects refugees and migrants.

3. Research Method

This study was conducted using a qualitative research design between June 2021 and February 2023. For a preliminary examination of the statelessness situation among the indigenous people of Sarawak, the study utilizes existing secondary sources of information that were produced during the adoption and amendment of laws, policies, and practices. This approach allowed us to thoroughly examine the underlying factors, contextual conditions, and responses associated with these amendments. These secondary sources came in the form of press articles, memorandums, speeches, statements, and guidelines released by the government and other stakeholders. Additionally, this study incorporates the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders through in-depth interviews and participant observation to supplement the analysis of a vast array of written materials. In addition, we have reached out to experts who have the most experience working with stateless individuals and knowledge of relevant issues in order to obtain background information. We gathered perspectives from all informants, such as (1) work experiences with stateless people (2) detail of statelessness cases among indigenous people to identify contributive factors to their situation (3) difficulties encountered while assisting stateless people (4) strategies devised to address statelessness; and (5) policy and practice recommendations to resolve statelessness. Meanwhile, for stateless people, we concentrated on their lived experiences to learn about causes, challenges, and consequences of statelessness. Since there were no standard practices or concrete policies in Sarawak addressing the issue of statelessness, a method of purposive sampling was

used to identify research participants. Specifically, the study utilized snowball sampling to identify stateless individuals, gathering data from local activists who have been actively engaged in assisting stateless individuals. Consequently, the recruiting process has yielded limited samples of individuals who are qualified to discuss the subject of this inquiry. Accordingly, in-depth interviews were conducted with ten stakeholders, including a government official, a human rights activist, an academician, 3 local NGOs representatives, and 4 stateless individuals and their families. In order to safeguard the identities of the stateless individuals discussed in the narratives and data collected for this research, the study has taken measures to anonymize the names of the respondents.

4. Result

Structural causes of statelessness

The Gaps in Nationality Law

Within the framework of the Federal Constitution, there are four pathways for a person to obtain citizenship in Malaysia: through the operation of laws or automatically, through registration, naturalisation, or incorporation of territory. As stated in Article 14 of the Federal Constitution, a person is a citizen by operation of law if one of their parents was a Malaysian or permanent resident at the time of their birth, or if they were born in Malaysia and were not born a citizen of any other country. However, this article must be read in conjunction with the Second Schedule, which restricts the ability of Malaysian mothers to confer their citizenship on their children born abroad by operation of law. Therefore, Malaysian mothers are required to follow the procedures outlined in Article 15(2)4 in order to register for citizenship. According to Child Rights Coalition Malaysia (CRCM) status report released in 2019, these procedures have not always been successful and are frequently beset with delays. Even though there are discretionary registration provisions that may allow children born abroad to be granted Malaysian nationality, the data from MOHA shows that these applications have a very low success rate.

In 1995, Malaysia had ratified one of the most important human rights treaties which protect against discrimination on the basis of gender under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). However, the effectiveness of the Convention has been limited, and there are still legal constraints that prevent Malaysian mothers from passing on their nationality to children born abroad. Despite the fact that Malaysian mothers can still register their children born abroad under Article 15(2), there is no certainty that the application would be approved, leaving the children at risk of statelessness (DHRRA, 2019). This is especially true if the foreign father is unable to transmit his nationality to his children. In a written response to a parliamentary question in 2019 and 2021, MOHA revealed that, from 2013 to 2018, only 142 applications were approved, whereas 3,715 were denied and 4,959 were pending[4]. Between 2018 to 2021, only 21 of 2,352 applications had been successful, with 31 applications being rejected[5].

[4] Hansard Parliament of Malaysia (House of Senate), Penyata Rasmi Parlimen Dewan Rakyat Parlimen Keempat Belas Penggal Kedua Mesyuarat Ketiga DR.09.10.2019.BIL.35. Accessed at https://www.parlimen.gov.my/files/hindex/pdf/DR09102019.pdf#page=24&zoom=100&search=kewarganegaraan

[5] '*Home Ministry says approved 21 of 2,352 citizenship applications by Malaysian mums for their kids from 2018 until now',* Malay Mail, published on 26/10/2021, accessed at: https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2021/10/26/home-ministry-says-approved-21-of-2352-citizenship-applications-by-malaysia/2016181

Because there is no separate legislation concerning citizenship for Sarawak, this legal constraint also applies to some of the statelessness cases involving children who are born overseas by their Sarawakian mother. Several studies have found that cross-border marriages between indigenous communities in Sarawak and Kalimantan, Indonesia, are prevalent, owing to socio-historical ties and unregulated border crossing for since time immemorial (Bala, 2002; Amster, 2005; Oesterheld, 2016). This type of marital arrangement becomes problematic when the spouses are unable to provide any documentary evidence of their marriage after returning to Malaysia, and the situation is further complicated by the fact that the child was born outside of Malaysia, even though the mother is a Malaysian citizen.

This unfortunate legal consequence was experienced by one of the stateless informants, Liman, a Bidayuh man, aged 36 from Kota Samarahan. He encountered difficulties in obtaining citizenship due to the fact that the law prohibits his mother from passing on her nationality to her overseas-born children, and their father, who had been granted citizenship by the Malaysian government, could not pass on his nationality due to the lack of a legally recognized marriage certificate. His mother gave birth to him when they accompanied their father back to Nyari, Indonesia and did not return to Sarawak until he was six years old.

> *I've been applying since the early 1990s, when I found out I needed my birth certificate to get into school. Five or six times, but all of my applications were turned down. When I applied again in early 2022, the NRD officer told me to get my birth certificate from the government of Indonesia. I was told again to get another paper after I got my birth certificate from the Indonesian government. I went to the Indonesian consulate in Kuching with a friend. When I got there, I was told that they had already given me the paper I wanted (my birth certificate) and couldn't give me anything else.*
>
> (Liman, interviewed on the 5th February 2023)

Liman, who is illiterate and unable to understand the additional document required by NRD, expressed that his situation is extremely confusing. This confusion has almost led him to give up on resubmitting his citizenship application. Ironically, Liman and his older brother Gary (who is now deceased) are the only ones among their three other siblings who are stateless. This occurred because both parents were married in accordance with local custom (adat) at the church in their village, which is a common practice among Sarawak's indigenous people, but without any documentary evidence or verification from the *saksi* (witness) or village head, the marriage is considered 'unregistered' or invalid. While their Sarawakian-born siblings were automatically granted Malaysian citizenship because according to Malaysian nationality law, if the mother is Malaysian, the child will automatically acquire citizenship, regardless of whether the marriage is legally recognized. However, in the eyes of the law, Letman and his brother are considered "illegitimate" children due to the lack of a proper marriage certificate, and their citizenship status is further complicated by the fact that they were born abroad even though their mother is a Malaysian citizen.

One of the stakeholders interviewed, who is a long-time advocate for civil rights among the indigenous population in Sarawak, criticized the gender-based nationality law as "objectionable" in his following comments:

> *The other gap is the whole question of gender. They say, Oh, your father is Indonesian worker, your mother is Penan. So you are not Malaysian and I find that offensive. I don't even find that objectionable. I find that offensive. This is the 21st century. And we refuse to recognize citizenship according to the maternal, what we call principles. And if one parent*

is Malaysian, should be recognized as a Malaysian so the child should not be denied. Or the child should not be victimized just because of the parents. So I find this gender definition of citizenship according to the father line, objectionable. Number two, I find it objectionable that the parents if the child is born outside, but the parents are both Malaysian that or even one is Malaysian they don't recognize.

(Human right activist, interviewed on 25th July, 2021)

Given the situation among the indigenous populations in Sarawak, the idea of crossing-border and returning to Sarawak solely to give birth so the child could obtain citizenship was practically non-existent. In actuality, communities in rural villages have not always been aware of such legal repercussions. This situation reflected by a researcher who was recently engaged in a study project to identify undocumented issues among Sarawak's minors.

Of course, there are incidents of couples returning to Malaysia who refused to go through the hassle of civil registration due to a lackadaisical attitude. But there are those who are genuinely unaware of the legal consequences of failing to register their marriage and the birth of their child if the child was born abroad. This is especially true for the indigenous people of Sarawak living in remote areas, the majority of whom lacked education and had no access to knowledge about the significance of civil registration. Due to this legislation, they were the unfortunate ones who found themselves in legal limbo and are still awaiting citizenship, despite being natives of Sarawak.

(Researcher, interviewed on 31st January 2023)

The gaps in legislation which are defined by paternalistic practice are known as a traditional cause that render certain quarters of community stateless (Razali et.al, 2015). The regulations governing the transmission of Malaysian citizenship from mothers to their children born outside the country lead to an unjust treatment of children, which is contingent upon their gender and the legal standing of their parents' marital union. This paternalistic feature of Malaysian nationality law was modelled after the British Nationality Act, under which British citizenship was paternalistic prior to 1983 (Low, 2017). Therefore, Malaysian citizenship was granted on the basis of *jus sanguinis* before 2010 which was based on paternal heritage. Citizenship by descent was granted to children born outside of Malaysia to a Malaysian father and whose birth was recorded at a Malaysian consulate within one year of their birth. As such, there are many cases in which Malaysian women who are married to foreigners are unable to pass on their citizenship and to make matter even worse these women have been forced to travel back to Malaysia in order to give birth to their children (Low, 2017).

Administrative Barriers

In 2019, NRD director general, Datuk Ruslin Jusoh reported that Sarawak has the highest rate of late birth registrations with atleast 3,000 late birth registrations annually[6]. The current Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) indicates that any birth occurred more than 42 days is considered as late registration under Section 24, Births & Deaths Registration Ordinance (Sarawak Cap. 10), whereas in Peninsular Malaysia late registration is more than 61 days. Delayed registration frequently causes parents to confront administrative challenges in acquiring their child's birth certificate, especially if the child was not born in a hospital and was instead delivered at a *kampung*.

[6] *'90 per cent of Penans registered with NRD'*, Dayak Daily published on 11/11/2019, accessed at: https://dayakdaily.com/90-per-cent-of-penans-registered-with-nrd/

Consequently, it is not surprising that the issue of unregistered births among applicants is one of the administrative challenges encountered by NGOs and local activists in statelessness cases. It must be noted that for communities living in remote areas, homebirth is not an unusual practice especially when the nearest accessible hospital is situated in an urban location. An activist of the Sarawak human rights NGO has mentioned that some of these people faced difficulties in registering the birth of their children because they lived in a remote area and gave birth with the help of *bidan kampung* or local midwife. When they tried to register their child at NRD, they are required to produce a verification letter of birth administered by the local midwife or known as *Surat Pengesahan Kelahiran oleh Bidan*. Producing such a document in a case where the bidan kampung has passed away is challenging. In another case involving stateless communities in Lawas, a local activist also mentioned that because childbirth during the *Konfrontasi* period was difficult to register, unfortunately there are those who are in their 50s and 60s still have no identification card and stateless. In the interview, she also spoke about the prevalence of statelessness cases among elder women from Ba'kelalan as the following:

> *Statelessness is prevalent among the women. The generation born between 1960 to 1969 during the "Konfrontasi" and the formation of Malaysia. Those who are in the 50s and 60s. Ba'Kelalan is 150km away from Lawas and in those days, there were no flight and land transport. Villagers walk from the Ulu approximately 2 weeks to Lawas to trade. Not many women will make the trip to Lawas specially women who have lost their husbands, in their confinement or pregnant. Childbirth during the Konfrontasi period was difficult to register and until today we have cases yet to be resolved.*
>
> (Human right activist, interviewed on 25th November, 2022)

Additionally, a government official who has been assisting the Penan to obtain their identity documents revealed that NRD rigid documentary evidence would mean asking for evidence that is almost impossible to obtain. He mentioned this situation as follows:

> *One reason is because some of them were born in the forest. JPN will need to confirm this information, which will necessitate seeking confirmation from the elders. This is a common occurrence among nomadic Penan. And this is especially tough when the elders (saksi) have died. Because to their way of living, many of them have lived for generations without any documents such as birth and marriage certificates.*
>
> (Government official, interviewed on 22nd July 2021)

The statelessness situation among indigenous people in Sarawak is often characterized by the intergenerational transmission of statelessness status. This phenomenon is primarily attributed to the absence of birth certificates, not only for their parents but also for their grandparents. Lia's situation exemplifies the administrative hurdles she faced due to her parents' and grandparents' lack of the necessary identity documents, such as proof of residency or other documentation required to establish their identity and nationality. Lia explained:

> *I was able to register for schooling because I used my birth certificate and was allowed to further my study in local university in Sibu at diploma level. However, I cannot continue if I am still unable to obtain my identity card. My citizenship status is undetermined because my parents and my grandparents have no opportunity to obtain identity documents. So now, me and my 3 other siblings are stateless.*
>
> (Lia, stateless informant interviewed on 15th February 2023)

Lia's grandparents have both lost their identity documents, and because it happened a long time ago, NRD is unable to locate them. The only proof they have of her grandparents' citizenship status is their death certificate, which states that their status is unknown. Hence, they can only request for citizenship through her mother. Due to this, to Lia's mother was advised to apply for a Mykas, which is an identification card for temporary residence before she could proceed for her Mykad application. Furthermore, because Lia's father is Indonesian, Lia's citizenship status depended on her mother's nationality because her birth was considered illegitimate due to the absence of a valid marriage certificate and identity document, despite having a valid birth certificate. In the middle of 2023, Lia's mother acquired her Mykas and proceeded to apply for her Mykad. This course of action will facilitate Lia's acquisition of citizenship once her mother's Malaysian citizenship is granted. Currently, Lia's mother's application is still being processed.

The examples mentioned above indicate that inflexible and rigid administrative procedures, which necessitate specific documentary evidence, often result in delayed or unsuccessful citizenship applications. The National Registration Department's (NRD) failure to acknowledge the 'unique' circumstances faced by some individuals in registering their births and marriages has contributed to irregular status among this group. This highlights the need for a more practical and adaptable approach within administrative processes to address the complex realities faced by stateless individuals.

Contextual Causes of Statelessness

Inaccessibility to Civil Registration Services

NRD Sarawak had begun its Special Mobile Unit (UKB) Outreach Programme in the 1990s, with Kuching covering the area up to Sarikei, Bintulu covering the area up to Belaga, Kapit covering the area up to Baleh and Kanowit, and Miri covering the area up to Baram, Limbang, and Lawas. As of the 31st of August 2017, a total of 1,777 people have been assisted by NRD through 59 of its Outreach Programmes and 4,098 people were served from its 58 Outreach Programmes in 2016[7]. In spite of NRD commendable effort in helping the rural population to resolve their documentation issues, there are still unresolved cases that have a deep root in Sarawak's history of development prior to establishment of Malaysia. Herein, the disparities in population settlement and development in Sarawak are attributable to colonial developmental approach which strategically focused on most profitable districts such as Kuching, Sibu, Bintulu, and Miri (Echoh et.al, 2015). Not only are rural areas deemed unproductive due to the low-income occupations in which the rural population is typically involved, but the uneven distribution of development has resulted in disparity between the rural and urban populations. This spatial and development disparity has undoubtedly increased rural poverty and causing inaccessibility to roads and essential infrastructure.

Inaccessibility among the rural poor has led to the issue of information deficit. According to Berma et al. (2006), information deficit can lead to a wide range of problems, from misunderstanding government policies and programmes to being excluded from development projects and programmes. One of informants who is stateless discussed this issue in his interview, indicating that due to the inaccessibility of urban areas, his parents were unable to perform civil registration as required. In the past, the transportation and road access in his village which is located at Batu

[7] *'15,540 Penans have identification documents*', New Sarawak Tribune published on 7/9/2017, accessed at: https://www.newsarawaktribune.com.my/15540-penans-have-identification-documents/

10, Samarahan was very limited. And traditionally, it is very common for rural villages to have their weddings at the local church, which sometimes didn't provide any proper documentation as evidence. He was made aware of his situation when he was required to provide his birth certificate for school admission.

> *In 1964, my parents got married in the kampong. So, I have to ask the village chief for help (to sign and verify information required by NRD). I asked him and filled out the form early this year, but I'm still waiting for the next step.*
>
> (Liman, interviewed on the 5th February 2023)

The standard operating procedure in regards to civil registration has become a major issue for rural communities due to several reasons. If the birth took place deep in the interior and requires hours of travelling time to urban centers which also requires multiple of transportation mode, some parents would rather skip the hassle until their child are old enough to obtain documents for schooling. And sometimes, because they did not bring a complete document for registration down to the NRD located in the city they have to return to their village and wait until they can obtain the complete documents to be verified by District officers or village chief. As informed by informants, most of the applicants did not intentionally fail to provide their documents but were hampered by the fact that they had to travel back and forth from rural areas. Furthermore, the centralization of civil registration services is considered impractical to the rural communities. A local human right activist reiterated this situation as below:

> *Registration is a very practical problem because they are based in the big cities. The application has to go through to the national registration department in KL and then in Kuching and then it's in Sibu, Bintulu, Miri, maybe a small office in Belaga, and then district office in Kapit, or in for that matter, long Lama, and to go out to the Penan villages in the interior. It's hard and it's not easy.*
>
> (Human right activist, interviewed on 25th July, 2021)

In this note, he mentioned that the process of civil registry not only can become a huge logistical problem for the indigenous people, but it is also a mental burden due to the rigidity of the law. The informant elaborated this situation as follows:

> *Citizenship issues actually can be decentralized. Usually when the applicants from the rural areas went to district offices to check on their application status, no decision can be made because the power is not in the hands of the district officer. So the identification issue can be decentralized especially with the Lusong Laku which is located deep in the interior. Why don't we just decentralized rather than waiting for somebody in Kuching to make a decision based on the narrowness of the law.*
>
> (Human right activist, interviewed on 25th July, 2021)

According to informants' accounts of difficulties experienced by indigenous people in Sarawak, inaccessibility to civil registration services includes not only physical barriers (distance and logistics), but also information barriers hampered by excessive bureaucracy. Legal implications and civil registration procedures is unbeknown to the rural populations since there were no telecommunication devices available. In relation to this, a local NGO representative explained that even if there is a mobile registration counter made available to ease the registration for rural populations, there are those who missed the opportunity simply because they information was not

conveyed to them.

> *Those who reside in remote areas face a significant barrier because there is no communication between JPN and applicants. Applicants are unwilling to travel to town only to check on the status of their application because it will be costly for them.*
>
> (Government official, interviewed on 22nd July 2021)

The obstacles encompassed in this context comprise of geographical distance, logistical considerations, and bureaucratic difficulties. It is worth noting that the limited availability of telecommunication devices and services significantly impedes the rural population's knowledge regarding legal ramifications and registration protocols. Despite efforts to provide mobile registration services, some individuals are unable to utilize these services due to insufficient communication channels. In addition, individuals residing in rural areas face a significant challenge due to the lack of efficient communication between the National Registration Department (JPN) and the applicants. Consequently, the financial burden involved with traveling to urban centers to inquire about the status of their applications leads to a sense of hesitancy among applicants.

Cross-border marriages and marriages according to adat

The prevalence of unregistered cross-border marriages between Malaysian and Indonesian has been recognized as a contributing factor to the problem of stateless children in Sarawak[8]. There were numerous instances of unregistered cross-border marriages reported within the local communities residing along the state border with Kalimantan, Indonesia. The complex nature of this situations involves multiple factors and legal complexities, leading to the birth of children who lack a legally recognized nationality, consequently rendering them stateless. Cross-border marriage involving Sarawakians and Indonesians frequently occur in border regions characterized by shared cultural, family, and historical ties. These weddings may not be formally recorded for a variety of reasons, such as limited knowledge or understanding of the registration process, administrative obstacles, or deliberate attempts to circumvent legal procedures. Consequently, the marriages may not be acknowledged by either government's authorities of both countries.

The following case illustrates the legal challenges faced by a family due to an unregistered cross-border marriage and a reversion of religious identity. Specifically, the case involves an informant named Phil and the citizenship issues surrounding his two sons: Faiz, from his previous relationship with an Indonesian Muslim woman, and Mark, from his current marriage to Nia, who had previously been married to a Muslim man and had since reverted to her original religion. In Faiz's case, his citizenship is tied to his mother's because Phil and his former wife had no evidence of marriage at the time of Faiz's birth. Furthermore, Faiz's mother is Muslim, which is reflected in his Muslim name, and she left him under the care of his non-Muslim father. The second issue pertains to Mark's unregistered birth and undocumented status. Nia, Mark's mother, was dealing with the reversion of her religious identity, which not only affected Mark's birth registration but also had implications for the registration of her forthcoming child with Phil, as she was already 8 months pregnant at the time. Phil described his experience in navigating the complexities of attaining his children's citizenship status:

[8] *'Sarawak minister blames unregistered cross-border marriages for stateless kids*', Malay Mail published on 12/07/2017, accessed at https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/07/12/sarawak-minister-blames-unregistered-cross-border-marriages-for-stateless-k/1418773

> *In 2018, I went to NRD to get a birth certificate for my child. I was told that the process would take three days, but it's been three years and I'm still waiting. NRD kept asking Jabatan Agama Islam (JAIS) for a release letter for my wife, who had returned to her original faith (Christianity), but mahkamah syariah told my lawyer that the letter was not needed because my children were under 18 and had nothing to do with their mother's religion.*
>
> (Phil, aged 50, interviewed on 8th January 2023)

At present, the relevant authorities are required to determine the faith of the mother prior to evaluating the application for the child's registration. Despite the fact that the mother is Malaysian, they are unable to acquire birth certificates for one of their children due to his wife's status. In Sarawak, authorities have purportedly been slow to review conversions involving the separation of a couple, and the NRD has been known to refuse to register a child born to a Muslim-non-Muslim couple (CRCM, 2019). Similarly, an unregistered cross-border marriage involving Phil and his former wife has led to an undetermined citizenship status for his son, Faiz.

In another case, a Bidayuh family faced a protracted situation where three of their children were unable to obtain birth certificates due to the status of their parents' *adat* marriage certificate. During the process of registering the birth of their children, Ann and her husband encountered a situation when the *penghulu* declared their *adat* marriage certificate to be invalid. Ann describes her encounter with NRD when attempting to obtain birth certificates for their three children since their first child was born in 2005.

> *In 2004, we got married in a kampung based on adat. And in 2005, when we tried to register our child's birth certificate, we were told that our adat marriage documents were invalid and that only a marriage certificate registered by NRD could be used to produce our child's birth certificate. Since then, we haven't been able to get citizenship for three of our children except for our youngest, who was born after we had already registered our marriage under NRD in 2011.*
>
> (Ann, a mother with 3 stateless children, interviewed on 21st January 2022)

It is worth noting that the marriage had been officially registered in 2004 according to *adat* marriage custom, prior to the amendment of the regulation pertaining to native marriages in 2006. The *adat* marriage regulation stipulated that the union of individuals of indigenous and non-indigenous backgrounds in Sarawak was prohibited from 2006 onward (Refer to Table 1: Marriage according to custom in Sarawak). In 2011, the couple received advice to formally register their marriage with the National Registration Department (NRD). They were unaware that their decision would result in administrative difficulties that would significantly impact the process of registering the births of their three children, ultimately rendering the *adat* marriage certificate obsolete. The issue arose due to the fact that their marriage was registered under Section 3(4) of the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976 (Act 164) and not under native law. Therefore, all three of their children who were born before the marriage was registered by NRD in 2011 were deemed 'illegitimate' or born out of wedlock. As their mother was a noncitizen, it is essential to note that this status created substantial obstacles to obtaining citizenship automatically. Upon engaging with a non-governmental organisation (NGO) for assistance, the couple successfully nullified their marriage registration with the National Registration Department (NRD). This was done to ensure that their *adat* marriage documents would be recognised as a valid document for obtaining their child's birth certificate. Their situation was regarded as correction of documents, were taken and verified in the civil court. Based on a local activist account when handling Ann's cases in the civil

court, they had to bear the legal cost amounting up to RM8000, only to end up nullifying the NRD's marriage registration.

> *It is considered a correction, as it is now clear that Penghulu was at fault. NRD is also to blame. Why did they never inquire whether these individuals are married according to adat? You are aware that this people are from a village. Why it was never inquired whether they were previously married in the village or through adat marriage? Is that correct? People can marry according to adat in Sarawak. Even the judge agrees with what I said. The judge inquired, "What is this case?" She explained why this NRD was wasting court time and people's money. And these people have no money, so who will pay for them? The attorney responded that the NGO would pay for them. Then she said this is an NGO burden. The judge stated once more, "If NRD can do this, why do these people have to go to court?" However, NRD stated that they want the court to nullify the document. See the complexity? And when I went to NRD, I told NRD I said, you know, what did the judge say to me? They said the mistake was yours.*
>
> (NGO representative, interviewed on 19th December 2022)

The prevalence of misunderstanding stemming from the legal status of adat marriage documents serves as an apparent indication of the conflict between *adat* marriages and formal legal requirements, which has resulted in administrative barriers in the acquisition of citizenship status. In this regard, a government official interviewed for this study advised that if a couple encounters a problem with the legality of their adat marriage certificate when interacting with government agencies, they should be referred to MAIS because the issue falls under MAIS's jurisdiction. It has been reported that couples who were married under native law face legal obstacles when attempting to register their marriage under NRD because NRD has no authority to verify either an individual's marriage or the marital status of those who were married under native customs. In other words, even if a couple have provided evidence of marriage performed under adat marriage, NRD has no authority to prove the legality of their marriage certificates unless it is registered Section 3(4) of the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976 (Act 164).

Meanwhile, there are instances reported in regard to unrecorded customary marriage. It must be noted that native customary (*adat*) law only applies to the indigenous non-Muslim population of Sabah and Sarawak. And all marriages and divorces involving native of Sarawak registered under native customary law were under the jurisdiction of Sarawak Native Customs Council (Majlis Adat Istiadat Sarawak or MAIS). The Majlis's jurisdiction is vested in the Majlis Adat Istiadat Sarawak Ordinance 1977, as well as three (3) other subsidiary legislations, as listed below:

(i) Native Courts Ordinance 1992

(ii) The Native Courts Rules 1993 and

(iii) Native Customs (Declaration) Ordinance 1996

Within Sarawak's native customs and traditions, MAIS plays an important role not only in reviewing and codifying the native's local traditions into customary law but also in verifying the validity of marriages and divorces under the law. Hence, a complete guideline has been outlined by MAIS to help the public understand the requirements pertaining to marriage and divorce involving the natives of Sarawak (Refer to table 1). In many cases, native customary marriage with a proper document and procedure rarely poses any problem of registration when the native couple tried to register their child because before 2006, all marriage according to *adat* is recognized by

NRD. And according to MAIS, for those who have registered their marriage according to *adat* before the establishment of Native Marriage Electronic System (NAMES), are allowed to present their documents to MAIS to be recorded in the electronic systems. Starting 2005, all marriages among natives in Sarawak performed under the *adat* customary law have been recorded in the electronic system.

Table 1: Marriage According to Customs in Sarawak

Question	Answer
Can the natives of Sarawak marry according to custom?	Yes
Can Sarawak Chinese / Sarawak Indians marry Sarawak natives?	Yes
Can or not natives of Sarawak who were born in Peninsular Malaysia (such as children of soldiers / police) but now live in Sarawak, marry according to Adat and apply for a Marriage Certificate?	An application can be considered if a person has resided in Sarawak provided he changes the address in the identity card using a permanent address in Sarawak. (Mykad can be considered and should start with the letter: i) Malaysian Mykad with the letter "K".
Can the status of a person who wants to get married be checked online?	Yes.The status can be checked online. However, for areas that have NOT used the online system, the couple's information can be checked by: - i) Requesting the District Officer (DO) to write a letter to the DO at the person's place of origin, because if he/she has been married according to Adat, his/her record can be checked at the "counterfoil" of the Marriage Letter. ii) check at JPN to ensure that the person has never been married according to the Law Reform (Marriage & Divorce) Act 1976
Can non-Malaysians marry Sarawak natives according to Adat?	Not after 21 September 2006. The couple's marriage is not valid however before before if the marriage is before 21st September 2006, the marriage in VALID.
Can non-Sarawakians marry Sarawak natives according to custom?	No.
Can a couple have been living together secretly for example his wife is less than 16 years old or a husband is less than 18 years old get married?	Custom does not mention the age of a person who can marry. The couple can apply for a marriage certificate from the Penghulu. However, before the Penghulu approves the application: - i) The couple CAN BE prosecuted according to Custom ii) Parents OF BOTH SIDE must make in writing stating they 'have no objections' to avoid being raped.

Who can get married under Sarawak Bumiputra Customs?	Sarawak Bumiputra holding a Mykad / Sarawak Identity Card (with the letter 'K' or code number MyKad Sarawak) or anyone born in the Sarawak State In other words :- a) Sarawakians who are not bumiputra Sarawak can marry a Bumiputra Sarawak under custom (b) A Malaysian citizen who is not a citizen of Sarawak but born in the State of Sarawak can marry a Sarawak Bumiputra under custom (c) Children of Sarawak Bumiputras born outside the State of Sarawak are not entitled to marry under custom unless one of the parties is born in the State of Sarawak.
Can a marriage under Adat held in 1990, be registered in 2000?	Yes.
Who can register a bumiputra divorce under their respective customs? Is a divorce certificate issued?	The Penghulu of that area is responsible for it. A divorce certificate will be issued. Form B is issued for written customs. From 1st November 2008, marriage and divorce forms for all Sarawak Bumiputras who do not have written customs will use the standard format.
Can a marriage held under Iban custom where the man / woman is a kayan, dissolved under Kayan custom?	No. Divorce is only valid if dissolved using Iban Custom.
Can a marriage solemnized under Bumiputra Customs be dissolved under the Laws of Malaysia Law Reform (Marriage & Divorce) Act 1976 while both parties are outside the State of Sarawak?	No.
Can a marriage solemnized under Bumiputra Customs be dissolved under the Marriage & Divorce Law outside Malaysia?	No.
Can a Bumiputra who profess the christian faith marry under Bumiputra Customs?	Yes.
How to apply for a certificate of marriage and divorce?	(a) Certificate can be obtained from the District Office where the relevant marriage or divorce records are kept. No fees is charged. (b) For the public, a police report is required / sufficient..

	(c) The certificate will be signed by the Sarawak District Officer / Administrative Officer as well as the name, position and official stamp. The certificate with the new serial number will have a reference to the relevant marriage / divorce letter.

(Source: Council for Native Customs and Traditions official website accessed on 3rd November 2023)

Based on the interview conducted among NGO informants and the family affected by statelessness, the issue persist among the indigenous people in relation to *adat* marriage are listed as follows:

a. *Adat* marriage between native of Sarawak and non-native before 2006 is valid and if there is any evidence of the marriage, it should be presented to NRD as a supporting document to register their child who was born after the marriage. The child will not be considered as "illegitimate" child and eligible for citizenship if she or he was born in Sarawak. However, if there is no evidence of the marriage or it has been conducted outside of Malaysia, the marriage must be re-registered under NRD when the couple return to Malaysia. Without evidence of marriage or re-registration, the child will follow the nationality of their mother even the child was born in Sarawak and the marriage will be considered as 'invalid'.

b. After 21st September 2006, marriage between native and non-native according to *adat* is not valid. In this case, marriage according to *adat* only recognized marriages between non-Muslim native couple.

In relation to this, an informant reiterated that cases involving Sarawak man and Indonesian women solemnized under the *adat* marriage after 21st September 2006 is considered as invalid and even when the child was born after the said *adat* marriage, the child will be considered as illegitimate. Amendments made to these policies have resulted in documentation challenges for indigenous children, despite the fact that their father is a Malaysian citizen, and they were born in Malaysia. She added that this occurred because the couple genuinely unaware of the changes in such laws because there had previously been no issue of marriage between non-native (foreigner) and native that was conducted under the *adat* laws. Another misunderstanding of the *adat* law which created documentation issues is in regard to the validity of marriage performed under the *adat* between a native who are non-Muslim and a native who have converted into Islam. This is because, only marriage between non-Muslim is allowed under the Native customary law. In this note, an informant narrated the situation as follows:

> *No issue if the concept of adat marriage is understood properly. However, there is a case where an Iban man married to Muslim according to native customary law which means the marriage is not legal because Muslim are not allowed to get married according to native law.*
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> (Academic researcher, interviewed on 31st January 2023)

The informant added that this issue occurred frequently because there are individuals who try to run away from proper marriage registration. *Adat* marriage were carried out because marriage according to civil law requires documents which some couples unable to provide (especially in a case of transborder marriage or marriage with a foreigner). If *Ketua Masyarakat Ketua Kampung* (KMKK) wasn't aware of or simply approved *adat* marriage even though the marriage according to *adat* was not allowed for native who wants to marry non-native partner or in some cases Muslim-

non-Muslim couples the problem will persist when the couple had children later. The citizenship status the couple's children will be stated as not yet determine.

Even though Sarawak government acknowledge the existence of native customary law pertaining to marriage and have long recognized the concept of *adat* marriage among the indigenous people of Sarawak, in practice they are some cases in which understanding of the adat does not align with the law. A complex coexistence of *adat* law and formal legal systems, particularly in situations involving interfaith marriages reveals an unintended legal consequence in citizenship acquisition among the indigenous people in Sarawak. The example of Phil's circumstance highlights the challenges experienced by couples navigating several legal and religious frameworks, which frequently results in a delay or denial of their children's registration.

5. Discussion

The findings above highlight how legal gaps, gender-based laws, administrative barriers, and customary practices intersect to produce situations where individuals, particularly children, are at risk of being stateless. In this particular context, it can be argued that the established legal framework, which has undergone change as a result of historical developments and legal amendments, does not adequately accommodate the local tradition and indigenous practices. When these individuals seek to secure official recognition of their marital and family statuses through civil registration processes, they are confronted with a disheartening reality. In many instances as evidenced in the findings above, the conflict between *adat* marriages and formal legal requirements has resulted in situations where individuals find themselves married according to one system while unrecognized by the other, especially when the claimed marriages lack any form of documentary evidence, such as *Sijil Berian* or *Sijil Perkahwinan Adat-istiadat*.

Cross-border marriages that are recognized as lawful among indigenous groups may be rendered invalid when measured against the nationality laws. Hence, incidences of 'unintentional' statelessness were produced as a result of these inconsistencies. In Sarawak where the ethnic boundary is characterized by a complex socio-historical network and strong kinship ties between populations residing in both Malaysia and Indonesia border, the study reveals that the establishment of political boundaries, as indicated by the implementation of immigration control and nationality laws, has contrasting impacts on the everyday practices and lived realities of the local people. The findings demonstrates that individuals who lack awareness on the significance of documentary evidence and are unable to fully grasp the complex legal and evidentiary prerequisites for obtaining identity documents may find themselves inadvertently trapped in a legal limbo, denied citizenship due to inconsistencies and contradictions that emerge when local customs intersect with legal instruments. According to Malkki's, these legal instruments in the form of passports, identity documents, and border controls have become a *national order of things* with the primary objective of attaining an economically and politically stable nation-state (Malkki, 1995). In a world where having or belonging to a nation is a *naturalized order* (Eliassi, 2015), it difficult to make sense of the situation faced by stateless people because they don't belong to any nation.

Consequently, the study also reveals there is a prevailing argument suggesting that as a well-established customary practice in Sarawak, *adat* marriage may effectively prevent statelessness if

conducted in accordance with established guidelines. This assertion posits that the provision of documentary evidence substantiating the occurrence of such marriages within the specified time and location is crucial. Nevertheless, it is evident that there is often a discrepancy between the actual practice and the legal and administrative framework responsible for granting citizenship to individuals. And throughout history, such misalignment between traditional customs (*adat*) and the formal system of identification has consistently resulted in a state of disorder, inconsistency, and arbitrariness (Pinkaew, 2003). The inconsistent and unstable nature of documentary practices within the context of political membership is not only *illegible* (Cheva-Isarakul, 2020), but the present examination of this study argues that these practices are often far from being neutral entities. As interviews with key stakeholders' revealed, it is evident that for indigenous communities in Sarawak, complying with the National Registration Department's (NRD) standard operating procedures presents formidable challenges and tends to be impractical. These challenges stem from a range of factors, including limited access to civil registration facilities and the complex social and cultural dynamics that influence the daily lives of these communities. Hence, it is frequently difficult to produce a *legible* and verifiable evidence, such as witness statements, when documenting births in these remote areas, hence raising significant concerns regarding the applicability of bureaucratic procedures in contexts where the prevailing conditions do not align with the underlying assumptions and expectations of these procedures.

Finally, the findings illustrate how legal and bureaucratic complexities can inadvertently render individuals and entire communities stateless, despite their deep-rooted connection to the land and their heritage. The complex regime of *administrative citizenship* becomes an obstacle to those who are eligible to claim citizenship by birth and descent (Sadiq, 2017). The lived experiences of individuals who exist on the margins of society, such as undocumented natives, immigrants, minorities, and the economically disadvantaged, are often systematically marginalized. Their complex and multifaceted circumstances defy the formal categorization within the standardized norms of the state, resulting in an alarming phenomenon of *in situ* statelessness among individuals who are, in principle, recognized as legal citizens. The state's rigid insistence on recognizing only legitimate marriages, for instance, excludes and stigmatizes children born outside of such unions, further illustrating the deeply entrenched inequalities sustained by these standard norms. Such evidentiary issues bring attention to the conflict between the perceived inherent nature of citizenship and its actuality (Bhabha, 2017).

6. Conclusion

In summary, this study provides insights into the pressing issue of statelessness within indigenous communities in Sarawak. This subject has garnered minimal attention, despite its serious consequences for the areas of human rights and social justice. The initial investigation carried out in this study has revealed an intersection of structural and contextual factors that contribute to the condition of statelessness among the indigenous community in Sarawak. One of the primary findings of this study is related to the presence of "unintentional" statelessness, when individuals and families experience a stateless condition due to a misalignment between their understanding of the law and the requirements of the bureaucratic systems in place. This highlights a significant concern over administrative obstacles and deficiencies within the nationality laws that hinder

proper recognition of persons' citizenship and entitlements. Additionally, the research emphasizes the occurrence of infrastructural challenges, cross-border marriages, and *adat* marriage practices as contextual factors which contribute to the stateless issue in Sarawak. These factors add to the complexity of an already challenging scenario, emphasizing the importance of implementing a multifaceted and culturally sensitive approach to addressing statelessness issues among the indigenous people in Sarawak.

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Author's Biography:

Dayang Hajyrayati Binti Awg Kassim is a lecturer in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University Malaysia Sarawak. She is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in Sociology and Anthropology at the International Islamic University Malaysia.

Noor Azlan Mohd Noor is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the International Islamic University Malaysia.