

THE EDUCATIONAL DROP OUT OF ORANG ASLI IN TERENGGANU

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Abstract. Educational aspects play an important role in the formation of a country as the education sector acts as a major contributor to the development of human capital as well as the economy. The government is always committed to ensure that all children in the country who enter school are entitled to early education regardless of their socio-economic status. In this aspect, pupils in the Orang Asli community are no exception in ensuring that they receive a quality education which is relevant to their needs. However, the improvement in the education level of the Orang Asli community is still at an alarming level compared to the achievement of mainstream students. This study was conducted to identify the dropout factor of Orang Asli students in the education stream. It was carried out at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Berua, Hulu Terengganu. The respondents of the study consisted of Malay Language teachers, Orang Asli students, school administrators and local residents. This study used qualitative design in case study using interview and observation techniques as data collection method. This study found out that the dropout factors of Orang Asli students in education are divided into internal factors and external factors.

Key words: dropout, Orang Asli education, SK. Sungai Berua.

Introduction. Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013-2025 targets a major shift in the Malaysia education system. The quality of teaching is the most important element for transforming the primary and secondary education, and further enhances the students' success. The Ministry is committed to improve educational achievement through the improvement of teaching quality in schools by strengthening existing best practices and rewarding the quality teachers in form of better career paths for them. This path must support the development of teachers' careers who carry out teaching and learning processes at schools [7]. Through the transformation of the education system as well, Shift 2 PPPM teachers are also required to implement effective teaching and learning strategies with students. In this aspect, teachers are not only required to master the subjects taught, but teachers also should have effective teaching techniques in delivering the contents of the lesson to students. Through the transformation of teachers' education, it is advisable to create an active learning climate among students in the realization of an equal education achievement of both urban and rural.

However, the impact of the changes in the education system is still poor in the Orang Asli community. A study from local researchers shows that the achievement of Orang Asli students in education is still at an alarming level. The mastery of Malay Language among Orang Asli pupils is still at a weak level. In [11] study on Orang Asli pupils in Kelantan shows that the achievement of Orang Asli pupils is still unreliable. About 67% of Orang Asli pupils still cannot master the Malay Language well. It found that 75% of 115 students in Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Berua face a speech problem in Malay Language and they are involved with a great Malay Language literacy problem. The study of [3, 5] in Kelantan found similar findings of 8 to 10 students in each class cannot read and write well. In [1, 11, 14] also found that the position of Malay Language as a second language is because of the strong influence of native language among Orang Asli pupils. This study also found that the weak Malay Language proficiency among Orang Asli students gave an impact on the achievements of other subjects. Although there has been a previous study that discusses the dropout of Orang Asli students in education but the dilemma of Orang Asli children's dropout issues is generally debated. Therefore, this study has been carried out in depth regarding the dropout in education of Orang Asli students in education.

Methodology. This study is a qualitative study of case studies. Location of study at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Berua (SKSB), in the district of Hulu Terengganu. The respondents were Malay teachers, teachers of other subjects, Orang Asli students, school administrators and locals. The data were analysed using Nvivo version 11. The data collection method was carried out through group interviewing and participants' observation and document analysis. The data were analysed using Nvivo version 11 software. This study was based on the GPILSEO Education Development Model (goals, pedagogy, institution, leadership, spread, evidence) developed by [13, 16]. The GPILSEO model was developed in 33 Maori schools in New Zealand in 2004-2008.

Results and discussion. The findings show that there are two factors that involved in the issue of education dropout among Orang Asli students in the location of the study. The factors involved are internal factors and external factors. These factors are described as follows;

Internal factor: Problems of mastering 3M skills

The results of the interviews, the follow-up of the analysis of the documents that have been conducted have found that 96% of the students in this school are illiterate and involved with the recovery class. Indirectly, pupils involved in Malay literacy problems caused Orang Asli students do not master the content of learning well. The effect of the illiterate problem, the implementation of teacher's R&D is more on the reading and writing skills of students from year 1 to year 6. The teacher's teaching is also faced with language barriers as a result of environmental factors. The disadvantages of pupils in the aspect of 3M's skills are shown in Table 1.

Table. 1. Mastery of 3M skills at SK. Sungai Berua [16]

Level	Student Bills	Number of Pupils Who Mastered 3M's Skills
Year 1	20	0
Year 2	9	0
Year 3	14	2
Year 4	21	4
Year 5	23	3
Year 6	17	2
Total	104	11

Referring to the 3M proficiency data show that the level of 3M's proficiency in pupils at SKSB is still at an alarming level. Based on the data obtained, 10.58% of pupils who can master 3M's skills are still small compared with 89.42% who have not mastered 3M's skills. It is even worse when 2 out of 17 of 6-year-old pupils still do not master 3M's skills. Students' failure in mastering 3M's skills will definitely have a major impact on their achievement in the Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR). This is because the basis to master Bahasa Melayu is to have the ability of 3M which has become the primary medium for each student to master other subjects as well.

The findings of this study are in line with [15] in the Orang Asli Education Rights Status Report, suggesting that the Ministry of Education (MOE) to revise the delivery system and monitors all ongoing programs to avoid dilution in the implementation of programs which can affect KPM's intention to develop Orang Asli students. The relevant section is intended to review their approach to the unique needs of Orang Asli children in the aspects of curriculum, co-curriculum, assessment, teaching materials, teaching aids and their learning culture. In [15] also suggests that factors which cause the Orang Asli pupils not able to master 3M should be identified in addressing the problem of the decline in educational attainment among Orang Asli children.

Problem of Malay literacy

The fieldwork at the study site also found that Malay-language teachers at SKSB faced great literacy problems among Orang Asli students. The ability of students to communicate using the Malay language is limited. The number of students who can communicate well is only 8 out of 104 pupils in SKSB. The problem of Malay literacy is the impact of students' weakness in the mastery of 3M's skills. The interviews with teachers are shown in Table 2.

Table. 2. Orang Asli student literacy level [16]

Level	Number of Students	Ability to Speak with Malay Language	Ability to Write Malay Language Well	Two Ways Communication Ability	Ability to Express the Purpose and Use of Malay Words
Year 1	20	0	0	0	0
Year 2	9	0	0	0	0
Year 3	14	2	0	0	0
Year 4	21	5	0	2	1
Year 5	23	6	2	3	2
Year 6	17	7	1	3	3
Total	104	20	3	8	6

The findings of this study are in line with the previous findings of the researchers where Orang Asli students have low literacy levels. Only 8 out of 104 students can communicate in Malay Language. Based on the participating observations with teachers in the classroom, students' ability to speak in Malay from all levels of pupils from 1 to 6 years is extremely weak. This literacy problem poses a great challenge to Malay-language teachers, especially in writing aspects [8]. The students' inability to understand the concept of the word in Malay Language has made the pupils unable to imply the Malay Language in the essay writing. This challenge has been revealed by other researchers such as [3, 2, 16] that the ability of Orang Asli children to speak Bahasa Melayu is limited to only a few simple words.

Influence of mother tongue

Interviews with teachers also found that Orang Asli pupils mostly communicate using their mother tongue, Semaq Beri Language while at school. Observation revealed that the Malay language was only used when interacting with the teacher in the classroom. The study also found that Semaq Beri Language was the first language used by all pupils at SKSB from year 1 to 6. The Orang Asli students also used Semaq Beri Language during discussions with friends even during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The interviews and observations revealed that the Malay Language was only used by students when communicating with teachers. The findings of this study are parallel with other local researchers such as [11, 12, 2, 14] that the mother tongue has a strong influence on the Orang Asli pupils due the usage of native language at home.

The problems of using the penal natural curriculum module (KAP)

Teachers at the study site are also faced with the usage of the KAP module. Although the KAP has gone through several series of improvements, however, the results of the field study have found that the use of KAP among Malay Language teachers at SKSB is limited as most of the students are weak in 3M's ability (read, write and count).

The problem of using KAP at SKSB can be listed as follows; The elements in the KAP Module are high compared to the low level of pupils because they do not master the 3M Skills. The use of the KAP Module has to undergo a process of modifying the student's level Implementation of the KAP Module at the Orang Asli school is not in line with the exam questions in the mainstream. The results of this study did not deny the success of the KAP module in improving the achievement of Orang Asli children's education, but based on interviews transcripts show that the KAP module is still not fully applied at the Orang Asli school in Terengganu. The willingness of Malay teachers to modify the KAP with teaching activities in the classroom is a challenge that makes it difficult for teachers because at the same time teaching teachers must also meet the curriculum set out in the Primary School Standard Curriculum (KSSR). The problem of using KAP at other Orang Asli schools was also touched by [10, 4].

Lack of family support

Teachers are also faced the challenges surrounding the life of Orang Asli students who cause teachers' and school's efforts to raise the level of education of Orang Asli children hampered. The absence of family support has resulted in the absence of an Orang Asli student who is not attending school. There are still a handful of the parents dragging their children looking for forest product for sale. The effects of this parental action cause their children to be absent for several months to school. This absence can cause students to miss a lot in the process of teaching and learning with teachers. Additionally, the results of the interviews found that there was no family support for the learning of children at home. Children's learning affairs are left to the school completely. The Orang Asli community in Sungai Berua also mostly consists of illiterate families and has no skills to teach children. Most teens also get married at a young age and the skills in the education aspect of children are neglected and left entirely to the school.

School attendance problem

Although the percentage of school attendance among Orang Asli children has increased over the previous years, there are still Orang Asli children in SKSB dropped out of school. The interviews found that there were still a handful of parents who drag their children to search for forest products for sale. The effects of this parental action cause their children to be absent for several months to school. This absence can cause students to miss out in the process of teaching and learning with teachers. Although the percentage of student's attendance to SKSB has increased from 40-50% to 82% between 2015 and 2018, however, the increase was due to the efforts of the school and teachers in ensuring that pupils attend and follow the process of teaching and learning at school.

Based on observations also found that the actions of administrators and teachers in inviting pupils at home every morning has become a practice. The increase in percentage of attendance was also driven by the efforts of Terengganu Malay Religious and Customs Council (MAIDAM) which provided free food to the pupils. This effort succeeded in maintaining the position of pupils in school until the completion of schooling. This effort was also made to attract students to school. Similarly, the efforts of teachers who have given gifts to students who give good commitment in the lessons. However, the problems in learning process still happen. The data of this study contradicts Pavlov's Theory that the stimulus can overcome the problem of learning among students [6].

Home learning climate

The results of observations in the Orang Asli villages also found that pupils' learning was not happening at home but the Orang Asli children only studied in schools with the teachers in the classroom only and their children's learning affairs were entirely handed over to teachers at the school. Observation also found that Orang Asli's living conditions did not attract students to study because of the lack of facilities for learning activities such as chairs and tables. In addition to the absence of learning facilities, Orang Asli students are also squeezed into a narrow and non-conducive living space. Referring to JAKOA Resources that, in 2018 the population of Sungai Berua was 555. A total of 105 housing units provided by the government are unable to accommodate the growing number of family members. Observation at the Orang Asli settlement at Kampung Sungai Berua found that most of the residents shared between 2 and 3 families in one home. This situation did not give the Orang Asli students the opportunity to study at home and the time spent by playing and following family to the forest [2, 9, 11].

Culture and the influence of the environment

Cultural and environmental factors are also one of the factors that have a negative impact on improving the performance of education for students in Sungai Berua. Although the Orang Asli have received various advances and incentives from the government, their life and culture are still bound by the practices inherited from their ancestors. Until today, their life still have great relation to nature. Interviews with local residents found out that the Orang Asli community in Berua still make nature and forest as their primary search source. Hence, they are still comfortable with their old circumstances. For a few people in Berua, by acquiring forest product can still help them continue their daily life. This impression makes them feel rather difficult to accept renewal in their lives, especially in education. Their life are also quite isolated from the city's residents as a result of their settlements far from the interior. They are less exposed to the development of science and technology and they are less aware of the educational transformation. They also have no "role model" in the field of education to emulate and become icons because they have lack of successful students in education.

In the last 10 years, there has been no successful Orang Asli community in Berua in the university [11, 16, 14]. More worrying, most Orang Asli children in Berua are only able to spend in elementary school. When entering secondary school nature, all Orang Asli children in Berua dropped out and could not be traced. The result of interviews with teachers, most of the students in Sungai Berua were unable to pass the LINUS module. However, for the Orang Asli community, they have already felt that the level of education they have today is 'enough' because there is no

competition that they have to go through. Because they live in the countryside, they feel that they do not have to compete with urban citizens who are getting advanced from time to time. This scenario can be seen as a 'cancer' in the education of the Orang Asli community if it is not addressed from now on. Through interviews with teachers, some suggestions have been proposed.

Special curriculum and exams for Orang Asli students

Teachers suggested that the Ministry of Education (Malaysia) to review the curriculum so that a special curriculum for Orang Asli students can be implemented at the Orang Asli school. The rationale for this backup is to evaluate the use of the KAP module at SKSB. Although the government has introduced a special curriculum for Orang Asli pupils namely the Penan Asli Curriculum (KAP) in 2007, the module cannot be fully adapted among Malay Language teachers at SKSB. The modules have to be modified by teachers according to the level of pupils as most of the students are faced with Malay literacy. In the aspect of the examination, the teachers suggested that the MOEs can be able to come out with specific examinations for Orang Asli students. The proposal is also in line with the problem of using KAP in Orang Asli school. In KAP Bahasa Melayu there is an articular element of the Orang Asli life to attract Orang Asli to school. However, the content disclosed in KAP is not included in the UPSR Evaluation Test. The Orang Asli students also answered UPSR questions in line with the mainstream students. In this case, it is said that there is no parallel between the content that has been taught with the teacher with the actual element being questioned in the exam. Based on these inconsistencies, teachers suggest that Orang Asli cultural based curriculum and special examinations for Orang Asli students.

Placement of expert teachers at Orang Asli schools

With regard to this expertise, the results of the study found that from four Malay Language teachers at SKSB, only two of them were Malay Language options. The finding of the interviews with the teachers suggest that KPM should place expert teachers in Bahasa Melayu. The placement of this expert teacher is a model or specialist referring to teachers related to Malay language pedagogy. In this regard, teachers also suggest that MOEs place teachers among Orang Asli who are experts in language and culture of Orang Asli.

JAKOA and parents involvement

Apart from the efforts of the State Education Department (JPN) and the District Education Office (PPD), the JAKOA collaboration and parents are highly expected by teachers in SKSB. The findings from the interview with the teachers, they acknowledge that JAKOA has provided assistance in the form of gifts, financials and school supplies. However, the involvement of the JAKOA in the Orang Asli student's academic programs remains incomplete. In addition, the awareness on the importance of education, parental support for academic upgrading activities in schools should also be supported by parents and locals. Parents are encouraged to encourage children to study at home and teaching tasks are not left to the school completely.

Conclusion. As a result of the perspectives provided by the Malay Language teachers in SKSB in this study, it is generally said that it is necessary to change the curriculum for Orang Asli students so that the contents of the examination are in line with what they are learning. KAP content should be more helpful to Orang Asli pupils in Malay language and to attract Orang Asli students to school. The involvement of teachers with local community programs is also very important to open the space for teachers to understand the culture of Orang Asli people. The mastery of the language and culture of the Orang Asli is important to foster a sense of belonging among teachers and parents. This is because negative feelings toward outsiders still exist in some Orang Asli communities.

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