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Fieldwork and Methodological Problems in Poverty Research:
A Case Study of a New Village in Kedah

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TO:

MY MOTHER,

Latihan Ilmiah

Bagi Memenuhi Sebahagian

Daripada Syarat-Syarat Untuk

Ijazah Sarjana Muda Sastera

Jabatan Antropologi dan Sosiologi

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The Penghulu of Junjung, ENCIK OMAR BIN YUSOF;

The Chairman of Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung Padang Jangus, ENCIK SAIDIN BIN ARIFFIN and

The Chairman of Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung Baru Junjung, ENCIK ENG KENG LIM.

Lastly, my heartfelt thanks too to all who have helped me in one way or another.

SYNOPSIS

Based on her experience in a New Village, the researcher attempts to 'unravel' certain shortcomings of poverty research.

The introductory chapter presents the definition and nature of poverty in Malaysia. It outlines the aims and limitations of the study. Methods of research and sources of data are also mentioned here.

Chapter Two contains the background characteristics of the New Village. Its history, demography, structure of administration, etc. are described. The general patterns of employment, income and education among the respondents are tabulated.

Chapter Three touches on the practical problems encountered in field-work. How the knowledge of the topic of study affects the spontaneity of the respondents, is discussed. Here subtlety in raising sensitive issues, is also emphasized.

In Chapter Four, the researcher compares the reception and reaction of Malay and Chinese respondents during the study. Attempts are made to trace the reasons behind at times, the diverse responses of the respondents.

Certain concepts related to poverty as employed by past researchers and writers, are applied to substantiate the research findings in the concluding chapter. Among others, it reiterates the need to avoid insensitive framing of question as it might adversely affect the survey findings and conclusions drawn by researcher.

SINOPSIS

Berdasarkan pengalamannya di sebuah Kampung Baru, pengkaji cuba mengemukakan beberapa kelemahan kajian kemiskinan yang diharapkannya akan dihindari oleh pengkaji-pengkaji lain kelak.

Bab pengenalan menerangkan definisi dan keadaan kemiskinan di Malaysia. Tujuan, bidang atau batasan kajian ini dinyatakan. Kaedah kajian dan sumber-sumber data juga disebutkan.

Latarbelakang Kampung Baru yang dikaji ada diperikan dalam Bab Dua. Ini termasuk sejarah, demografi, struktur pentadbiran dan lain-lain aspek Kampung Baru itu. Patten umum tentang pekerjaan, pendapatan dan pelajaran di kalangan responden ditunjukkan dalam jadual-jadual.

Bab Tiga merujuk kepada kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh pengkaji semasa menjalankan kajian luar. Di sini, dibincangkan bagaimana tindakan ("spontaneity") responden dipengaruhi apabila tujuan kajian termaklum oleh mereka. Adalah juga ditekankan keperluan 'berhati-hati' ketika membangkitkan isu-isu yang sensitif.

Pengkaji membandingkan sambutan dan reaksi responden-responden Melayu dan Cina semasa kajian dijalankan dalam Bab Empat. Sebab-sebab bagi jawapan ("response") responden-responden yang adakalanya amat berlainan, cuba dikaitkan.

Dalam bab terakhir, pengkaji cuba mengaplikasikan beberapa konsep tentang kemiskinan yang telah digunakan oleh pengkaji-pengkaji atau penulis-penulis lepas kepada hasil kajiannya. Antara lain, bab ini menegaskan jangan membentuk soalan-soalan secara tidak sensitif kerana ini akan mempengaruhi hasil kajian dan rumusan-rumusan yang dibuat oleh pengkaji.

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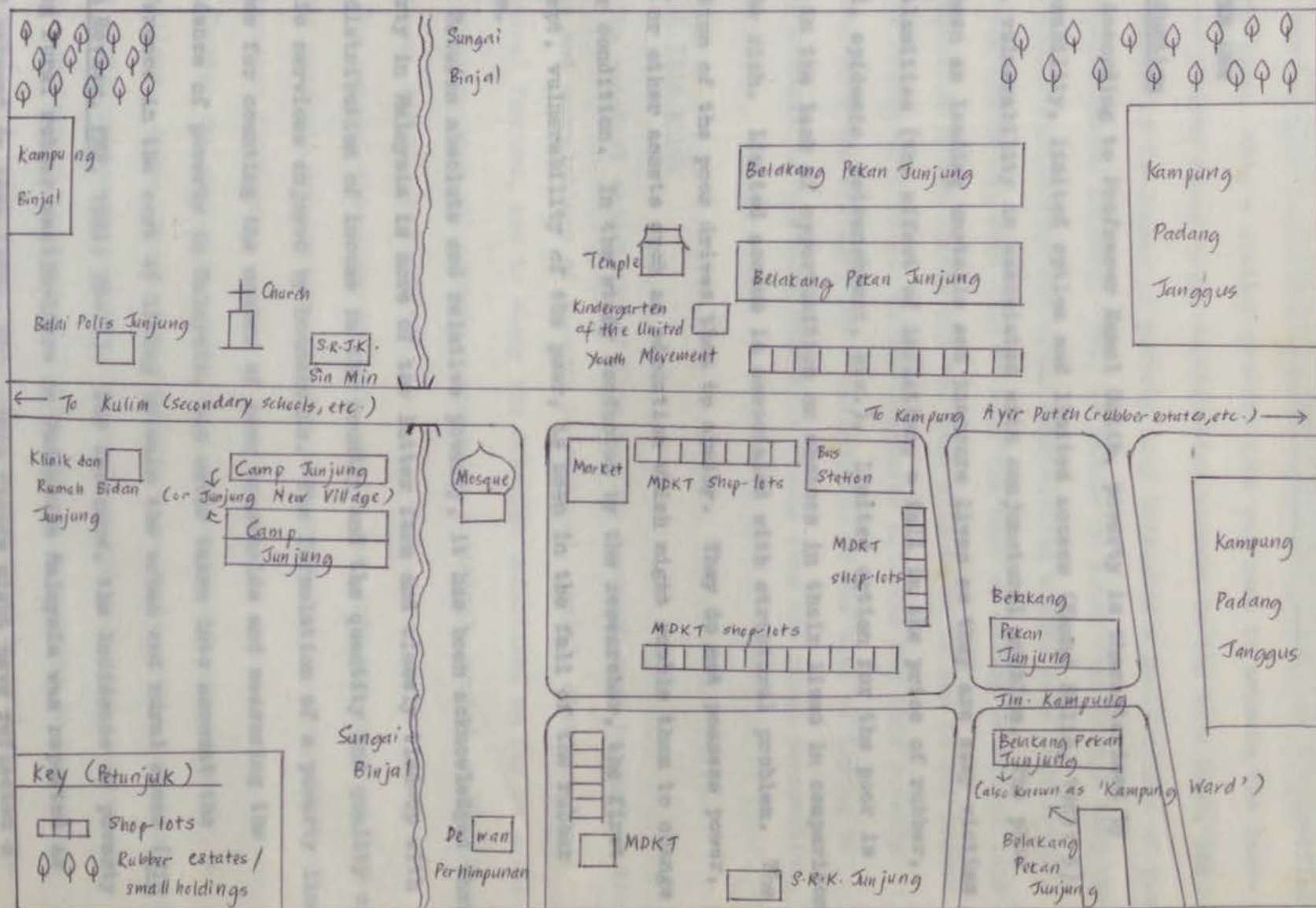
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A SKETCH-MAP OF THE AREA OF STUDY



CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

According to Professor Kamal Salih, poverty is characterised by vulnerability, limited option and limited access (Kamal Salih, 1983: 3). Here, vulnerability is associated with conjunctural problem. The poor are seen as leading unstable and insecure lives as they are easy victims to calamities (the effect of inflation, a fall in the price of rubber, flood, epidemic, retrenchment, etc.). Limited option for the poor is seen in the lack of opportunities or choices in their lives in comparison to the rich. Limited access is associated with structural problem. The position of the poor drives them to apathy. They do not possess power, land or other assets such as education which might enable them to change their condition. In the study conducted by the researcher, the first concept, vulnerability of the poor, is seen in the fall of the rubber price.

Between absolute and relative poverty, it has been acknowledged that poverty in Malaysia is more of the latter form and closely tied-up with the distribution of income in the country and the quantity and quality of public services enjoyed by households. The formulation of a poverty line income for counting the number of poor households and measuring the incidence of poverty in Malaysia, has never taken into account the difference in the cost of living between the urban and rural areas (Mid Term Review, FMP, 1984: 76-77). For instance, the incidence of poverty among rural rubber smallholders in Peninsula Malaysia was reported as 39.2 percent in 1985 (1984: 90). This figure might have reflected a

great number of poor rural rubber smallholders who fell below a specified poverty line. When a similar poverty line was used to measure the incidence of poverty among urban construction workers in the same year, the 12.4 percent of incidence of poverty only indicated a small number of poor urban construction workers. But, it should be noted that though both the rural rubber smallholder and urban construction worker were considered poor, the former was more able to meet the cost of living in his village in comparison to the latter who was less able to do so due to the higher cost of living in a city. As the fieldsite selected for this poverty research is a new village, any consideration of the cost of living or living standard of the poor should be viewed from the rural perspective.

The final chapter which sums up the exercise, also applies concepts formulated by past researchers on poverty to the research findings.

Aims of this study

This chapter also stresses on the need for future researchers to avoid repeating the mistakes made by the researcher.

The original objectives of this poverty research were to analyse the causes and correlations of poverty to cultural, social, structural and historical factors, and to study the measures undertaken so far to eradicate poverty, from all aspects - economic, political, social, cultural, education, health, housing, etc. rare occasions, the researcher did not

The present objectives however, are to look into the problems in a poverty research and the consequences that undermine the credibility of the research findings. Though the three major Chinese speech groups

Chapter Two presents a background picture of the area of study, a new village. Among others, the residents' access to public amenities and their participation in various organizations and political parties are noted. Employment patterns of first, all the households in the census and second, all the sample households are indicated in tables. Income

patterns of the sample households as a whole and as different ethnic group are also shown.

Chapter Three focusses on sampling and survey difficulties encountered by the researcher in fieldwork. It also shows how the failure to obtain full co-operation from respondents prevents sampling from being smoothly done and interview from being satisfactorily conducted.

In Chapter Four, the researcher examines the marked contrast between the responses of residents from one, a similar ethnic group to hers and two, a different ethnic group from hers. It is noted here that the different circumstances in which the researcher finds the respondents, to an extent affect the survey findings.

The final chapter which sums up the exercise, also applies concepts formulated by past researchers on poverty to the research findings. This chapter also stresses on the need for future researchers to avoid repeating the mistakes made by the researcher.

Methodology

Interviews were conducted from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. daily. Except for few rare occasions, the researcher did not face much problem in communicating with her respondents. Between the researcher and a respondent of similar ethnic group to the researcher's, Hokkien dialect was used. Though the three major Chinese speech groups in the area of study were Hakka, Teochiu and Hokkien, the commonly-spoken dialect was Hokkien which was the researcher's 'mother tongue' too. Similarly, the researcher and a respondent of different ethnic group from the researcher's, were able to make use of a common medium, the national language - Bahasa Malaysia.

Besides listing 258 households in the census and interviewing 50 heads of sample households, consulting leaders in the area of study was also done by the researcher. Though the service of an interpreter was not engaged in this study, the assistance of a key informant was certainly employed. The key informant in this study was the researcher's foster father. Having witnessed the formation (1954) and dissolution of the Local Council (1971) prior to the formation of the present Majlis Daerah Kerajaan Tempatan (MDKT), Junjung Branch, this key informant who has always been actively involved in local administration, has kindly helped to illuminate the researcher on little known history of the area of study. As a native and much respected leader¹ in the new village, his experience and sound knowledge of issues pertaining to his people, etc. are unquestionably reliable.

The questionnaires that were used in the survey comprised open-ended and close-ended questions. In general, respondents were rather conscious of expressing their views in response to the former type of questions but were well disposed to answer the latter type of questions.

Additional information beyond the coverage of the questionnaires that were provided by the respondents, were recorded in a log-book. Personal observation that were made by the researcher in fieldwork were also taken into account.

Photo documentation is an attempt by the researcher to 'flashback'

¹This observation was made when majority of the respondents gave a word or two of praise for the researcher's foster father when they were informed where the researcher was staying during the research period.

on certain typical scenes found in the area of study. It is hoped that these photographs would shed some light on the stark reality of the new village as perceived by the researcher. It is felt that to remain objective, the researcher has to attempt to understand the physical condition surrounding the community studied, besides the values inherent in it.

Limitations of the study

The problems encountered in fieldwork shall be discussed at length in Chapter Three. The root of these problems, as discussed by the researcher lies mainly in her failure to personally view the fieldsite before beginning on the study. In addition, the researcher did not determine the suitability of the residents for her choice topic of study. Perhaps, pre-interview contacts should have been initiated by the researcher to ascertain that the prospective samples satisfy the criteria specified for their inclusion in the study (refer to conclusion).

As a set method for selecting samples had to be employed by the researcher for the purpose of standardization¹, she had to remain complacent regarding the manner in which the samples were selected in this poverty research.

It is acknowledged that an 'in-depth' study on the actual condition of the residents concerned, had not been achieved mainly due to time constraint. The study was conducted within six weeks only i.e. from

¹ The research method employed need to be standardised to enable the researcher's survey findings to be used collectively with other findings of a similar nature.

2 April to 14 May 1985. This factor also led to the researcher's inability to truly gain rapport with the respondents which might have rendered the research findings more reliable and accurate.

In the 1920s, Junjung was mainly situated in swampy land. It was widely noted that the residents of Junjung New Village used to carry things on their heads especially when crossing swampy areas. Hence, the New Village gradually derived its name, Junjung New Village, from the common action of carrying something on one's head or "junjung" in Bahasa Malaysia.

Sources of data

As the questionnaires used were not set by the researcher with a topic in mind, only part of the survey findings were selected and analysed for the purpose of this academic exercise.

Official statistics and maps were obtained from the Penghulu of Kulim, Penghulu of Mukim Junjung, Mandor of Majlis Daerah Kerajaan Tempatan, Junjung Branch, Penolong Pegawai Kanan RISDA, Kulim, and the midwife of Klinik dan Rumah Bidan Junjung. It is hoped that these information will render at least part of the account of the area studied, more concrete and reliable than the survey findings based on sample respondents.

Finally, library research was undertaken by the researcher to critically view the poverty research conducted by her in comparison to earlier ones.

apart from Junjung New Village are Kampung Padang Pengadang, Belakang Pekan Junjung, Kampung Padang Janggus, Peranting Tiong and Kampung Ayer Puth. The area studied by the researcher included Junjung New Village or Camp Junjung, Belakang Pekan Junjung and Kampung Padang Janggus. This area forms about one quarter of Mukim Junjung.

The area of study is sparsely surrounded by hills with gradual slopes which are ideal for planting rubber trees. Thus, approximately 90% of the cultivated land in this area are planted with rubber trees. The other crops which are cultivated include coconut and fruit trees (mainly durian, rambutan and nenas).

CHAPTER TWO *typical of other towns ("pekan") or New Villages, the "pekan"*

Background of Junjung New Village *In the area of study is dominated by Chinese. Approximately at the radius of 500 yards away from the "pekan", majority of the occupants are Malays*

In the 1920s, Junjung was mainly situated in swampy land. It was widely noted that the residents of Junjung New Village used to carry things on their heads especially when crossing swampy areas. Hence, the New Village gradually derived its name, Junjung New Village, from the common action of carrying something on one's head or "junjung" in Bahasa Malaysia. *area of study comes under the control of Penghulu Mukim Junjung.*

In the late 1920s, the main crops that were cultivated were pinang and tapioca. Rubber planting was introduced and greatly encouraged in the 1940s. Since then, rubber planting has remained the dominant economic activity in the New Village. *Chairman*

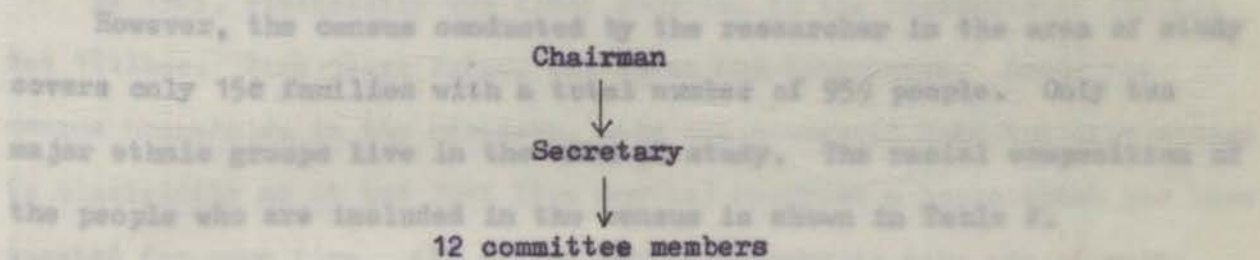
The New Village is situated six miles off Kulim, the third largest town in Kedah. It is located within Mukim Junjung which covers an area of 30.4 square kilometres. The other areas which come under Mukim Junjung apart from Junjung New Village are Kampung Padang Penyangga, Belakang Pekan Junjung, Kampung Padang Janggus, Permatang Tiong and Kampung Ayer Putih. The area studied by the researcher included Junjung New Village or Camp Junjung, Belakang Pekan Junjung and Kampung Padang Janggus. This area forms about one quarter of Mukim Junjung. *Secretary*

The area of study is sparsely surrounded by hills with gradual slopes which are ideal for planting rubber trees. Thus, approximately 90% of the cultivated land in this area are planted with rubber trees. The other crops which are cultivated include coconut and fruit trees (mainly durian, *The Local Council (1954 - 71) used to attend to public matters like* rambutan and nutmeg). *housing i.e. repair work, etc.*

As is typical of other towns ("pekan") or New Villages, the "pekan" in the area of study is dominated by Chinese. Approximately at the radius of 500 yards away from the "pekan", majority of the occupants are Malays who live in their kampung homes. Almost all the Indians stay near the rubber estates at Kampung Ayer Putih which is beyond the researcher's area of study.

Structure of Administration

The area of study comes under the control of Penghulu Mukim Junjung. A committee, Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK) is set up in one, Junjung New Village and two, Kampung Padang Janggus. This committee is run by the following members:



It serves as the medium through which the residents of a particular area express their needs and suggestions which they hope to obtain the government's hearing.

Majlis Daerah Kerajaan Tempatan (MDKT), cawangan Junjung is set up in the early 1970s following the dissolution of the Local Council¹. The administrative structure of MDKT is shown below:

¹The Local Council (1954 - 71) used to attend to public matters like housing i.e. repair work, etc.

Based on the census conducted in 1980¹, the population of Mukim Junjung stands at 4119 people. The racial composition of residents in this area is as shown in Table 1.

Race	Number of people	Percentage
Malay	2384	57.9
Chinese	1673	40.6
Indians	62	1.5
Other races	-	-

Table 1: Racial Composition of the Residents of Mukim Junjung

However, the census conducted by the researcher in the area of study covers only 158 families with a total number of 959 people. Only two major ethnic groups live in the area of study. The racial composition of the people who are included in the census is shown in Table 2.

Race	Number of people	Percentage
Malay	258	26.9
Chinese	701	73.1
Total	959	100.0

Table 2: Racial Composition of the People included in the Census

¹ Banci Penduduk dan Perumahan

Source: Pejabat Penghulu Mukim Junjung

"Mandor"



Clerk



6 workers (including truck driver, etc.)

This council is in-charge of collecting revenue in the form of quit rent and business licence (including payment for the setting-up of stalls at Pasar Minggu¹). It also provides services concerned with sanitation. For instance, the MDKT staff see to the sewage and garbage disposal in the area under its concern, "Pekan Junjung".

Public Amenities in the Area of Study

In 1965, electricity was first supplied to the residents of Junjung New Village. Five years later, tap water was introduced. Among the sample households in the research, only one household does not have access to electricity as it has just (two months) occupied a house which has been vacated for some time. 62% of the sample households make use of well water, 32% tap water and 6% make use of both.

There are three public water pams and two public wells in Kampung Padang Janggus.

However, there is no fire hydrant or fire station in the area of study. Therefore, any incident of fire in this area has always been referred to the fire station in Kulim.

In order to encourage the use of flush toilets ("tandas curah") in rural areas, the Ministry of Health has instructed that the fee charged

¹\$1 per night is charged for selling non-edibles. 50 cents per night is charged for selling edibles.

for sewage disposal-bucket system be increased from \$40 in 1984 to \$60 in 1985¹.

At the time of study, 54% of the sample households were making use of flush toilets, 42% bucket system, 2% "jamban korek" and 2% pit latrine. The types of toilet used by the sample households are shown in Table 3.

Type of toilet	Number of User		Percentage of User	
	Malay	Chinese	Malay	Chinese
Flush toilet	16	11	32%	22%
Bucket system	-	21	-	42%
Modern pit latrine	-	1	-	2%
"Jamban korek"	1	-	2%	-

Table 3: Types of toilet used by sample households (N=50)

In 1982, \$30,000 was allocated for building four units of classrooms in the Chinese primary school. Two years later, approximately \$100,000 was allocated for the construction of two additional blocks of classrooms in the Malay Primary School. The primary schools mentioned are the only schools in the area of study. Thus, children from this area have to travel daily to secondary schools in Kulim, six miles away. Majority of them attend classes at Sekolah Menengah St. Patrick, Sekolah Menengah Kulim, Sekolah Menengah Convent St. Anne, Sekolah Menengah Chio Min and Sekolah Menengah Kelang Lama.

In 1980, a tar road along Jalan Ayer Putih was built. Two years later, another tar road was built along Jalan Kampung in 'Kampung Ward'.

¹The Chairman, Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung Padang Jangus

In 1983, tar road was made in front of MDKT's shoplots. At the time of study, a similar project was being carried out at the main road of Kampung Padang Janggus. none in the area of study. A mobile library from The Kedah State Government allocated \$30,000 in 1983 for the conversion of the waterfall and its surrounding area at Kampung Ayer Putih into a Recreation Park. Since then, this place has served as a getaway for the local residents and other Kedah residents.

Organizations within the Area of Study

There is a police station located about half a mile from Pekan Junjung.

(a) MDKT Welfare and Sports Association

Unfortunately, the records of crime rates in the area of study were kept

This association has a membership of 250 people at the time of study. confidential by the police officers on-duty at the Junjung Police Station. Every month, a fee of one dollar is collected from the members. From this as a precautionary measure against communist sympathizers, etc.

collection fund, the association is able to offer scholarship to deserving children among its members. It also extends help to its members in times of bereavement and financial constraint. This association is under the supervision of an authority in Kulim. Some common outdoor activities which Junjung and Kampung Padang Penyangga. This midwife plays several roles. are occasionally held include games competition and athletics.

Firstly, expectant mothers who do not seek examination from doctors who practise outside the area of study, depend on this midwife for regular check-ups and delivery. Secondly, children of few months to 6 years old refer to this midwife for 'medical' examination. Thirdly, adults who receive minor injuries could be tended upon by this midwife. Fourthly, this midwife also dispenses medicine to children and adults who suffer from common ailments like coughs and colds¹.

There are three public telephones in Mukim Junjung, including one at their for the rubber smallholders.

¹ According to a HISA officer of Daerah Kulim, including those in Majority of the adults here seek medical attention from private general Mukim Junjung, only 26.9% of the 1,249 smallholders in Daerah Kulim are practitioners or doctors in Hospital Kulim.

the area of study. A mobile post office enables residents to obtain postal services twice weekly. On other days, they have to go to the Kulim Post Office as there is none in the area of study. A mobile library permits children to borrow books fortnightly.

The bus service from the New Village includes the hourly bus to Kulim (six miles away) and half hourly bus to Simpang Empat (four miles away).

Organizations within the Area of Study

(a) MDKT Welfare and Sports Association

This association has a membership of 250 people at the time of study. Every month, a fee of one dollar is collected from the members. From this collective fund, the association is able to offer scholarship to deserving children among its members. It also extends help to its members in times of bereavement and financial constraint. This association is under the supervision of an authority in Kulim. Some common outdoor activities which are occasionally held include games competition and athletics.

(b) Rubber Smallholders' Co-operative

RISDA's (Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority) indirect involvement in the area of study is seen in the formation of a rubber smallholders' co-operative here. Members of this Co-operative refer matters related to subsidies, seedlings or transplants to a RISDA officer who is stationed at the area of study. This officer in turn, reports to the RISDA office in Kulim which acts as the insurance representative and whole saler for the rubber smallholders.

According to a RISDA officer of Daerah Kulim, including those in Mukim Junjung, only 26.9% of the 1,249 smallholders in Daerah Kulim are

members of RISDA's Smallholders' Co-operative. The Co-operative's object is to ensure that the sale of rubber sheets fetches deserving returns to the smallholders. A RISDA agent takes charge of sending rubber sheets to smoke houses at Nibong Tebal, Province Wellesley. At the time of study, the Co-operative was not giving much aid to rubber smallholders as it was in the process of capital accumulation.

Rubber smallholders who are not members of RISDA's Co-operative generally sell their rubber sheets or crepe rubber to any of the five rubber dealers in the New Village.

(c) Gerakan Belia Bersatu 4-B

This youth movement "Ching Ren Tuan Yin", aims primarily to bring youths in the area of study together and for a useful purpose. This movement has initiated the formation of Tadika Gerakan Belia Bersatu (or Kindergarten of the United Youth Movement). Every child who attends this kindergarten is charged \$16.50 a month, i.e. inclusive of text-books and snacks during recess time.

Similarly, KEMAS with the assistance of Penghulu Mukim Junjung, saw the formation of a kindergarten at Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan Junjung. Every child in this kindergarten has access to book loan and sports facilities. Snacks are provided during recess time. A fee of \$4.00 a month is charged.

(d) The National Front and PAS

There are only two political parties in the area of study. They are the National Front comprising UMNO, MCA and MIC, and an opposition party, PAS.

There are 180 members in the Junjung Branch of UMNO. This party is

run by 8 office-bearers and 15 committee members. Its structure of organisation is as follows:

Head of Sample Household							
Occupation	Chairman	Chinese		Total			
		No.	%	No.	%		
	↓						
	Vice-Chairman						
	↓						
Rubber Smallholder	Head	4.0	15	32.0	10	36.0	
	↓						
Rubber tapper	Assistant Head	7	14.0	7	14.0		
	↓						
Labourer	Vice Assistant Head	4.0	2	4.0	4	8.0	
	↓						
Rawlar	Secretary	6.0	1	2.0	4	8.0	
	↓						
Carpenter	Head of Information	-	1	2.0	1	2.0	
	↓						
Bus killing/Lorry driver	Treasurer	-	1	2.0	1	2.0	
	↓						
Estate worker (other than rubber)	Committee Members (15 people)	-	1	2.0	1	2.0	
Farmer (livestock)		-	1	2.0	1	2.0	
Unemployed/housewife/sick		6	12.0	3	6.0	9	18.0

There are approximately 180 members in the Junjung Branch of MCA.

Thus, 10.8% of the Chinese here participate in or join political parties.

There are 80 members in PAS, i.e. the Junjung Branch.² As the members of

UMNO and PAS are Malays, the degree of Malay participation in politics here is 10.9%.

Employment patterns among the Respondents

The employment patterns of both the sample households and households that are included in the census are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

primary sector (agriculture) as a farmer. On the other hand, 6 percent of the heads of sample households who are in the selling trade are Malays.

- 12 percent of the heads of sample households who are unemployed, house-
1. The Vice Chairman, MCA Junjung Branch.
 2. The Vice Chairman, MCA Junjung Branch.

Table 4. Employment Pattern Among Sample Households

Occupation	Head of Sample Household					
	Malay		Chinese		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Rubber Smallholder	2	4.0	16	32.0	18	36.0
Rubber tapper	-	-	7	14.0	7	14.0
Labourer	2	4.0	2	4.0	4	8.0
Hawker	3	6.0	1	2.0	4	8.0
Carpenter	-	-	1	2.0	1	2.0
Bas kilang/Lorry driver	-	-	1	2.0	1	2.0
Estate worker(other than rubber)	-	-	1	2.0	1	2.0
Farmer(livestock)	-	-	1	2.0	1	2.0
Broker driver	1	2.0	-	-	1	2.0
Civil servant(i.e. Ketua Kampung)	1	2.0	-	-	1	2.0
Pensioner	2	4.0	-	-	2	4.0
Unemployed/housewife/sick	6	12.0	3	6.0	9	18.0

As indicated above, majority of the Chinese heads of sample households are rubber smallholders. One of them, however, is engaged in the primary sector (agriculture) as a farmer. On the other hand, 6 percent of the heads of sample households who are in the selling trade are Malays. 12 percent of the heads of sample households who are unemployed, housewives or sick are Malays. Only 6 percent of the Chinese heads of households fall under this category.

Table 5: Employment pattern among Households that are included in the Census

Head of Household that is included in the Census						
Occupation	Malay		Chinese		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Rubber smallholder	3	1.9	26	16.5	29	18.4
Rubber tapper	8	5.1	34	21.5	42	26.6
Labourer	8	5.1	4	2.5	12	7.6
Hawker	9	5.7	2	1.3	11	7.0
Construction worker	-	-	7	4.4	7	4.4
Carpenter	-	-	4	2.5	4	2.5
Other smallholder	3	1.9	1	0.6	4	2.5
Shop owner	1	0.6	2	1.3	3	1.9
Bas kilang/ lorry driver	-	-	3	1.9	3	1.9
Estate worker (other than rubber)	1	0.6	1	0.6	2	1.3
Foundry worker	-	-	2	1.3	2	1.3
Joss-stick maker	-	-	2	1.3	2	1.3
Security guard	2	1.3	-	-	2	1.3
Farmer (livestock)	-	-	1	0.6	1	0.6
Broker	1	0.6	-	-	1	0.6
Civil servant (i.e. Ketua kampung)	1	0.6	-	-	1	0.6
Other occupation	3	1.9	1	0.6	4	2.5
Pensioner	4	2.5	-	-	4	2.5
Unemployed/housewife/ sick	10	6.3	14	8.9	24	15.2

While sixty Chinese heads of households are involved in rubber production, seven heads of households are in the secondary sector as construction workers. On the whole, the Chinese heads of households seem to have 'ventured' into all types of occupation that have been listed, except for the positions of security guard, broker or civil servant. There are 5.7 percent of the Malay heads of households (in comparison to 1.3 percent of Chinese) are traders. Four Malay heads of households who have served in the government sector are receiving pensions now in contrast to the Chinese who have never worked in this sector.

The income pattern among the heads of sample households is shown in Income patterns among the respondents

The income pattern of the whole sample households is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Income pattern of the whole sample households

Income (\$ per month)	Whole Sample Household					
	Malay		Chinese		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0	1	2.0	1	2.0	2	4.0
1 - 100	2	4.0	2	4.0	4	8.0
101 - 200	4	8.0	2	4.0	6	12.0
201 - 300	3	6.0	5	10.0	8	16.0
301 - 400	2	4.0	8	16.0	10	20.0
401 - 500	3	6.0	4	8.0	7	14.0
501 - 600	1	2.0	5	10.0	6	12.0
601 - 700	-	-	1	2.0	1	2.0
701 - 800	-	-	1	2.0	1	2.0
801 - 900	-	-	2	4.0	2	4.0
901 - 1000	1	2.0	-	-	1	2.0
above 1000	-	-	3	4.0	2	4.0

Though it generally appears that whole Chinese sample households are receiving higher income than whole Malay sample households, the former households have an average of five members while the latter, only three members. For instance, there are seventeen people in each of the two Chinese households which have total income exceeding one thousand dollars each. On the other hand, a Malay household of four people receives total monthly income exceeding nine hundred dollars. Thus, it is necessary to consider the size of any household in relation to its total income in assessing its economic standing.

The income pattern among the heads of sample households is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Income pattern among the Heads of Sample Households

Income (\$ per month)	Head of sample household					
	Malay		Chinese		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0	6	12.0	2	4.0	8	16.0
1 - 100	1	2.0	2	4.0	3	6.0
101 - 200	3	6.0	6	12.0	9	18.0
201 - 300	2	4.0	5	10.0	7	14.0
301 - 400	3	6.0	9	18.0	12	24.0
401 - 500	3	6.0	5	10.0	8	16.0
501 - 600	-	-	3	6.0	3	6.0
601 - 700	-	-	-	-	-	-

Though it appears that six heads of sample households who are not earning any income generally due to old age are Malays, they are actually being supported by their children who are working 'outstation'. In

contrast, nine Chinese heads of sample households who are generally in their prime, are earning an average of \$300 to \$400 a month.

Education

The highest level of education attained by the Heads of Sample Households is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Highest level of education among the Heads of Sample Households

Level of Education	Head of Sample Household							
	Malay		Chinese		Total			
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male		Female	
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	%	No.	%
Did not attend school	2	1	10	6	12	24.0	7	14.0
Primary school	12	1	14	1	26	52.0	2	4.0
Secondary school	1	-	2	-	3	6.0	-	-

A common feature among the Malays and Chinese is that more male heads of sample households have received primary education than the female heads of sample households. As indicated above, 52 percent of the male heads of sample households had this advantage in comparison to only 4 percent of the female heads of households. On the whole, only three of the seventeen Malay heads of households did not attend school whilst almost half (i.e. sixteen) of the thirty-three Chinese heads of households did not attend school.

1 The study was conducted from April 2 to May 14, 1983, i.e. within six weeks only

CHAPTER THREE

Sampling and Survey Problems

The area of the researcher's study was chosen based on a pre-selected list obtained from the Internal Co-ordination Unit (ICU), the Prime Minister's Department. This area, Kampung Baru Junjung or Camp Junjung, is inhabited by less than seventy households.

Two houses could not be listed in the census as they were used as public prayer house and rubber storehouse. Eight households were also not listed as their representatives could not be reached. Though repeated attempts were made by the researcher, members of these households could not be contacted during the entire period of the study. As their neighbours could not furnish the particulars required - name and age of the head of household, the number of years he has stayed at the house, etc., the researcher could not include these households in the census.

Time constraint¹ partly accounted for the exclusion of these households from the census list. Consequently, not every household in the area had equal opportunity to be selected as a sample in the poverty research. Thus, the samples used in this study could not be claimed as truly representing the community studied. Furthermore, the study merely focussed on two ethnic groups which resided in the area of study.

Sample households of Indian or other race could not be included in the study as they stayed in the areas beyond the researcher's study. Consequently, the study conducted only made use of Malay and Chinese sample households as indicated in Table 9.

¹ Another researcher, who was also conducting a similar study, was inter-

1 The study was conducted from April 2 to May 14, 1985, i.e. within six weeks only

Table 9: A Break up of the Residents of the area of study

Race	Household		Family members	
	No.	%	No.	%
Malay	54	34.2	258	26.9
Chinese	104	65.8	701	73.1
Total	158	100.0	959	100.0

The minimum of one hundred households had to be listed before any sampling could be done by the researcher. As the researcher could only do listing on fifty-two households in Camp Junjung, she had to move to its right for the purpose mentioned. The areas concerned, Pekan Junjung, Belakang Pekan Junjung and Kampung Padang Janggus had to be included in the census as listing could not be done to the left of Camp Junjung.¹

The researcher was only able to interview respondents who were willing. Thus, when four heads of households were reluctant to co-operate, they were replaced by four others. As four 'second samples' had to be used in the study, the ideal of using merely original 'first samples' could not be met in this poverty research.

Initially, the researcher felt that it was necessary to dispel any notion that a household was selected for the poverty research because its members were deemed poor. Firstly, this impression might create a sense of inferiority and uneasiness among the respondents. Secondly, it might of the information provided by them is questionable. Ironically, this supposed affluent spending among majority of the sample households certainly

¹ Another researcher, who was also conducting a similar study, was interviewed to project the preconceived notion of a poor community. viewing the households in this area, Kampung Padang Penyangga.

lead to an exaggeration of the respondents' real economic or financial situation.

Though an attempt was made, i.e. the researcher informed the respondents that the study was generally on their way of life, the actual object of the study soon had to be revealed. As the questions that were raised probe into the respondents' earnings and possessions, the respondents were apparently conscious that the researcher was 'assessing' their wealth.

When the sample households realised that a study on 'poverty' was being conducted, they generally over estimated their expenditure but under estimated their income. Granted that it is normal to find a marginal error of estimation of the monthly household expenditure which may be more or less than the monthly household income by one hundred dollars. The study conducted by the researcher however, did not reveal such a tendency. In fact, forty-eight percent of the sample households reported monthly expenditure which exceeded monthly income by \$200 to \$494. This excess spending perhaps, could be covered by the savings of these sample households. However, the survey findings revealed that only ten percent of these sample households appeared to have savings in banks or post offices. Furthermore, very few of these respondents mentioned debts that they might have incurred to make 'ends meet'.

Thus, unless the over estimation of monthly expenditure by the respondents is casually overlooked as probable human error, the credibility of the information provided by them is questionable. Ironically, this supposed affluent spending among majority of the sample households certainly failed to project the preconceived notion of a poor community.

That they deemed 'ideal' for their children was irrelevant.

There were eighteen rubber smallholders among the heads of the sample households. One rubber smallholder whom the researcher interviewed, reported that his land had not been cultivated due to prolonged negotiation regarding land tenure. On the other hand, fifteen rubber smallholders revealed that an average of rubber sheets weighing 436 kilograms were reaped from one relong (0.7 acre) of rubber cultivated land each year. In contrast two rubber smallholders ^{who owned rubber cultivated land of substantial sizes} reported the rubber yield obtained by them as less than the average yield cited by the other rubber smallholders. The first one stated that he obtained merely an average of rubber sheets weighing 60 kilograms from one relong (0.7 acre) of rubber cultivated land each year. The other rubber smallholder too informed the researcher that she obtained an average of rubber sheets weighing 155 kilograms from one relong of rubber cultivated land each year. Thus, the margin of error in estimation on the part of the two rubber smallholders is too wide to be simply overlooked. As these rubber smallholders were not in the process of replanting their rubber trees (which might have resulted in the lower rubber yield), the credibility of the figures quoted on the rubber yield by them, is questionable.

Some of the questions that were raised in the questionnaires used in the study aroused the sensitivity of the respondents. For instance, question G3 on the type of occupation that a respondent deemed 'good' for his child. More than sixty percent (i.e. 62%) of the respondents refused to comment on this matter. It evoked a feeling of inferiority and inadequacy within the respondents for not providing enough opportunity, incentive or encouragement for their children to study. Thus, the question of the type of occupation that they deemed 'ideal' for their children was irrelevant.

Question G5 on the field of study that the respondent deemed 'good' for his children was also received in a similar manner by the respondent. Here, he generally claimed that it was beyond him to say which field of study was 'good' for his children. In fact, sixteen percent of the respondents were of this opinion. This attitude was partly due to the fact that majority of the respondents were illiterate or semi-illiterate.

(Refer to Table 8, Chapter Two)

Besides, they would rather leave the selection of any particular field of study to their children i.e. based on their academic inclination.

Question G7 on the most influential and respected person in the village, was received differently by the respondents. Among the possible persons cited in this close-ended question were the Penghulu, Ketua Kampung, Imam, Government Officer, Politician, Teacher and Land Developer ("peneroka tanah"). The respondents were cautious about committing themselves by stating that one personality was more influential or respected in the village than another. They generally gave a shrug and said that all these personalities were regarded in the same manner in the village. Twenty-four percent of the respondents refused to make any comment on this question. Forty-six percent of the respondents felt that the Penghulu was the most influential and respected person in the village. Six respondents however, perceived teachers to be the most influential and respected figures in the village. At the same time, some cynical respondents remarked that politicians who were supposedly influential personalities, did not strike them (the respondents) as such as these public figures have not ever reached out or tried to know the people whom they represent.

Political sensitivity was evoked due to the implications attached to the answers that the respondents gave. In question H1 on the political party that the respondent favoured or liked, the respondent was very conscious about naming a party which he liked. This was partly due to the fact that stating a preference for a political party might be taken as not supporting another party. Sixteen percent of the respondents adopted a non-commitment attitude. As the New Village was listed under the 'black area' category especially during the Emergency¹, the respondents did not want to be suspected of being communist sympathizers or anti-government agents.

Question H7 on the election campaign of which political party that the respondent attended was also crucial in arousing the respondent's suspicion towards the researcher's intention. Forty-four percent of the respondents refused to comment on this highly sensitive question.

Question H9 on the political party which the respondent disliked, further aggravated the respondent's suspicion towards the researcher. Consequently, fifty-four percent of the respondents bluntly refused to answer this question.

Thus, questions H1, H7 and H9 should not have been included in the questionnaires. The tendency that the respondents' suspicion towards the researcher's motive increased as these questions were raised, did not come as a surprise. As the census and interviews were conducted a few weeks following the national call for eligible voters to register their names for the forthcoming election, the impression that the researcher was a government spy was not far from many of the respondents' minds.

1 Emergency (1948-54)

The framing of certain questions in the questionnaires was not carefully done as indicated above. The consideration of the sensitivity of the subjects raised should have been taken into account. As this was not done, the awareness that the researcher was indirectly acting on behalf of the government was recurrent in the respondents' minds. Consequently, it affected the spontaneity and ease of the respondents. Most of them appeared to have withheld their actual views. Instead, their responses were passive and non-committal.

Hostility-Sociability

The reception of the respondents from the same ethnic group to the researcher's (i.e. Chinese) was hostile and suspicious. This was largely due to the fact that the researcher was a stranger whose aim was viewed as prying into the villager's lives. Despite the researcher's attempt to 'familiarise' herself with the villagers and vice-versa, it appeared that she was still regarded as an urbanite who could probably never perceive life as the villagers did.

On the other hand, the respondents from a different ethnic group to the researcher's (i.e. the Malays) were quite warm in their reception of the researcher. Their friendly queries of: "Kerajaan nak buat tanah, ya?" helped to ease any hesitation on the researcher's part to approach them.

CHAPTER FOUR

Social Interaction in Fieldwork

Social interaction is here referred to the response of the respondents, whether of the same ethnic group to the researcher's or not, to the researcher. One of the traditional concepts that implies social interaction is hostility-sociability (Borgetta, E.F., 1965: 3). This concept can be applied to the respondents in this study. Some of the respondents were at times awkward, hesitant, discreet, disagreeable, pessimistic and withdrawn. In contrast, the others were spontaneous, forthright, frank, agreeable, optimistic and co-operative.

Hostility-Sociability

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On the other hand, the respondents from a different ethnic group to the researcher's (i.e. the Malays) were quite warm in their reception of the researcher. Their friendly queries of: "Kerajaan nak buat banci, ya?" helped to ease any hesitation on the researcher's part to approach them.

Awkwardness-Spontaneity

In general, the Chinese respondents particularly those residing in 'camp lots' under T.O.L. (Temporary Occupational Licence), were conscious of their dark and 'congested' homes - each measuring 160 to 320 square feet. Thus, none of these respondents invited the researcher into their homes. It was noted that both the Chinese and Malay respondents were disinclined to have the researcher enter their homes.

The Malay respondents however, were spontaneous in their immediate invitation of the researcher into their homes. Their warm disposition enabled the researcher to relax and converse with them. As all of the Malay respondents except one, owned the houses that they were occupying, they seemed to take pride in their homes disregarding of the sizes, etc.

Hesitation-Forthrightness

78% of the Chinese respondents expressed concern over the lack of employment opportunities in the New Village for their children. Thus, 60.6% of these respondents had children securing employment beyond the New Village. When the researcher questioned them on the types of job that their children held in other states, they were quite reluctant to answer. Nevertheless, it was finally revealed that most of their children were working as construction workers and electronic factory workers and earning daily wages, not monthly salaries.

The Malay respondents (i.e. 22% of them) too remarked on the lack of employment opportunities in the New Village for their children. Those who had children working in other states were not hesitant when questioned on the types of job that their children were holding. Majority of them matter-of-factly informed the researcher that they had children working as

soldiers, policemen, teachers, government officers and clerks in the different states of Malaysia. Even those who had children working as labourers or estate workers duly informed the researcher about them.

Discretion-Frankness

It was noted that both the Chinese and Malays respondents were discreet when questioned on their children's (i.e. those working 'outstation') monthly contribution to them. Majority of them quoted small sums of ten or twenty dollars as each of their children's monthly contribution.

Similarly, on the question of land ownership, the Chinese respondents were generally very discreet. They were hesitant and cautious in their mention of the acreage of land owned, yield obtained yearly from their cash crops and cost involved for cultivating these crops. Most of them showed sudden unwillingness to co-operate with the researcher once the question of their property ownership was raised. Thus, these respondents only remained tolerant towards the researcher until the question of economic standing was mentioned.

The Malay respondents who were less involved in rubber planting than the Chinese (i.e. only two of the eighteen rubber smallholders interviewed, were Malays), were less perturbed by the question of land ownership. Most of them who owned few acres of orchards, quoted to the researcher indefinite or inconsistent amount of yield as each harvest varied from the others. They were not directly dependent on the returns from the sale of fruits. Thus, they were frank in answering the question on the supplementary income brought in by this sale of fruits.

When political issues or sentiments were raised during the study in

the form of questions, the Chinese respondents generally remained discreet and non-committal. As discussed in Chapter Three, they were conscious of evoking unnecessary signs of their support for any political party.

Majority of the Malay respondents however, acknowledged their membership in certain parties. They were generally not secretive about their support for any political party. Some of the Malay respondents did exercise caution when the question (H9) on the political party which they dislike, was raised.

Disagreeability-Agreeability

When questioned on whether their children were receiving any government aid in education, 51.5% of the Chinese respondents instantly replied in the negative. Though they later acknowledged that the government book loan scheme was extended to their children, the Chinese respondents were swift to add that only the book loan scheme was accessible to their children. The Malay respondents readily informed the researcher that their children had access to the book loan scheme. Some of them happily added that their children were government scholars overseas or students at fully-residential schools or MARA junior science colleges.

Pessimism-Optimism

When thirty of the Chinese respondents were questioned on the level of education that they wished their children to attain, sixteen of them stated that education until upper secondary level was 'quite possible' for their children. They explained that education at higher level was beyond

majority of the Chinese respondents. This was apparent when nineteen of the thirty-

the reach of their children due to two factors. Firstly, financial constraint and secondly, limited opportunity of pursuing tertiary education in this country.

Almost all the Malay respondents expressed a wish to see their children pursue higher education at universities. Fifteen of the seventeen Malay respondents who expressed such a wish, were optimistic that their children would fair well in life if they could win scholarship to support their educational pursuit.

Withdrawal-Participation

The Chinese respondents' initial hostility towards the researcher could be viewed as a natural inclination to protect their self-interest.

As they could not help viewing the researcher as a representative of governmental authority who intended to check on their actual economic position, they were not genuinely co-operative in their response. Thus,

On the other hand, the Chinese respondents were perturbed as they felt that the drainage and sewage disposal system in their area as they viewed her as a possible government agent.

In general, the Malay respondents acknowledged that the researcher was a representative of governmental authority. They normally permitted interviews to be conducted by the researcher without any objection. Their

polarisation, national integration and democracy was apparent as none of them considered any of these issues as national problem ("masalah negara"). whether the survey findings could possibly bring any financial aid to them or not.

Consciousness-Indifference

Majority of the Chinese respondents realised the importance of education for their children. This was apparent when nineteen of the thirty-

Only one Malay respondent regarded corruption as a national problem.

three Chinese respondents claimed that education was the most invaluable gift that they could impart on their children. The emphasis that they placed upon education for their children was indicated by the average monthly expenditure with respect to their children's education. The survey findings revealed that an average of forty-six dollars was spent on a Chinese child's education every month.

The Malay respondents too spent a substantial amount of their salary on their children's education. But in comparison to the Chinese respondents, they were moderate in their spending on education. An average of thirty-six dollars and forty cents was spent on a schooling child among the Malay sample households.

The Malay respondents generally did not comment much on the surroundings of their homes (which they maintained the cleanliness on their own) as they seemed contented with the present condition.

On the other hand, the Chinese 'camp lots' respondents were perturbed as they felt that the drainage and sewage disposal system in their area needed to be improved. Similar to the Malay respondents, they felt that a clean environment was essential for the maintenance of good health.

The Chinese respondents' indifference towards issues like racial polarisation, national integration and democracy was apparent as none of them considered any of these issues as national problem ("masalah negara"). The Malay respondents however, were quite conscious of the need for national integration.

Both the Malay and Chinese respondents were concerned that the drug-menace was posing a big threat to the country. Unlike the Chinese respondents, the Malay respondents showed less awareness on corruption in the country. Only one Malay respondent regarded corruption as a national problem.

The respondents' perception of the researcher to an extent affect their response during the study. When confronted with issues that they were well disposed to answer, the respondents were often spontaneous.

One of the main elements in the strategy to restructure Malaysian society through growth, is the increase in productivity and quality of life of the poor through modernization in the rural areas (Mid Term Review, FMP, 1984: 92). According to Joan Higgins, this contention that poverty was concentrated in particular areas, is an elaboration of the less spontaneous to the researcher than the Malay respondents.

culture of poverty (Higgins, J., 1978: 107). This theme has been applied by Oscar Lewis on the poor in Puerto Rico whom he pictured as removed and alienated, ignorant and uninterested, uninvolved and apathetic toward the wider world, as manifested by expressions of interest in politics, class consciousness, ethnic identity and national identification (Lewis, O., 1966: xlv-xlvi). As a result of fear, suspicion or apathy among these people with a culture of poverty, they usually are not members of political parties. Could this view be accepted or applied in the Malaysian context? Based on the study conducted by the researcher, this view could be sustained. As revealed in Chapter Two (page 15), only 10.8 per cent of the 1673 Chinese residents of Makin Junjung and 10.9 per cent of the 2384 Malay residents of Makin Junjung were members of political parties at the time of study. 'Apathy' might be present among the other residents who were not members. But did 'fear' and 'suspicion' also account for their lack of participation? As discussed in Chapter Three, the respondents' consciousness of the implications attached to the answers that they gave to highly sensitive questions on political parties preferred (Question H1) or disliked (Question H2), made them suspicious of the researcher's intention. Their refusal to answer these questions (refer to page 26)

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

One of the main elements in the strategy to restructure Malaysian society through growth, is the increase in productivity and quality of life of the poor through modernization in the rural areas (Mid Term Review, FMP, 1984: 92). According to Joan Higgins, this contention that poverty was concentrated in particular areas, is an elaboration of the culture of poverty (Higgins, J., 1978: 107). This theme has been applied by Oscar Lewis on the poor in Puerto Rico whom he pictured as removed and alienated, ignorant and uninterested, uninvolved and apathetic toward the wider world, as manifested by expressions of interest in politics, class consciousness, ethnic identity and national identification (Lewis, O., 1966: xlv-xlvi). As a result of fear, suspicion or apathy among these people with a culture of poverty, they usually are not members of political parties. Could this view be accepted or applied in the Malaysian context? Based on the study conducted by the researcher, this view could be sustained. As revealed in Chapter Two (page 15), only 10.8 per cent of the 1673 Chinese residents of Mukim Junjung and 10.9 per cent of the 2384 Malay residents of Mukim Junjung were members of political parties at the time of study. 'Apathy' might be present among the other residents who were not members. But did 'fear' and 'suspicion' also account for their lack of participation? As discussed in Chapter Three, the respondents' consciousness of the implications attached to the answers that they gave to highly sensitive questions on political parties preferred (Question H1) or disliked (Question H9), made them suspicious of the researcher's intention. Their refusal to answer these questions (refer to page 26)

implied their fear of persecution should they be suspected of being anti-government agents.

Valentine has stressed the importance that in confronting respondents, direct inquiries by a researcher should be kept to a minimum and directed only to topics that the former have no reason to believe are particularly sensitive (Valentine, C.A., 1968: 183). The raising of particularly sensitive questions (Questions H1, H7 and H9) as mentioned above, was inevitable as the researcher had to pose these questions to the respondents though she did not set them (i.e. the questions). She had to bear with the suspicious glances and negative answers cast upon her in the process of interviewing the respondents. Direct inquiries by the researcher could not be kept to a minimum as an average of questions covering fourteen foolscap pages were posed to each respondent. As the questionnaires were designed for a comprehensive study (though not by the researcher or for the topic of the researcher's study) of poverty, it was inevitable that numerous questions were raised.

Abu Masmara has remarked that the incidence of poverty in Malaysia does not take into account the size of a family (Abu Masmara Hj. Mohd., 1983: 8). Consequently, a relatively small family with no children but an income of two hundred dollars, might be deemed poorer than a family with two children and an income of three hundred dollars. Referring to the 39.2 per cent of incidence of poverty among rural rubber smallholders in Peninsula Malaysia in 1985 (Notes: as in page 1), the researcher will try to justify Abu Masmara's comment based on her research findings. In this study conducted by her, it was noted that a Malay rubber smallholder from a family of four persons, had an average income of \$400 while a

Chinese rubber smallholder from a family of 7 persons, had an average income of \$562. Here the difference in income between the two rubber smallholders need not indicate that one was poorer than the other. The size of a family in relation to its whole household income should therefore, be taken into account for a fair assessment of its economic standing to be made. Thus, the percentage of incidence of poverty fails to ultimately indicate the extent and severity of poverty in Malaysia. (100).

In enumerating the essential dimensions of poverty, Mohamad Nor Ghani cited levels of education and training as one (Mohd Nor Ghani, 1977: 220).

The validity of his view in the study conducted by the researcher can be upheld. Table 8 in Chapter Two indicated that 94 per cent of heads of sample households did not attend school or did so until the primary level only. Lack of or inadequate education and training perhaps, could explain why 54 per cent of the heads of sample households were engaged in the

primary sector (i.e. agriculture) while 12 per cent were in the secondary sector i.e. construction and transport. ^(Refer to Chapter One, Table 4) The nature of the work involved in these two sectors generally necessitates less education than that in the tertiary sector (i.e. public administration).

Cheah Hock Beng, in a Masters of Social Science dissertation, "seeks to examine poverty from a structural perspective - looking at how general economic and social conditions, and institutional and structural constraints on opportunity may operate to produce and perpetuate poverty" (Cheah Hock Beng, 1977: 19). Here institutional constraints refer to access to economic opportunity and social services. In his study, the criteria for selection of samples were one, comprise households currently receiving some form of formal assistance from public sources and two, to

cover the different socio-economic groups residing in Tao Payoh housing estate, households in different types of housing units were selected through a stratified random sampling procedure (Cheah Hock Beng, 1977: 26). Substitution was made when an initially selected household did not fit the above-mentioned criteria.

In the present study however, the fieldsite was chosen based on a pre-selected list obtained from the Internal Co-ordinations Unit (ICU), the Prime Minister's Department. Level of progress was measured by the standard set by ICU and the criteria for the selection of fieldsite were as follows:

- (i) according to state and region;
- (ii) size of the village (i.e. the population);
- (iii) ethnic group;
- (iv) employment pattern and
- (v) type of crop cultivated

The researcher assumed that the residents living in the fieldsite chosen, satisfied the criteria mentioned unlike Cheah Hock Beng who established pre-interview contacts with prospective households to ascertain whether they satisfied the criteria specified for their inclusion into the actual sample. As no pre-interview contacts were established by the researcher in the present study to secure the co-operation of the prospective respondents and to minimise the number of interview refusals, when four respondents refused to co-operate, they were replaced by four 'second samples'.

The credibility of the household income and expenditure quoted by 48 per cent of the respondents as discussed in Chapter Three, is questionable.

Here it is important that a researcher should not be overwhelmed by the profession of a supposed poverty-stricken respondent especially when the object of the researcher's study - poverty - has been revealed. Though a marginal error of estimation of the difference between monthly household income and expenditure has been granted, the enormous excess spending generally has not been covered by savings, debts or borrowings. Unless these respondents had deliberately not mention any savings which might indicate their 'hoarded' wealth, or any debts which might 'lower' their self-dignity, the exaggeration of their actual economic standing should not be overlooked. The researcher had to be acutely perceptive on this matter or such exaggeration might falsely lead her to draw conclusion on the apparent, preconceived notion of poverty.

According to Teoh Jin Inn,

"The underlying issue of land among the Chinese new villagers appear to be a desperate need for a sense of belonging to the country of their adoption."

(Teoh Jin Inn, 1977:148).

Here he probably refers to Chinese Malaysians whose ancestors have come from an impoverished background in China to Malaya in quest of wealth and security. Over the years, with governmental interventions and measures, among others, Chinese new villagers have realised the necessity of possessing some land in order to at least maintain an economic standing in the country. The unfounded fear of losing these prized possessions one day perhaps, might have led two rubber small-holders in this poverty research to quote very low yield from their rubber trees (Refer to Page 24, Chapter Three).

The Chinese 'camp lots' dwellers generally expressed discontentment regarding their homes. Their sense of insecurity and uncertainty was justified as all of them were living in homes under TOL (Temporary Occupational Licence) and were unable to have their houses constructed as they were either landless or dependent on their cultivated land for sustenance. Jin Inn perceives that:

Teoh Jin Inn's view that "the emotional correlates of poverty often include a low self-esteem and self-worth" (Teoh Jin Inn, 1977: 142), is reflected in the responses of 62 per cent of the respondents to question G3 on the type of occupation that they deemed 'good' for their children. As 94 per cent (including 62 per cent of these respondents) of the respondents in this study either did not attend school or did so until the primary level only, they felt that they were inadequate to comment on any type of occupation that they aspired their children to hold. Their proclamation of not possessing sufficient means to motivate their children towards stable career, indicated underestimation of their self-worth. The houses that they occupied, housing problem was generally not

face. The respondents' concern over the lack of employment opportunities for their children, sustain Joan Higgins' view that poverty resulted, in part, from a lack of opportunity (Higgins, J., 1978: 108). They were happy to let their children work in other states as they realised that the new village did not provide much employment opportunities. Many of them expressed a wish to see the establishment of factories in the new village which would provide employment opportunities for their children. Majority of their children were earning wages in other states. The limit-

As discussed in Chapter Four, the Chinese rubber smallholders were

generally more disturbed when questioned on the returns from their cultivated land as they realised that quoting higher yield would mean paying more tax. In contrast, the Malays who treated the returns from their orchards as merely supplementary to their other sources of income, were not secretive in quoting the yield from each acre of orchard owned, etc.

Teoh Jin Inn perceives that:

" The poor communities do not normally define their difficulties in abstract concepts. Instead, they see their problems, often not unrealistically, in the terms of employment, housing, education and general health. "

(Teoh Jin Inn, 1977: 145)

This apt perception of the poor can be applied to the respondents in the present study. The extent in which respondents of the different ethnic groups responded to these issues varied. For instance, Chinese respondents were the majority who voiced concern over employment opportunities and housing problems. As all except one of the Malay respondents owned the houses that they occupied, housing problem was generally not faced by them. On education, both the Malay and Chinese respondents showed concern. Among the Malays, optimism could be discerned regarding the educational prospects of their children. In contrast, the Chinese respondents showed pessimism regarding the same matter.

It is hoped that the problems encountered by the researcher in this study would not be faced by future researcher. As discussed in Chapter Three and Four, objectivity and to an extent, detachment have to be maintained by the researcher throughout the period of study. The limitations of this study, it is hoped, would not be repeated in future

studies. The reference to exerting discretion in the handling of respondents who are sensitive towards certain issues, should be noted and insensitive framing of questions should be avoided in the future.

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Plate 2: A Malay house at Kampung Padang Janggus



APPENDIX A

Plate 3: 'Camp lots' at Belakang Pekan Junjung

Plate 1: A Malay house at Belakang Pekan Junjung



Plate 2: A Malay house at Kampung Padang Janggus



Plate 3: 'Camp lots' at Junjung New Village or Camp Junjung



Plate 4: Rubber sheets are left to dry at home



Plate 5: Drinking place for 'Camp late' residents

Plate 5: A public well at Camp Junjung



Plate 6: Common toilets (bucket system) at Camp Junjung



Plate 7: Cooking place for 'Camp lots' residents



Plate 8: Clinic at the area of study (Assembly Hall)



Plate 9: MDKT office at Pekan Junjung area of study



Plate 10: Dewan Perhimpunan (Assembly Hall) study



Plate 11: Chinese primary school at the area of study



Plate 12: Malay primary school at the area of study

