

## Cultural Identity Struggles of the Jahut in Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores the challenges the Jahut community faces in preserving their cultural identity. In this study, Orang Asli communities, including the Jahut community, encounter various obstacles threatening their traditional ways of life. This study employed a qualitative approach, with data collected through semi-structured interviews with eleven members of the Jahut community from Kuala Krau, Pahang state of Malaysia. Four significant challenges to maintaining cultural identity are identified: modernisation, assimilation, leadership, and attitudes. The study's findings are significant because they highlight the necessity for policymakers to consider protecting the cultural identity of Orang Asli communities in Malaysia. It also makes a strong case for fostering respect for cultural diversity and recognising the rights of Orang Asli communities to protect their identity in the rapidly changing digital age.

*Keywords:* Assimilation, cultural identity, diversity, Orang Asli, preservation

### INTRODUCTION

Approximately 476 million Indigenous people worldwide constitute about six per cent of the global population (International Labour Organization, 2019; United Nations,

2022). Indigenous communities have a long and complex history of cultural identity preservation, deeply intertwined with their histories, traditions, and ways of life (Ford et al., 2020). Cultural identity encompasses a wide range of elements, including language, traditions, spirituality, gender, and knowledge systems, and plays a vital role in the social, economic, and political well-being of Indigenous communities (Chiriboga, 2006; Fiedeldej-Van Dijk, 2019; Hall, 1990). Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious country. Among the indigenous people of

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Malaysia are the Orang Asli communities, which comprise 18 distinct sub-ethnic groups. These ethnic groups are divided into three main categories: the Senoi, Negrito, and Proto-Malay, each with their own unique culture, beliefs, and language (Nicholas, 2000).

The Jahut community, a sub-ethnic group of the Senoi, is mainly populated in the Temerloh and Jerantut districts of Pahang state, with a population of approximately 6,383 (Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli [JAKOA], 2020). Diffloth (1976) indicated that the Jahut people are generally unfamiliar with the outside world. According to Carey (1976), Jah means “man”, while Hut means “forest”. The combination of both means “forest people”. Most Jahut people live on the outskirts of the Krau River, which is in the Krau Forest Reserve in Pahang (Couillard, 1980). The Jahut community used to be nomadic but now lives in villages. In recent decades, the Jahut have embraced modernity and learned other languages to align with globalisation (Adam et al., 2018; Teoh, 1986). Although the Jahut children have grown up knowing their traditions, these traditions are quickly disappearing (Ghani et al., 2020; Teoh, 1986). However, this issue has received little attention by the respective authorities. Therefore, this paper explores the challenges faced by the Jahut community in preserving their cultural identity in Kuala Krau, Pahang.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Colonialism, globalisation, modernisation, nationalist projects, and assimilation policies

have contributed to the erosion of the cultural identity of the Orang Asli communities in Malaysia (Nah, 2008; Nicholas, 2000). Colonialism has resulted in the acquisition of indigenous lands for economic exploitation and settlement, disregarding traditional land rights (Bulkan, 2016; Domínguez & Luoma, 2020). Globalisation and modernisation have greatly impacted Orang Asli cultures. Globalisation has expanded Western culture, incorporating Western values and technologies into indigenous societies (Resta, 2011). As a result, new practices and habits frequently clash with existing indigenous norms and values (Mustafa, 2006). Modernisation has resulted in alterations to their way of life, leading to the forsaking of traditional knowledge and customs that are crucial to the cultural distinctiveness of indigenous minorities (Aswani et al., 2018; Quinlan & Quinlan, 2007). Nowadays, *sewang* (traditional medical ceremonies) is rarely performed, as the Jahut community has opted for contemporary medical services provided by hospitals and clinics (Adam & Yusop, 2020).

The issue of whether to assimilate Indigenous populations into mainstream society is a multifaceted and contentious topic that has been the subject of discourse for several decades. Nationalist projects often emphasise a single, dominant culture, leading to pressure on indigenous peoples to assimilate and conform (Wolfe, 2006); similarly, Islamization programmes have also impacted indigenous people to assimilate. Assimilation proponents argue that it is essential to nurture societal cohesion and provide equal opportunities

for Indigenous people. In contrast, opponents argue that assimilation erodes the distinct cultural identities of indigenous communities and may lead to the loss of their customs, dialects, and traditional practices (Gomes, 2004). Regrettably, the cultures, spiritualities, and languages of the Orang Asli are not receiving genuine support, encouragement, or endorsement from the government (Nicholas et al., 2010). Implementing assimilation policies hinders the preservation of cultural identity among Orang Asli communities. The assimilation of Orang Asli communities into the dominant culture has gradually lost their distinctive cultural heritage (Endicott & Dentan, 2004; Nicholas, 2002).

The loss of traditional knowledge due to displacement from traditional lands and the disruption of knowledge transmission from elders to younger generations weaken cultural identity (Alfred, 2009). Sani and Arif (2021) found that the art of wood carving in the Jah Hut community is diminishing due to modernisation, resulting in a decreased interest in preserving this ancestral heritage. Instead, they are more likely to seek alternative employment opportunities to improve their prospects of survival. Smith (1999) noted that the influence of dominant cultures, amplified by globalised media and consumerism, often results in cultural homogenisation and a decline in interest in traditional ways of life. Niezen (2003) also highlights the presence of internal conflicts within communities, such as disputes over cultural practices, leadership, or approaches to addressing

historical injustices, which can impede efforts to rejuvenate cultural identity. McIntyre-Bond (2008) emphasises the impact of urbanisation, where migration to urban areas for education or employment can weaken cultural bonds and traditional knowledge, particularly among younger community members.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A qualitative case study explored the challenges the Jahut community faced in preserving their cultural identity. This method allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences and perspectives of the Jahut members, which offers rich insights focusing on the characteristics of assimilation, integration, and marginalisation. The inclusion criteria were: (1) Jahut people, (2) currently live in Pahang, Malaysia. This study involved eleven informants aged 16 to 62, including six males and five females with various occupations and education levels. Through purposive sampling, this study incorporated informants with varied backgrounds, expertise, and life experiences, which helps to enrich the dataset with a multitude of perspectives, thereby enhancing the depth and breadth of the findings.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted at convenient times for the informants to ensure engagement. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher provided the informants with a printed consent form that explained the purpose and importance of the research, along with their rights and responsibilities.

Interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. The researcher applied thematic analysis to information gathered from interview transcripts. Thematic analysis was performed using inductive coding to extract pertinent information. The researcher thoroughly read the transcripts and familiarised the data (Christou, 2022). Subsequently, coding is employed to organise the data into meaningful groups and generate themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Emerging themes were reviewed to ensure accuracy and relevance to the research questions (Christou, 2022). The themes and sub-themes were defined and described, and the coding was scrutinised multiple times to finalise the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process ends when data saturation is reached and no new themes emerge.

### **Ethical Consideration**

This study was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee for Research involving Human Subjects Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Department of Orang Asli Development Malaysia. The researcher engaged with Jahut community leaders prior to the study to obtain permission and build rapport. Prior to gathering any data, every informant was given an overview of the study's objectives and methodology through an information sheet. The information sheet stressed that involvement in the study was voluntary while outlining the measures taken to safeguard confidentiality. A consent form was provided alongside the information sheet and signed by the informants. The researcher respected local customs by adapting the

interview techniques to be culturally appropriate, ensuring that the study was ethical, respectful, and culturally sensitive.

### **RESULTS**

Orang Asli communities have been associated with problems of customary land rights, political involvement, education participation, and malnutrition (Chew et al., 2022; Edo et al., 2013; Hamzah, 2013; Sawalludin et al., 2020). These problems are associated with their cultural identity as the customary land rights represent economic sustenance and symbolise the preservation of ancestral connections and spiritual legacy. Additionally, lack of political representation undermines their ability to assert cultural rights, while barriers to education participation hinder the transmission of indigenous knowledge. The analysis of the data obtained through the interviews revealed the challenges faced by the Jahut community in preserving their cultural identity.

### **Modernisation**

Modernisation has significantly impacted indigenous cultures and traditions, pressing them to adapt to the rapidly changing world (Irwandi & Taufik, 2023; Karim & Hashim, 2012; Zainuddin, 2023). Lah (2014) stated that many Orang Asli communities face threats to language and way of life due to technological advancements. The findings of this study, consistent with Teoh's (1986) study, indicate that the Jahut community is increasingly exposed to external influences and has adopted modernisation, resulting in diverse impacts on their cultural identity.

“The challenge now... it’s like people are modern now... my mother is good at weaving, but I don’t know how to do it because I didn’t learn...” (Ema, female, 23 years old).

Another informant disclosed that the Jahut community faces difficulty retaining their traditional customs.

“They said we can no longer continue with these traditional practices because it is hindering development... people said that it is Orang Asli who always set the snares and annihilate tigers... but actually the ones who annihilate tigers are not Orang Asli... this is also a culture of the Orang Asli for them to earn a living... that’s what we’re worried about too...” (Yus, male, 58 years old).

Furthermore, environmental changes due to modernisation, especially deforestation, appear to be a crucial factor that hinders efforts to preserve Jahut’s cultural identity. One of the reasons why traditional healing practices are disappearing was provided by one informant:

“It used to be in dreams... that is for the knowledge...but now we have to learn a lot because that used to come mostly from the forest. Now the forest is gone... the spirits of the forest are the ones who tell us...” (Yus, male, 58 years old).

Another informant also noted cultural changes in Jahut traditions, such as the *berkhatan* (circumcision) ceremony, as a result of modernisation.

“Uhm... I see people are still practising it... but what I see is that sometimes they send their children to the clinic to be circumcised... if they don’t want to do it through the traditional way...” (Jar, female, 45 years old).

### **Assimilation**

The assumption that all members of a society will adopt the same social and economic patterns leads to the assimilation of indigenous cultures (Bala et al., 2020). However, this threatens the cultural identity of many Orang Asli communities (Gomes, 2004). The findings of the study revealed that assimilation into mainstream society is a significant challenge for the Jahut community. Language reflects cultural values, and proficiency can affect one’s integration into the community (Rameka & Peterson, 2021). Mastering the Jahut language among the younger generation is at risk, with one informant admitting limited proficiency.

“Language... uhm... I don’t really know the language that is too deep... For example, in the next village, it’s like going to their village; some speak a deep language, and then I don’t understand what they mean...” (Harah, female, 25 years old).

Meanwhile, another informant shared her experience regarding the use of the Jahut language and *Bahasa Melayu*:

“We speak Bahasa Melayu at home... Since childhood, I was taught in Bahasa Melayu because they (my parents) said it

would be easy to speak Bahasa Melayu later in school... My brothers and sisters all speak Bahasa Melayu, and my son also speaks Bahasa Melayu..." (Sam, female, 36 years old).

Some informants shared their observations regarding the new cultural elements adopted by the Jahut people in wedding celebrations, such as the bridal attire and live band during the wedding.

"When we got married, we don't dress like a king... ordinary clothes... but today we have clothes like a king, and then wedding attire... at that time we didn't hire a band and so forth... but now, many things are new now... it seems like the culture will disappear... the original culture from generations... as if it is going to disappear..." (Lus, male, 62 years old)

"What I see... changes about marriage... it's not like before... it used to be simple... now, there is dancing, bersanding, procession... I see the changes are from outside... we follow culture from outside..." (Ros, female, 50 years old).

The observations shared by the informants highlight a significant shift in the Jahut community's cultural practices, particularly in wedding celebrations, with the introduction of luxurious bridal attire and live bands. This suggests external influences and assimilation, leading to a gradual erosion of their original cultural identity.

## Leadership

In Malaysia, *Tok Batin* refers to the Orang Asli village's tribal chief. It acts as a liaison agent between the Orang Asli communities and government agencies, the private sector, and non-governmental organisations. For various reasons, Orang Asli communities rely heavily on their leaders. Leaders are responsible for safeguarding the traditions of their people, and the communities look up to their leaders as role models and inspiration (Ottmann, 2005). Some informants in this study have shown their concerns towards the village leadership, which is crucial in ensuring the Jahut culture can be sustained effectively. One of the informants shared his views regarding the leadership in his village.

"Maybe our efforts are very lacking. For example, whose responsibility it is to fix the situation in this village... Tok Batin... but Tok Batin doesn't care... and now one of them is politics... it's not just us with ICT and the Internet, but also with politics that's what causes us to divide again... divide again..." (Yus, male, 58 years old).

Another informant shared similar opinions regarding the issue of the village leadership.

"When we want to do something, we must be together, every village head must be present... sometimes these village heads are quite difficult to cooperate... when we can't unite... this is an obstacle... if there is no consensus, then this is quite difficult... it is quite



difficult for us to discuss and to get coordination about cultural customs...” (Lus, male, 62 years old).

Furthermore, another informant highlighted that the leadership of the respective authorities should play a more significant role in assisting the community in preserving its culture.

“I tried to go to JAKOA (Department of Orang Asli Development) too, but I didn’t write it in black and white... to do an activity... maybe with JAKOA, we can close the relationship again... but JAKOA too seems don’t play the role... they requested a paperwork from me... I don’t have time to do the paperwork... I need to work too...” (Yus, male, 58 years old).

Regrettably, ineffective leadership has not succeeded in unifying the village members, resulting in a lack of teamwork, especially among the younger generation of Jahut members.

“Even about gotong-royong sometimes, when we invite them, they don’t even care, some don’t come... even if they come, the percentage is very low... Because they prioritise themselves... for example, they said: if I come, what will I get... Some parents are concerned about this... but their children don’t care either... stick to their stance...” (Yus, male, 58 years old).

Varying leadership practices within Orang Asli communities profoundly impact

cultural identity. The *Tok Batin*’s role as a cultural custodian and mediator between the community and external entities is critical for preserving and transmitting cultural traditions. A proactive *Tok Batin* that prioritises cultural preservation promotes the transmission of traditional knowledge to future generations, maintaining cultural continuity. On the other hand, ineffective leadership hinders collective efforts to preserve cultural customs, potentially leading to fragmentation within the community and eventual loss of cultural identity over time.

### Attitudes

According to Berry (1999), an individual’s sense of belonging, purpose, social support, and self-worth can all benefit from developing a strong cultural identity. Ajibade et al. (2016) suggested that this might occur because of identifying with and receiving support from members of a cultural group who share and reinforce one’s values, norms, responsibilities, and ways of life. Therefore, the attitudes of the community members towards the preservation of their cultural identity are vital in ensuring the cultural survival of the community. Some informants shared their views regarding the disappearance of Jahut’s tradition, which resulted from the younger generation’s indifferent attitudes towards cultural preservation. It led to the gradual disappearance of the pawang and valuable traditional medical practices. *Pawang* is regarded as having access to and influence in the world of good and evil spirits; typically,

such people enter a trance state during a ritual and practice divination and healing (Skeat, 2005).

“For example, pawang... now there are not many people are learning to become pawang... so... pawang are disappearing...” (Ema, female, 23 years old).

“Only a few of them (pawang) in the Jahut villages... The problem now is that people are too lazy to do such work... lazy to learn... The old folks have died, after that there is no continuation of them... because the young people now, they are like not interested... they prefer the social life like other people...” (Lus, male, 62 years old).

“Young people are not interested... old people cannot do anything on them... friends or children in the village are more into mobile phones... less participate in all those things... more towards the games...” (Izad, male, 22 years old)

“The kids now don’t care anymore... with customs... culture... tradition... everything they already don’t care... I don’t know what to say... back to the Internet earlier... they were playing... don’t care about anything else... with the game...” (Yus, male, 58 years old).

Nonetheless, one informant noted that certain individuals’ individualistic attitudes have contributed to the erosion or slow extinction of Jahut traditional knowledge.

“One of the reasons is that person who knows (about the traditional medicine knowledge), he won’t simply teach others... he put a lot of efforts to learn it, so he doesn’t simply teach... so the knowledge, when he passed away, not many people will know... One of the reasons why Jahut’s knowledge is getting less and less, he doesn’t allow us to write, record... if he reads it, we have to memorise it...” (Dini, male, 38 years old).

On the other hand, some informants explained that they did not have the intention to abandon the Jahut’s culture:

“The challenges that I face... uhm... I don’t know much about my own culture... I rarely take part... for example, for medical treatment right, the treatment that must look for leaves... I’m lacking knowledge because I’m still studying... I’m not very exposed...” (Izad, male, 22 years old).

“I went out to work in Kuala Lumpur and came back here... only now I think about practicing the Jahut culture...” (Ney, male, 50 years old).

The findings revealed different mindsets and attitudes between older and younger generations of the Jahut community concerning the continuation of cultural traditions. Older generations demonstrate a strong dedication to preserving Jahut culture and expressing distress over losing traditional knowledge. Meanwhile, younger generations exhibit disinterest



and indifference toward cultural traditions and favour modern activities such as mobile phones and gaming over cultural participation. This divergence in attitudes has significantly contributed to the decline of cultural practices within the community due to a lack of interest and involvement from the younger generations, impeding the effective transmission of traditional knowledge.

## DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that the Jahut community had embraced modernity, but the younger generations might not have inherited all cultural knowledge, such as weaving, contributing to its disappearance. Ghani et al. (2020) indicated that modernisation and globalisation erode the Jahut tribe's culture, customs, and distinctive taboos. The Jahut people are facing numerous challenges as they struggle to integrate their traditional cultures with modern life. Stereotyped attitudes erroneously categorise Orang Asli's traditional behaviours as outmoded and inhibiting development, aligning with Mustapha et al.'s (2010) identification of external factors impeding Orang Asli's success, including competition and prejudice held by outsiders.

Wildlife hunting is crucial for indigenous communities' economic sustenance and cultural identity (Luz et al., 2015). Omar et al. (2021) asserted that Indigenous communities prioritise appropriate natural resource use. The Orang Asli communities demonstrate a profound respect for the natural environment, yet

they have been unjustly held accountable for the decline of endangered species, overshadowing deforestation by others. Government initiatives promoting cash crops, industrialisation, and modernisation have adversely affected the Orang Asli, eroding their languages, cultures, and traditions, resulting in their dislocation, displacement, and marginalisation (Dhir, 2015; Mat Dong et al., 2022). The depletion of forests threatens traditional knowledge about medical treatments, which is critical for Jahut traditional healers. The land is a livelihood source and embodies cultural identity with spiritual values (Hood, 1993; Masron et al., 2013; Tuck-Po, 2002).

Land development has resulted from modernisation, presenting the Orang Asli communities with a dilemma: either they oppose the "development" and risk stigma or embrace it and risk displacement (Masron et al., 2013). Economic modernisation and development often stereotype Indigenous peoples as primitive, leading to discrimination and marginalisation (Kipuri, 2009; Nicholas, 2000). In fact, Orang Asli communities remain an impoverished group that experiences socio-economic and cultural marginalisation (Ismail et al., 2019; Masron et al., 2013). These communities are often marginalised due to their consistently poor performance in various socio-economic indicators (Othman et al., 2017; Zulkipli et al., 2021).

Malaysia's indigenous languages are at risk of extinction due to linguistic assimilation and the dominant use of *Bahasa Malaysia* in the education system

(Hamzah et al., 2022; Kijai, 2012; Lah, 2014). To promote values like personal development, nationalism, national identity, and harmonious coexistence, Malaysia has implemented civic and citizenship education as part of its curriculum (Moorthy et al., 2021). However, the emphasis on creating a shared national identity through compulsory schooling has contributed to the declining use of minority languages, which struggle to survive due to the dominance of *Bahasa Malaysia* as the national language and English as the widely used language in business and education. Numerous languages spoken by the Orang Asli have not been recorded or documented, making the future of these languages uncertain or even extinct (Abd Ghani, 2015; Ali, 2010). The Jahut language among younger generations is progressively diminishing, and the Jahut language is classified as a severely endangered language (UNESCO, 2007).

Regrettably, ethnic minorities have been treated unequally in various ways (Gill et al., 2016; Khong et al., 2021). They have consistently been compromising their interests without equal development opportunities. The Orang Asli communities confront so many unique challenges, from poverty-related obstacles to a lack of *Bahasa Malaysia* fluency to a dearth of educational resources and a lack of regional mobility; thus, a one-size-fits-all curriculum may not be the best approach (Wong & Abdillah, 2017). Apparently, a lack of sensitivity to minorities' religious and cultural norms and practices in the curriculum is a major

contributor to the loss of cultural identity among these groups (Masron et al., 2013).

Among the four characteristics of the acculturation model by Berry (1980), assimilation is the most common characteristic observed in this study, highlighting the pressure on the Jahut community to assimilate, potentially leading to the loss of language, beliefs, and traditional practices. The findings revealed that the Jahut language is diluting as the younger generation of Jahut are keen to communicate in *Bahasa Melayu* at home to help them adapt more quickly to school and future employment, aligning with Berry's model where indigenous minorities may choose to assimilate into the dominant culture to gain social and economic advantages. It can result in the loss of their cultural identity and a disconnection from their traditional ways of life (Berry, 1999). The integration characteristics are also present, with the Jahut community struggling to integrate their traditional culture with modernity. For instance, the Jahut community is depicted as struggling to integrate their traditional culture with modernity, implying a compromise between their heritage and contemporary influences. Furthermore, the participation of the Jahut community in modern economic activities, such as migration for job opportunities, demonstrates characteristics of integration. It shows that the Jahut community are interacting with mainstream culture and adjusting to current economic structures.

The findings also showed that leadership issues, such as lack of quality leadership

and politics, exacerbate divisions among community members, making it difficult to preserve their culture. The role of JAKOA is acknowledged but criticised for bureaucratic inefficiency. Mustapha et al. (2010) indicated that the local authorities oversee local welfare and day-to-day operations. However, they cannot take on the role of transformational leaders to affect meaningful change among the Orang Asli youth. Furthermore, the findings revealed that attitudes among community members, particularly the younger generation's indifference, pose a threat to the disappearing culture of the Jahut community. Declining interest in traditional practices, such as becoming a *pawang* and leading traditional knowledge, such as traditional medical practices, is in jeopardy of extinction (Adam & Yusop, 2020). The transfer of indigenous knowledge has become increasingly challenging over time due to the inherent limitations of human memory (Azubuike & Aji, 2021). The situation deteriorated when the elderly groups passed without leaving behind successors. Therefore, parents and institutions need strategic approaches to inculcate indigenous knowledge.

Meanwhile, the informants who frequently leave the village indicated they cannot engage in the Jahut tradition due to their academic and work commitments. In fact, the migration of rural workers to urban areas has created a generational gap between youngsters and traditional knowledge holders, resulting in the loss of indigenous languages (McNaught, 2019). Similarly, the culture, traditions, and distinct taboos of

the Jahut tribe are believed to be vanishing due to the currents of modernisation and globalisation. However, certain unique rituals and taboos are still practised among them (Ghani et al., 2020). Therefore, parents and institutions need strategic approaches to inculcate indigenous knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, cultural identity preservation in the Jahut community presents complex and multifaceted challenges involving assimilation, modernisation, leadership issues, and attitudinal hindrances. This study offers a broader understanding of the ways indigenous communities preserve their distinctive identities in a world that is becoming increasingly digital. A deeper level of interaction with these communities is necessary to ensure the preservation of their traditions and voices in the modernisation process. The preservation of indigenous cultures is not only a matter of cultural heritage but also a crucial element of human diversity and ecological sustainability.

## Implication for Theory and Practice

The contribution of this study suggests potential expansions of the Acculturation Model to better encompass the cultural complexities specific to the Jahut community. It could contribute to a more comprehensive theoretical framework that accounts for how individuals within indigenous tribes negotiate their cultural identities amidst broader societal changes. This study highlights the necessity for specific interventions and policies that

support fairness, respect for diversity, and cultural sensitivity among Malaysians. The findings of this study provide guidance for integrating ICT, which can be beneficial for individuals working to foster further ICT development and empowering Indigenous communities that have yet to adopt ICT, helping them shift from traditional approaches to incorporating ICT in their endeavours to preserve their cultural heritage. This study is expected to be beneficial in evaluating National Culture Policy, such as enhancing ICT accessibility and digital literacy and providing funds for community-led cultural preservation initiatives. These initiatives are crucial in ensuring inclusivity across all ethnic groups and minimising the digital divide. Otherwise, lofty slogans will remain mere rhetoric.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

This study possesses various limitations that necessitate consideration. Among these limitations is the use of a small sample size and the exclusive focus on a single sub-ethnic group within the Orang Asli community. While this qualitative study provides valuable insights into individual experiences, it may lack the quantitative data required for a thorough analysis. As a result, the findings cannot be generalised into different contexts. Future studies should, therefore, aim to reproduce these findings with larger and more diverse samples encompassing various sub-ethnic groups of the Orang Asli to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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