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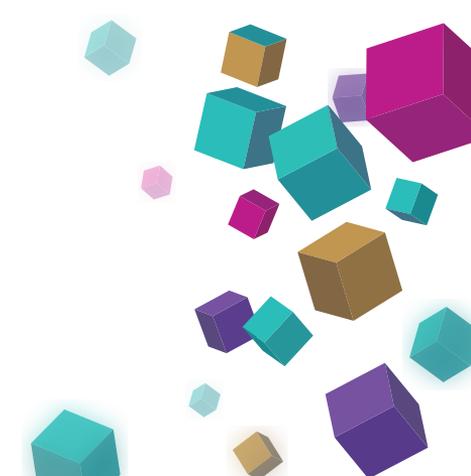
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WORKING SECTOR AND PARTICIPATION RELATIONSHIP: RUKUN TETANGGA ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN STATE OF MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Rukun Tetangga Scheme (RTS) was introduced in 1975 following the enforcement of Necessary Rules (Rukun Tetangga) 1975. The main purpose of these rules is to safeguard the people in their residential area due to safety problems and issues arising. The instrument used for this research is done through the quantitative findings by using questionnaires that have been distributed around communities of Rukun Tetangga in the Northern State in Malaysia. From 2,000 questionnaires that had been distributed, 1866 respondents have responded. The research data had been analysed by using the description statistics. From numerous elements in the questionnaires, this paper will cover two chosen elements from the research questionnaires which are the communities working sector and their participation in Rukun Tetangga. The instrument used is IBM SPSS 20.0 to analyse these research findings. Therefore, this research shows that working sector are one of the factors that influence participation of communities in Rukun Tetangga activities. In order to ensure the continuous of participation in RT activities, they should always have a good time management and knowledge about the activities.

Keywords: *Working Sector, Rukun Tertangga, Communities, Participation, Northern State.*

Introduction

The Rukun Tetangga Scheme (RTS) was introduced in 1975 following the enforcement of Necessary Rules (Rukun Tetangga) 1975. The main purpose of these rules is to safeguard the people in their residential area due to safety problems and issues arising from the tragedy of 13th May 1969. Among others, the issues were the threat of communist propaganda, the chaos caused by the murder of the Inspector General Police (IGP) and the bombing of the National Monument. In order to overcome these problems, in line with national security force, local residents have been given the responsibilities to safeguard and promote the spirit of solidarity through the introduction of the Rukun Tetangga (RT) programme.

In two decades (1970-1990), the RTS had changed drastically through the tremendous urbanization process in the country. Mass migration of Malay people from the rural areas to the urban areas had caused intense pressure in the city. This has caused the city to be highly populated with multi-racial community which has diversified activities and lifestyles. Definitely, this had led to new phenomenon in the context of neighborhood and intra-racial relationships in this country. In fact, this state of affairs requires SRT as an important tool to create national integration with harmony, safety and tolerance in the country.

In 1984, these organizations focus turns to strengthen the relations between the various races in Malaysia. Then in 2001, the focus of this program is once again the focus now turns to: the development of local communities. Now, role of RT has been expanded to promoting neighborliness. RT can identify and understand the problems face by the community helping in reducing the problems of that community. In addition, RT may also be the middle man between the community and the agencies, whether government agencies or private agencies in providing data or information about their area. Managing the complaints and problems of the inhabitants, enhancing and improving the cleanliness of their area are also part of the roles of RT. Now, the activities of RT within their neighbourhood include recreation, culture, finance, administration, welfare, social, education and security.

Total of Rukun Tetangga (RT) have been expanded in line with its roles. In September 2013, there are 6390 of RT areas in Malaysia. Even though the RT has successfully organized varieties of activities, yet until now, it has not been identified whether they can strengthen the cooperation and integration among different race groups. In fact, at the moment, there have been very few comprehensive studies done to re-evaluate the effectiveness of RT in strengthening the understanding, tolerance and unity amongst the multi-racial community in this country. Therefore,

this study is significant in order to gain information about the effectiveness of the RT program from the community's perspective. The result of the study will ascertain the best resolution to determine the direction of the RT especially in the more challenging new millennium.

Throughout numerous elements in the questionnaires, the researchers have pick several elements that corresponded to the objective of this paper which is focus on the relationship between the working sectors of communities with their participation in Rukun Tetangga activities. Thus, the aims of this paper are to study whether working sectors are the factor of participation in Rukun Tetangga activities.

Literature Review

i. Rukun Tetangga

Research that have done by Mohd Taib Dora dlenn. (2008) find out that the level of perception and knowledge of community in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur is high towards Rukun Tetangga activities. However, the level of acceptance towards the RT activities was moderate. This is because of some factors such as of workload , distance to workplace, quality time along with family and individual attitudes and motives as well as the acquisition of information Rukun Tetangga activities.

Omar Mohamad (1979) that examines the function and role of the Rukun Tetangga Scheme in area of Kuala Lumpur found that the main problem in this RT is the involvement of the communities that is not satisfactory, the Committee of RT was less coterminous with the communities and the lack of knowledge about laws and regulations that make the residents failed to interact . The results of the his study found that the population has a tendency to run away from their responsibilities.

Now , the city is more individualistic and materialistic . they no longer care about the things that happen around them and think it does not affect their lives. Elaine Phoo Tiew (1983) that studies the interaction among residents of the neighbourhood have found the interaction between neighbour only to salute namely 90 percent without involving visits or chatting. While Yahya Ibrahim (1995) found out that urban community are less interested in social activities. The factor is respondents have more interest towards economy that give more benefit for them.

ii. Working Sector

The meaning of the word 'Public' is not one that is difficult to state. In his journal Osemeke, M (2011) said, according to Tonwe (1998) the word public is equated to "Government". This equation is justified on the ground that in modern society,

government is the only organization to which everyone belongs without exception either actively or passively. It takes a concrete and organized form when equated to government (Wehrich et al 2005). Public sector consists of three separate levels of government. They are the federal, state and local governments. The federal government and state governments conduct their activities through two major forms of organization: Ministries and Public enterprises. Therefore, public sector workers are those that work for some sort of government agency.

The Development Assistance Committee of the OECD (DAC, 1994) defines the private sector as “a basic organizing principle for economic activity where private ownership is an important factor, where markets and competition drive production and where private initiative and risk-taking set activities in motion”. The private sector was include any self-employed person or any employer of labour who does not belong to the public sector (Oyeranti, 2004). The private sector also refers to all economic institutions, business firms, foundations, and cooperatives etc that are not owned by the government. In conclusion, we can said that, private sector jobs are those found with employers who are nongovernment agencies.

The Webster dictionary defines retirement as a “withdrawal from one’s position or occupation or from active working life”. This definition does not capture the full complexity of the experience. Meanwhile, Oxford dictionary defines retirement as “a person who stop from his payable job”. According to Purcell (2003), “Retirement most often is defined with reference to two characteristics: nonparticipation in the paid labor force and receipt of income from pensions, Social Security, and other retirement plans”.

Methodology

A. Research Design

This research have use a exploration research design. Data have been collected using a quantitative method and support by qualitative method. the quantitative findings by using questionnaires that have been distributed around communities of Rukun Tetangga in the Nothern State in Malaysia. Based on researches that have been conducted, researchers have using the descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis method is used to analyse the tendency and percentage of respondents that includes studies on demography factors.

While for qualitative methods, after the results of the analysis of public perceptionis obtained, researcher was using it as an input to get feedback from the neighbourhood through face to face interview.

B. Location, Population and Research Sample

The research population were the residents of urban communities in Northern State. Diversity in ethnicity and locality as well as different forms of communal groups and their backgrounds make these areas suitable for this study. Besides, these areas are known to have the highest number of population in this state. Based on these criteria, this research covers residential areas in the Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang and Perak.

The instruments used in this research are likert scale, tables and documents analysis. The instruments are constructed from the questionnaires which were distributed to respondents. The questionnaire is divided into five parts:

a) Part A: Respondent's profile

This part contains questions aimed at obtaining personal information of respondents. There have 9 items are included for the purpose of measuring respondents' background factors such as gender, race, age, job, monthly income, highest education, family income and location. In this section also to know about the engaged in Rukun Tertangga activities.

b) Part B: Activities of Rukun Tetangga

This parts contains variables with reference to the RT activities including social, educational, sports and recreational, health, welfare, religious, arts and cultural, economy as well as safety activities. Part B of the questionnaire aims to know either the RT location have done the activities based on 10 elements.

c) Part C:

This parts contains questionnaire aims to know either the community accept RT based on the 10 elements. Each items in this questionnaire have four choice of answer that shown the level of respondents acceptance towards activities in their communities. Likert Scale 4 ranking have been used as a choice to respondents which is from strongly agree to distrongly agree. Score that strongly agree shown that acceptance towards the activities while the score of distrongly agree shown the respondents does not accept the activities.

d) Part D:

This part contains questionnaire aims to measure the importance of leadership in RT.

e) ***Part E: Suggestion***

This parts give respondents to give their suggestion about RT.

C. Pilot Study

After the questionnaires have been collected, researchers had to test the reliability of the sample by analysing data and information acquired by the respondents from the distributed questionnaires. Analyses can be tested by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software package version 20.0. Cronbach's Alpha test will be used to measure reliability and validity of instruments in the questionnaire.

D. Data Analysis

All the data gathered are analyzed based on the research questions and objectives. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods are used to analyze the data.

Researchers used the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 computer application to analyse data. The descriptive analysis were used to analyse the data obtained. Descriptive statistic method is used to characterise a situation. It is implemented due to its ability to describe the whole data in simplistic manner. Analysis on demographic characteristics was represented by gender, age, race, religion, residential area, occupation, level of education, income and districts represented by respondents. Data obtained was demonstrated in form of frequency description or tendency. It is later inserted into the SPSS software according to the number code assigned.

As a conclusion, this research is done to examine if their objective is achieved or not by observing the working sector obtained by the communities. Thus, researchers suggest the next experiment should be conducted to study variables which have more significant links, as well as testing on other potential factors to produce a more in-depth information in order to seek the connection towards their working sector and participation in Rukun Tetangga activities.

DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH ANALYSIS

A. *Distribution of Respondents Analysis*

This section explains the respondents' backgrounds or demographic features which was chosen according to gender, age, race, occupation, level of education and district.

i. Respondents' Gender

The overall respondents that took part in this questionnaire were made up from 1866 people in which 1072 people were male and 794 people were female. Based on the distribution we find that majority of the communities are male. The distribution of respondents according to their gender can be seen as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	1072	57.4
Female	794	42.6
Total	1866	100

ii. Respondents' Occupation/ Working Sector

This research involved four categories of occupation which are public sector, private sector, pensioners/retirement and others. Thus, the majority of respondents are working in private sector in total of 718 respondents or 38.5% from overall respondents, followed by public sector 534 respondents, 28.6%, and those who retire just 175 respondents which is 9.4%. The others occupation includes housewife, student, and unemployment are 439 person equal to 23.5%. The distribution of respondents according to their occupation can be seen as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Public Sector	534	28.6
Private Sector	718	38.5
Retire	175	9.4
Others	439	23.5
Total	1866	100

iii. Participation of Respondents Towards Rukun Tetangga Activities

It was found that 71.3% respondents ever getting involved in Rukun Tetangga

activities which have been carried out in their place. While only 28.7% of respondents who never getting involved in these activities. The distribution of respondents according to their participation in Rukun Tetangga activities can be seen as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to their participation towards Rukun Tetangga activities

Participation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1330	71.3
No	536	28.7
Total	1866	100

iv. Relationship Between Respondents’ Occupation and Theirs’ Participation Towards Rukun Tetangga Activities

Those group pensioners (97.7%) or 171 out of 175 person and 84.8% or 453 of the 534 respondents who work in the public sector give a ‘very good’ participation score. While others occupational groups and the private sector recorded a score of a ‘good’. The results found the pensioners and the government sector had a time and knowledge towards Rukun Tetangga activities. This means, the knowledge have been fostered well by the government. They are people who have more time for the local community. Respondents in private sector have a little time to engage in these activities. They usually give a commitment to their careers than in the Rukun Tetangga. The relationship between respondents’ occupation and theirs’ participation towards Rukun Tetangga activities can be seen as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 4: Percentage Rate and The Level of Participation

	Percentage Rate (%)	Level oParticipation
1	1.0 to 25.0	Unsatisfactory
2	25.1 to 50.0	Satisfy
3	50.1 to 75.0	Good
4	75.1 to 100.0	Very Good

Table 5: Relationship Between Respondents' Occupation and Theirs' Participation Towards Rukun Tetangga Activities

		Yes	No	Total
Occupation	Public Sector	453	81	534
	Private Sector	400	318	718
	Retire	171	4	175
	Others	306	133	439
Total		1330	536	1866

Conclusion

Occupation sector or working sector is one of the factors that contributes to communities participate in Rukun Tetangga activities. Therefore, the occupation does play a great role to the time management and knowledge about the Rukun Tetangga. For those in the public sector, government always do a campaign and knowledge about the advantages of joining a community of Rukun Tetangga. Hopefully, the state and nation of Malaysia will keep on progressing in educated people about Rukun Tetangga either in the public sector or private sector.

In conclusion, it is hope that this study can be of advantage to everyone concerned as the results of the researches showed that must be taken to educate our communities about the advantages of Rukun Tetangga activities. In addition, in the future, researchers hope that the study will be done more comprehensively by looking at various angles in order for it to be clear-cut, especially in achieving the goal to create a strong pillars of Rukun Tetangga in the local community.

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