EXPLORING BEFORE TRANSFORMING: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON HOME LEARNING CULTURE OF INDIGENOUS SEMAI PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PERAK

Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman[1], Lee Hui Ting[1*]

[1]
Faculty of Education,
Universiti Malaya,
Malaysia

Corresponding Author:
Faculty of Education,
Universiti Malaya,
Malaysia
E-mail:
htinglee1227@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

There is a recognised need for investigating home learning culture of indigenous students. Several attempts have been made to explore indigenous home learning culture in the overseas context; however, home learning culture, particularly among indigenous Semai primary school students in Perak, have yet to be understood. Several studies have documented exploration of the issue of low educational motivation among indigenous students in Malaysia in relation to parental and school context discretely rather than understanding learning culturally from both individual and social context at home. This study aimed to explore home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students between the ages of 9-12 in Perak using a phenomenological design to explore an in-depth understanding of home learning culture of six indigenous Semai primary school students. Data collection utilized the application of photography, individual semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and naturalistic observations and thematic qualitative analysis were employed for data analysis. The principal findings in relation to indigenous home learning culture were cultural norms and values, formal education values, as well as developmental and modernisation values. The findings presented in this research add to our understanding of how and why indigenous students learn at home, and how home situations influence learning based on indigenous cultural norms and values through the shifts in formal institutional, developmental and technological conditions. It provides insight to school educators to embrace the learning experiences of indigenous students and be cognisant of the way they live, learn, and how they can be taught in the home, by providing appropriate resources to develop future pathways in response to their cultural, literacy and technological transformation to lead their learning improvement.

Keywords: Indigenous, Home Learning Culture, Phenomenology

INTRODUCTION

Orang Asli education has grown in popularity in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 to offer opportunities for indigenous students in Peninsular Malaysia and aboriginal students in Sarawak and Sabah as other students to ensure quality of education and international recognition. Orang Asli education is one of the key agendas in enhancing the quality of national education (Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman, Nor Asiah Muhamad & Muhamad Asyraf Mansor, 2019). Despite progression and initiatives on enhancing school education for Orang Asli students, Muhammad Fuad Abdullah (2019) exhibited that 83.4% of the Orang Asli in Terengganu was deprived in years of schooling, and years of schooling revealed high dropout rates among Orang Asli students. Sheera Nabila Singar and Azizan Zainuddin (2017) indicated that the dominant factor of indigenous dropout was parents' educational background as well as low parental support and involvement.

Low educational attainment of indigenous students in Malaysia pointed out the need for further investigation to explore indigenous home learning culture, in terms of their learning as participation in social practice in the indigenous home, as any form of knowledge from the study could be framed to enhance learning and education for Orang Asli students. Jorgensen (2018) stated an incongruence between indigenous home and school learning system, illustrating symbolic violence happened where there was a failure to recognise the differences between home and school cultural systems. Bennett et al. (2009) posited that learning was more likely to be effective for students whose home habitus aligned with the practices of schools. If there was a higher congruence between home culture and school culture then learning was likely to be more powerful for indigenous students.

In the indigenous home context, Orang Asli learned and interacted with the natural environment, and they relied on traditional cultural knowledge to support their families and communities (Nicholas, Engi & Teh, 2010; Endicott, 2015). Semai children typically engaged in outdoor activities, and they usually shouldered responsibilities of their parents in their traditional village (Renganathan, 2016). Traditional music and songs as transmission of cultural values of social responsibility was observed in indigenous Semai community (Suet Ching & Ross, 2015). Traditional and spiritual beliefs were prevalent in the Semai community, denoting interrelationship, reciprocity, humility and respect between humans and ecological relationships (Gomes, 2018). Renganathan (2016) and Walid et al. (2015) denoted the emergence of the use of digital technology and literacy learning. According to Renganathan and Kral (2018), despite a strong influence of oral traditions such as stories, songs and traditional cultural practices on indigenous Semai people, literate resources and practices such as books, magazines, radio, television and Internet played a role in their lives due to modernization and environmental changes.

The current qualitative phenomenological study explored home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students in Perak. By taking a more holistic way to explore the dynamic of home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students, a greater understanding of the deficit orientation of educational attainment, educational motivation and school participation may benefit Orang Asli students, the community, educational initiatives and policy formation. By exploring indigenous home learning culture, it widened the understanding on indigenous cultural values and beliefs through the shifts in ecological context, thus increasing home-school congruency to lead an improvement of Orang Asli education.

Problem Statement

Indigenous students have been reported lagging behind in education compared to other mainstream students in Malaysia albeit the government in Malaysia has increased access to education and improved the quality of education for the Orang Asli over the years (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2018). Previous studies have reported low indigenous students' educational motivation and attainment in the Malaysian context in relation to disadvantaged parental support and capitals positioned within the home learning field (Misnaton Rabahi et al., 2016; Abdul Razaq Ahmad & Mohd Mahzan Awang, 2016; Renganathan, 2016; Norwaliza Abdul Wahab, 2016; Doreen Primus, Ng and Aziah Ismail, 2017). Most of these studies have only involved parental factors in influencing

Orang Asli struggles in formal education, and they have failed to consider learning culture and other home factors in their wider context and the symbolic system in the sociocultural environment that influenced their learning.

Furthermore, there was a lack of studies that explored the issue of educational backwardness of indigenous students through the lens of their home habitus, as most previous studies focused on school elements such as less culturally responsive school curriculum, instruction, pedagogy, assessment, teacher's attitudes and commitment, and poor teacher-student relationship (Nur Bahiyah Abdul Wahab et al., 2014; Warid Mihat, 2015; Wahab et al., 2016). Indigenous home learning perspective in this study gave an opportunity to indigenous students to voice out their innate learning dispositions and behaviors. The paucity of research based on indigenous home learning culture is a significant gap in understanding the phenomenon of discrepancy in indigenous education.

It was found that indigenous home learning culture in the abroad context comprised of learning through interaction with natural environment (Gratani et al., 2016), learning through oral tradition (Andrea Bowra & Angela Mashford-Pringle, 2020), social learning (Rogoff et al., 2015; De León, 2017), learning based on kinship values (Rona, Forster & O'Neill, 2018) and the influences of neighbourhood (Jirata, 2019) whereas indigenous home learning culture in Malaysian context was denoted as learning through interaction with nature, social learning and the value of stewardship, and learning based on family and community value (Gomes, 2018; Nicholas, Engi & Teh, 2010; Endicott, 2015). Negative influences on indigenous cultural practices were found due to the prevalence of modern technologies in Malaysian context (Isa et al., 2016). There were differences in what and how indigenous people come to shape or be shaped into their identities with respect to different cultural practices (Hodkinson, Biesta and James, 2008). The difference of cultural practices in both abroad and local context and the influences of modernization changes imperatively called for a study that reflected home learning culture of indigenous Semai groups in Malaysian context.

There is a need for more studies about home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students in Malaysian context. To date, there are only two studies that focused on indigenous experiences in home learning culture (Kral & Renganathan, 2018; Renganathan, 2016). Kral and Renganathan (2018) postulated that Orang Asli children come from a non-literate tradition, and their home language use was not the language of instruction in formal education setting whereas Renganathan (2016) postulated that indigenous children's after school routine was less structured and they participated in informal play. Other than these two studies, previous studies have associated the indigenous remote settlement and marginalization with the phenomenon of discrepancy in indigenous education (Aidil Fitri bin Sawalludin et al., 2020; Mazzlida Mat Deli and Ruhizan Mohamad Yasin, 2016) rather than understanding learning culturally from both individual and social context in the home.

Aim of the Study

Learning is social, embodied and practical as a result of individuals' embodied engagement in cultural practices (Bourdieu, 1985; Hodkinson, Biesta and James, 2008). This study aimed to explore home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students. The following research question was developed to attain the aim of this study.

> "What is the home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students in Perak?"

School Culture and Pedagogy in Malaysian Context

Formal education in Malaysia emphasizes literacy knowledge and mastery of 4R's which are reading, writing, arithmetic and reasoning with supplementary elements of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship along with the language practices through which school concepts, curriculum and processes are taught in Bahasa Melayu, English and their first language (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). School Based Assessment (SBA) is implemented via classroom-based assessment (PBD), physical activity, sports and curriculum assessment (PAJSK), and psychometric assessment (PSI), and UPSR is fully abolished in 2021 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2021). In

Ghani's (2015) analysis of maintaining the Orang Asli language in Malaysia, the Ethnic and Foreign Languages Unit, Curriculum Development Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia introduced the Semai language teaching programme with the goal of enabling the students to acquire basic language skills for communicative purposes, learning knowledge and cultivating pride in the language.

There were various educational policies and programs implemented by the government and scholars to enhance the education for Orang Asli students. They were Special Model K9 School programme (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015), Orang Asli and Penan Curriculum (KAP) (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013), Special Intervention Programme for the Orang Asli and indigenous community students (PIKAP) (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2018), development of a garden-based curriculum content model (Aniza Mohd Said et al., 2017) and development of home-schooling model based on indigenous values and practices (Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman, 2014). Nevertheless, low educational attainment and motivation was demonstrated albeit various educational efforts and initiatives taken by the government and other scholars in investigating the achievement gap disparity in order to improve the education of Orang Asli students.

Home Context of Indigenous Children's Learning

Understanding how culture shapes learning motivation does not just encompass school subjects, rather it acknowledges learning as an integral aspect of indigenous lives. According to Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2007), culture exists through interaction and interrelationship with a wide range of agents in social practices within a sociocultural environment. Learning is a continuous process whereby the surroundings affect learning and development.

In this sense, learning cannot be detached from the existent home environment. This coincided with those of Reio's (2012) as well as Veintie and Holm's (2010) studies in which children proactively learn, observe and explore their environment and surroundings in order to learn and adapt to everyday contingencies related to being a successful member of their culture. For success to be achieved, some conceptualization and exploration of the home learning culture was necessary.

Parental Practices

Misnaton Rabahi et al. (2016) elucidated the roles of mother, older siblings and grandparents as parents leading learning, illustrating Orang Asli mother's support and comfort of her children in the learning process of the basics of writing; older siblings' financial support of the education of younger siblings; and grandparents' role model value and transmission of traditional knowledge with regards to real life problems, illuminating emotional connection parental practices. Learning within indigenous culture have traditionally emphasized free learning in which the indigenous children were allowed freedom to explore and experience the world around them, take the initiative, and therefore possessed a greater influence on their learning activities (Lillemyr et al., 2011). In other words, it illuminated an autonomy-supportive home learning context.

Contrary to previously published studies, Doreen Primus, Ng and Aziah Ismail (2017) argued on indigenous students' challenges in pursuing post-secondary education due to cultural barriers and parents' negative belief on formal education. Warid Mihat (2015) identified lack of school guidance from Orang Asli parents as the cause of the mismatch in level of language skills in school. The study highlighted Orang Asli parents placing demands on their children to attend school and study, and the children were reported to have poor school learning attitude. Abdul Razaq Ahmad and Mohd Mahzan Awang (2016) reported lack of effective educational support provided by the aboriginal parents, and the study argued that the significance of parental awareness and concern of their children's future career in determining their schooling completion.

Teaching and Learning of Orang Asli

According to Endicott (2015), forest-human relations are deciphered in ritual and everyday life as an "adult-child caring" with the forest being perceived as a parent and to be regarded with love and appreciation for its nature's "gifts". To the Orang Asli, their customary land is a living entity, with a spirituality and a sacredness of its own (Nicholas, Engi & Teh, 2010). This view was supported by Gomes (2018) who mentioned that the Semai believed in their traditional and spiritual beliefs, that they refer to as Kenah Senlook, and it is connected with the "laws" of nature building on interdependence, reciprocity, humility and respect between humans and ecological relationships.

Gomes (2018) denoted that Orang Asli engaged in intra-community interdependence and generalized mutuality in production or opportunities for production. Orang Asli traditionally followed a communal system of ownership (Gomes, 2018). They are involved with their community, and they prioritized the welfare of the community over their own. Social organization is collaborative, and they take initiative to contribute and connect as valued members of their community. They depend on sustenance and interaction with the natural environment, and they rely on traditional cultural knowledge to support their families and communities (Nicholas, Engi & Teh, 2010; Endicott, 2015). Interestingly, it was noted literacy learning and digital literacy in the indigenous home and in the village environment (Renganathan, 2016; Walid et al., 2015).

According to Misnaton Rabahi et al. (2016), lack of cultural capital of a literate home background contributed to low school motivation and educational attainment among Orang Asli students. The findings of Murtaza et al. (2019) revealed that parents' income and parents' years of education, home environment, particularly the availability of learning materials, parental responsiveness to the child and variety of daily stimulation were associated with the cognitive performance of Orang Asli students. Norwaliza Abdul Wahab (2016) further indicated that the environmental conditions at indigenous homes were less favourable for learning and formal education was not focused in their homes. Economically disadvantaged indigenous children's after school routine was less structured, and they participated in informal play and spending time with peers, which were often perceived as lacking in educational content (Renganathan, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A qualitative phenomenological research design, with emphasis on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context of people sharing a specific experience, was the best fit for the study. The current phenomenological study explored indigenous Semai primary school students, who are experiencing and have experienced lived experiences related to engaging with home learning culture, thereby portraying a holistic picture of their home learning experiences that could be beneficial for indigenous education. Lived experiences is the study of "the nature or meaning of everyday experiences", and it enabled the researcher to essentialize those lived experiences and to share these through textual representation, thus providing a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Sampling Methods

Criterion purposive sampling was employed, and the participants were recruited based on fulfillment of the following criteria, namely 1) pure Semai ethnic group, 2) aged between 9-12 years old, 3) regardless of gender and 4) family background with medium family size and family monthly income of less than RM4000. The study sample consisted of six indigenous Semai primary school students living in Tapah, Batang Padang District, Perak as suggested by Creswell (2014), noting to interview 5-25 participants who have all experienced the phenomenon. With a small sample size, it enabled the researcher to provide insightful and deep descriptions of the phenomenon

which led to "information richness" (Patton, 2015).

Instruments of the Study

Data were collected through a research instrument, consisting of the observational protocols, subject instruments, interview protocols and visual photographs, and an informant instrument, using focus group interview protocols. The researcher instrument, subject instruments and informant instrument were employed to triangulate the data. Observation was conducted to explain the physical settings, the student participants' activities, involvement and interaction in the indigenous home, and it added contextual data to the verbal conversation and increased the richness of data collected through the interview process.

Furthermore, individual semi-structured interviews with the student participants were conducted following the interview protocols, whereas focus group interviews with their parents or primary caregivers were conducted using the focus group interview protocols to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' home learning experiences until it reached the point of data saturation. Utilizing photography allowed a new type of communication between a non-Orang Asli researcher and Orang Asli student participants (Langmann & Pick, 2018), which was especially important and less stressful for them, and it also provided different mirrors for reflecting on indigenous home learning culture.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using a six-phased method of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). Interview data collected via audiotapes was transcribed into verbatim transcripts. All the observational data and interview data were logged into Microsoft Excel with accompanying photographs, and they were read and reviewed repeatedly as a whole in an active way to obtain a sense of the entire data set. Initial colour coded data was generated in order to identify the themes based on the participant extracts of data. Constant comparative method was applied and similar responses were coded into categories. Each category was further compared and analysed, and similar categories were clustered to form emerging themes. The themes were then organised into subordinate themes and subthemes.

FINDINGS

Three subordinate themes were found when the researcher analysed the research data in accordance with the research question "What is the home learning culture of indigenous Semai primary school students?" They were: (1) cultural norms and values, (2) formal education values, and (3) developmental and modernisation values.

Cultural Norms and Values

Throughout indigenous primary school student participants' experiences on cultural norms and values, they expressed learning through interaction with the environment. Interaction with physical surroundings was mentioned with "playing with sands", "playing with the wood stick", "catching butterflies", "diving in the river", "looking for fish in the river", "bathing in the waterfall", "bathing pet dog and tortoise", "feeding hens", "catching deer with dad" and "making toy house and toy car using the resources available in their physical surroundings". The participants further expressed learning apprenticeship as experienced on interaction with the environment.

> "I built a hut before with dad. Dad will guide. Yes, fun. I built a hut in the plantation. It is used to sit and rest. Woods. Got the woods from the jungle. Dad will choose. He knows the types of woods suitable for hut making." (Student 5 – excerpts from interview transcripts)

Figure 1: Photograph taken by Student 2 indicating chasing the roosters is part of his daily activities

The findings about interaction with the environment coincided with the researcher's observation, illustrating a sense of appreciation of biodiversity via "Student 4 who showed to her friends the pet tortoises she reared and she talked about the features between these two species, such as the feet and the shape of the head". Student 4 further alluded to the notion of edible plants and planting techniques via "the leaves of cassava plant can be stew cooked and eaten", "plant pineapples with its head", "when it bears fruits, cut the pineapple head and plant again" and "cassava bears fruit underground", illustrating learning and understanding of whether certain parts of the plants could be eaten and how to grow fruits and vegetables.

Figure 2: Photograph taken by Student 4 showing how pineapple is grown from the crown

Furthermore, indigenous student participants expressed kinship obligations throughout their experiences on cultural norms and values. "Performing house chores", "family harvests", "taking care of siblings", "work in the plantation", "community service", "karaoke sessions", "gotong-royong", "family day", "participating in Zumba", "Aerobic exercise", "help the adults to carry woods when they are building the house", "help to carry things during wedding functions" were expressed, illustrating a pattern of their collaboration in family work and community-children relationship.

"Go to the jungle, find cassava. Go to the jungle and find petai with the child." (Parent 2 – excerpts from FGI transcripts)

The participants' ideas expressed during the interviews was consistent with the explanation for the photographs.

Figure 3: Photograph taken by Student 5 showing the farm located in the forest where he helped his dad to plant durian trees

Teaching and interacting between adults and indigenous participants were mentioned, which was described via "Grandparents teach me how to plant.", "If I am not good at catching fish, I will ask for help from dad.", "Dad teaches me how to make the bird catapult using woods. I observe and I do.", "Dad teaches me how to make fish arrows.", "Dad will let me do it on my own after demonstration.", illustrating selfless sharing of cultural knowledge and life skills between indigenous adults and children. Furthermore, teaching and guidance from the indigenous participants to younger siblings or friends were described with "I teach younger friends on how to play and make a toy car". The following was extracted from observation field notes, illustrating care for younger siblings.

> "He brought down a pony toy and he played with his younger sibling at home." (Student 2 – excerpts from observational field notes)

Moreover, throughout the participants' experiences on cultural norms and values, they expressed cultural shifts and incorporation of Malay culture in their traditional activities via "Sewang dance accompanied with traditional music" and "Malay songs". Language shifts were not indicated and the nature of widely spoken Semai language practised by the participants were observed. The participants further expressed learning spiritual practice and taboos, which was narrated with "I was told by my parents not to urinate while going to the forest. If the situation is desperate, I have to make a "hajat" (wish) to ask for permission." and "I should not throw rubbish anywhere. Bad consequences will happen. I will get a stomach ache and earache if I do so." Character development and moral education such as teaching indigenous students to be disciplined and guiding them to good conduct and appropriate behaviour were expressed as experienced on learning spiritual practices and taboos.

> "The taboo teaches the child to be disciplined in every matter and to abide by the rules of every situation that has been pre-set." (Parent 4 – excerpts from FGI transcripts)

> "If I do well, I will get good consequences. If I do bad, I will get bad consequences." (Student 5 – excerpts from interview transcripts)

Formal Education Values

When asked whether to do schoolwork in the home, Student 2, Student 3, Student 4, Student 5 and Student 6 reported that they performed school-related tasks at home by uttering "I finish school work. Then I play.", "I do English homework" and "The busiest day of the week is Wednesday because I have got a lot of schoolwork".

Parental emphasis on school education was narrated via "children learn from books (spell), at night I will ask them to do some school work" and "it is not really fine when the child plays a lot and learns less". Parents also expressed the use of extrinsic motivation to motivate their children to learn school work via "I will challenge her. If she learns more, I will give her the handset", "I would allow one to two hours for the child to play with the handphone when he has completed his work" and "I will give a present if he gets third prize in school".

Lack of academic knowledge, skills and poor school learning attitude were expressed by indigenous parents via "his school learning skill is not really good", "he is lazy in school learning" and "when I asked her to do school work, she would run away." were expressed. Furthermore, lacking educational learning support such as, books, educational toys and study tables was found in the observational data, illustrating school-related learning was not particularly prominent among indigenous participants, and there was a lack of conducive place to study, albeit parental emphasis on the school education.

Developmental and Modernisation Values

All the participants expressed that they spent most of their time involving in outdoor play, which was described via "strength game", "Batak" (chasing and fleeing), "Batak Kasut" (chasing and attacking opponents with slippers), "Batak Tong" (chasing and hitting the tins with slippers), "hide-and-seek" and "zombie game". Physical and social development were expressed as experienced while engaging in the play.

> "They have strong stamina in running. For example, in the play, they throw the slippers and run very fast to avoid getting hit by the slippers. They are good at running. If they go to the jungle, they are good at running too." (Parent 2 – excerpts from FGI transcripts)

> "He was telling his group members to stand at certain areas to defend and block the other group from hitting the tins." (Student 2 – excerpts from observation field notes)

The participants expressed experiencing self-created games. Learning rules of the social context was experienced by Student 1, in which he negotiated on the spot when another friend turned up and wanted to join the game, albeit there needed to be equal number of players on each team as in following the rules of the "Batak Tong" game per se, illustrating indigenous students' involvement in games with rules and learning rules of the social context as experienced in the play activity.

> "Half way through the game, a new friend wanted to join in the game, and they chose the new "chaser" by counting numbers with their feet/slippers again." (Student 1 – excerpts from observation field notes)

Furthermore, the participants expressed learning and engaging with digital technology. Student 2, Student 3, Student 5 and Student 6 expressed engaging in the use of technology for entertainment such as "watching cartoon using the handset", "watching Upin Ipin", "watching Astro program", Pada Zaman Dahulu", "playing crossword puzzles on phone", "playing Free Fire", "watching Korean dramas on handphone" and recording and editing the videos". Student 5 and Student 6 further spoke about communicating with friends on social media.

> "I use handphone to whatsapp with friends." (Student 6 – excerpts from interview transcripts)

DISCUSSIONS

The findings indicated that home learning culture comprised of cultural norms and values, formal education values as well as developmental and modernisation values, implying that learning is both a cultural and instructional

process, and it is also situational due to the profound change in social practices through developmental as well as digital revolution. Research has documented the prevalence of digital technology in indigenous community (Renganathan, 2016; Walid et al., 2015). Digital technology-based learning programs could be applied to engage indigenous students' learning (Renganathan & Kral, 2018). It provides an implication to school educators to implement teaching and learning with a culturally relevant perspective in response to literacy and digital transformation.

Past studies reported that indigenous learning, skills and knowledge is acquired through relevant experiences through fishing and farming (Mistry et al., 2020). These findings were consistent with investigations from the current study, in which the participants demonstrated their interactions with the environment and subsequently, they brought forth learning apprenticeship and life skills in fishing, planting, hunting, making fish arrows and bird catching tools as well as building huts. It is recommended that the school learning culture is created in adherence to indigenous home habitus. It is recommended that school educators enhance the notion of indigenous relatedness by systematically strengthening traditional culture and vocational learning. The school educators could leverage outdoor learning practices such as exploring in the jungle, playing water and swimming in the waterfall, physical play, fishing and hunting small animals so as Orang Asli students feel connected in the school environment.

The current study documented kinship obligations and contributions to families such as helping their parents or adults with responsibility in the aspects of housework, plantation and community work. This is well illustrated in Flores' (2015) study, expressing willingness of indigenous Mesoamerican children to offer their assistance with household work within the context of family and community activities, thereby inculcating respect and reciprocal relationships through the participation in collective activities. The study implied a need for a social support system in contributing to their children's learning just as King and McInerney (2019) showed optimal learning-related outcomes and engagement of indigenous students displayed with family-support goals. It is recommended that indigenous families motivate their children towards school achievement with the aim to prioritise familial concerns. Support for children to receive formal education from friends and community is salient. It further provides insight to the school educators to collaborate with indigenous communities to instill prosocial values within students and engage with their wider familial and communal networks in order to leverage interdependent nature of indigenous relatedness (Carlton et al. 2019).

Past studies addressed the lack of parental awareness on the importance of education and low parental literary skill and educational knowledge were associated with poor school performance among indigenous students (Abdul Razaq Ahmad and Mohd Mahzan Awang, 2016; Norwaliza Abdul Wahab, 2016). The current study demonstrated otherwise. The current findings indicated learning schoolwork as experienced on home learning culture and parental emphasis of their children receiving formal education values. Despite their experiences on learning schoolwork and parental awareness of the importance of formal education, lacking of school-related skills and poor attitude in school learning among indigenous participants were reported. It can be explained by other home contextual factors such as the provision of home resources and community influencing formal education values experienced by the participants. It is suggested that Orang Asli parents enhance their children's school learning through the provision of social, cultural and technological home learning resources.

The current study indicated playing self-created games as experienced by the indigenous participants. These findings were consistent with investigations from past studies reporting that variations of play in regard to the sociocultural history from which the children have embodied and served within (de Lopez, 2018). The current findings demonstrated learning games with rules and rules of the social context through play as experienced by indigenous participants. To the researcher's knowledge, there was no past studies addressing learning the rules of the social context in the play activity as experienced by indigenous students. The current findings added to the growing body of research that indicated the function of the play activities that served in indigenous children's development and learning. These findings have important implications for developing learning through culturally embodied play within school learning context to engage their learning as presented by De Lopez (2018) that stated

play activities in indigenous societies are generally non-guided and play materials are created by the children themselves in the process of establishing the play activity.

Suggestions from the Study

Based on preceding discussion, the researcher would like to present the following suggestions for the Ministry of Education, policy makers, stakeholders, school educators and indigenous parents.

Firstly, the findings of the current study provide insight to the government and policy makers to take note of the blending of learning in the indigenous home that reflects cultural values and institutional patterns of learning in response to digital technologies, in accordance with the four important indigenous epistemologies, namely peoplehood, land, language and time and circular thinking suggested by Holmes (2014) as well as development of learning motivation throughout indigenous students' experiences in the home. With the goal of bridging the gaps between indigenous and mainstream students and reducing dropout rates among indigenous students, it is suggested that the curriculum policy makers could propose an indigenous learning framework that honours Orang Asli's home learning experiences in relation to the inherently dynamic context. In the indigenous learning framework, learning includes the way indigenous students learn, teach and to be taught in their everyday life in the home, comprising of cultural values and norms, formal education values and developmental and modernisation values.

School educators can make use of the findings of the current study to plan and strategize a school learning culture that is in adherence to indigenous home habitus. An outdoor learning-based pedagogy, native language-based multilingual education and a sense of community could be promoted for indigenous notion of relatedness, thereby enhancing school motivation of indigenous students. Jaffee (2021) suggested pedagogy of making cross-cultural connections and pedagogy that is community-based to engage Latinx indigenous youths in social science education. Disa Hynsjö and Amy Damon (2016) found Quechua medium instruction contributed significantly to indigenous students' academic achievement. Acknowledging indigenous home cultural experiences through the shifts in technological condition and modernisation, it is suggested that school educators leverage the use of native language and outdoor learning practices, and foster meaningful school-related learning through interest-driven engagement in technology.

Furthermore, this research sparks the needs for Orang Asli parents to become aware of indigenous home learning that operates synchronistically with the changes of literacy and digital technology. Parents are credited most frequently of having the most interaction with their children in the home, therefore they play an important role in influencing their children's learning. Orang Asli parents could enhance their children's competence in school-related activities by providing adequate educational resources to assist them to be more intrinsically motivated in school context. Given that parental influences seem to be beneficial for indigenous children's learning motivation, home visits could be offered, or sessions for parenting classes that teach parents how to promote highly involved and value-autonomy parenting practices, and positive connectedness that elicit learning motivation and ameliorate the application of extrinsic motivation with satisfying relatedness, competence and autonomy needs.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore home learning culture of the indigenous Semai primary school students in Perak. This study has found that indigenous participants have experienced cultural and institutional learning through the shift in situational conditions through living of indigenous cultural norms and values, formal education values, and developmental and modernisation values. Indigenous home learning culture operates synchronistically with technological advancement and literacy transformation. This study has provided a deeper insight into development of formal education through an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of home learning culture. It suggested to

school educators to plan teaching and learning contents with understanding and sensitivity of indigenous home learning culture and how and why learning occurs in the home to indicate home-school congruence.

REFERENCES

Abdul Razaq Ahmad., & Mohd Mahzan Awang. (2016). Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Socio-Educational Support and Community Engagement for Educational Development of Aboriginal Students. *The New Educational Review*, 157-164.

Aidil Fitri Bin Sawalludin, Lim, J. M., & Mohamad Izzuan Mohd Ishar. (2020). The struggle of Orang Asli in education: quality of education. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, 5*(1), 46-51.

Andrea Bowra & Angela Mashford-Pringle. (2020). More than a Structure: Exploring the Relationship between Indigenous Homemaking Practices and Wholistic Wellbeing. *Wellbeing, Space and Society*. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wss.2020.100007

Aniza Mohd Said, Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman, Norlidah Alias & Saedah Siraj. (2017). Development of a Garden-Based Curriculum Content Model for Indigenous Primary School Students. *Science Journal of Business and Management, 5*(5), 181-188.

Bennett et al. (2009). *Culture, Class, Distinction*. Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1985). The Genesis of the concepts of Habitus and of Field. *Sociocriticism, 2*, 11–24.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Carlton J. Fong., Adam J. Alejandro., Megan R. Krou., John Segovia., & Karen Johnston-Ashton. (2019). Ya'at'eeh: Race-reimaged belongingness factors, academic outcomes, and goal pursuits among Indigenous community college students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 59*, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.101805.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. & Poth, C.N. (2016). *Qualitative Inquiry Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

de López, K.J. (2018). Situating Culturally Embodied Play Ecologies of Preschool Children: Los in Transition. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science. 52*, 401–408 https://doi-org.ezproxy.um.edu.my/10.1007/s12124-018-9439-5

Disa Hynsjö., & Amy Damon. (2016). Bilingual education in Peru: Evidence on how Quechua-medium education affects indigenous children's academic achievement, *Economics of Education Review, 53,* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2016.05.006.

Doreen Primus., Ng, L.Y.A., & Aziah Ismail. (2017). Indigenous students' challenges, adaptation and self-esteem during post-secondary education: a study on selected Malaysian public universities. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management, 5*(1),16-28.

Endicott, K. (2015). *Malaysia's Original People: Past, Present and Future of the Orang Asli.* NUS Press.

Flores et al. (2015). Chapter Fifteen - Using History to Analyze the Learning by Observing and Pitching In Practices of Contemporary Mesoamerican Societies. *Advances in Child Development and Behavior, 49*, 315-339.

Ghani, A, A. (2015). The Teaching of Indigenous Orang Asli Language in Peninsular Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 208,* 253–262. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.201

Gomes, A. (2018). Lessons from the margin: indigenous peace ecology. *Organicom, 28,* 150-166.

Gratani, M., Sutton, S. G., Butler, J. R. A., Bohensky, E. L., & Foale, S. (2016). Indigenous environmental values as human values. *Cogent Social Sciences, 2*(1). doi:10.1080/23311886.2016.1185811

Holmes, F.K. (2014*). Indigenous Relatedness within Educational Contexts.* In: van Wyk B.,Adeniji-Neill D. (eds) Indigenous Concepts of Education. Palgrave Macmillan's Postcolonial Studies in Education. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137382184_7

Isa, S.S., Zakaria, H.M., & Isa, S.S. (2016). *From Cultural Activity to Cultural Tourism: A Case of Indigenous Community in Malaysia.* In: Abdullah M., Yahya W., Ramli N., Mohamed S., Ahmad B. (eds) Regional Conference on Science, Technology and Social Sciences (RCSTSS 2014). Springer, Singapore. https://doi-org.ezproxy.um.edu.my/10.1007/978-981-10-1458-1_91

Jaffee, A. T. (2021). "I Want Them to Feel Safe and to Feel Loved": Collaborating to Teach Social Studies for Middle Level Emergent Bilingual Students. *Research in Middle Level Education Online, 44*(1), 1–16. https://doi-org.ezproxy.um.edu.my/10.1080/19404476.2020.1859904

Jirata, T. J. (2019). The cultural spaces of young children: Care, play and learning patterns in early childhood among the Guji people of Ethiopia. *Global Studies of Childhood,9*(1),42–55. https://doi.org/10.1177/2043610618817317

Jorgensen, R. (2018). Building the mathematical capital of marginalised learners of mathematics. *ZDM*, 50(6), 987–998. doi:10.1007/s11858-018-0966-9

King, R. B. & McInerney, D. M. (2019). Family-support goals drive engagement and achievement: Combining etic and emic approaches to understand motivation in a collectivist culture. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 58*, 338-353. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.04.003.

Kral I., & Renganathan S. (2018). *Beyond School: Digital Cultural Practice as a Catalyst for Language and Literacy.* In: Wigglesworth G., Simpson J., Vaughan J. (eds) Language Practices of Indigenous Children and Youth. Palgrave Studies in Minority Languages and Communities. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Langmann, S., & Pick, D. (2018). *Photography as a social research method.* Singapore: Springer Nature.

Lillemyr, O.F., Søbstad, F., Marder, K. & Flowerday, T. (2011). A Multicultural Perspective on Play and Learning in Primary School. *IJEC, 43*, 43–65.

Mazzlida Mat Deli & Ruhizan Mohamad Yasin. (2016). Quality Education of Orang Asli in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 6*(11), 233-240.

Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2013). *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Preschool to post-secondary education)*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education Malaysia. (2018). *2017 Annual Report Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025.* Putrajaya: Ministry of Education.

Ministry Of Education. (2015). *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025: Annual Report 2014.* Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia.

Ministry Of Education. (2021). *Primary Education.* Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia. Retrieved from https://www.moe.gov.my/pendidikan/pendidikan-rendah

Misnaton Rabahia et al. (2016). Leading Learning: A Grounded Theory Perspective of Orang Asli Parental Involvement and Engagement. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 94 -103.

Mohd Asri Mohd Noor. (2012). Advancing the Orang Asli through Malaysia's clusters of excellence policy. *Journal of International and Comparative Education, 1*(2), 90-103.

Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman, Mohammad Asyraf Mansor and Nor Asiah Muhamad (2020). Pengurusan Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Berasaskan Kreativiti Orang Asli dalam Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Kanak-Kanak Prasekolah. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan, 7*(1), 66-76.

Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman. (2014). *Development of homeschooling model based on value and community practice for indigenous children*. University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Muhammad Fuad Abdullah. (2019). Multidimensional Poverty Index of Marginalized Orang Asli in Terengganu, Malaysia. *Pertanika Journal Social Science & Humanities, 27*(2), 1241-1259.

Murtaza, S. F., Gan, W. Y., Sulaiman, N., Mohd Shariff, Z., & Ismail, S. I. F. (2019). Sociodemographic, nutritional, and environmental factors are associated with cognitive performance among Orang Asli children in Malaysia. *PLOS ONE, 14*(7), e0219841. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0219841

Nicholas, C., Engi, J. & Teh, Y.P. (2010). *The Orang Asli and th UNDRIP: From rhetoric to recognition.* Center for Orang Asli concerns: Malaysia.

Norlizah Che Hassan & Thava, M. (2017). Motivation and Academic Achievement: A Case Study of Malaysian Aboriginal (Orang Asli) Students. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 7*, 534-549.

Norwaliza et al. (2016). Parents' roles on educational goals among the orang asli community in Malaysia. *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research, 24*(8), 2431-2438.

Nowell, Lorelli S.; Norris, Jill M.; White, Deborah E.; Moules, Nancy J. (2017). Thematic Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16*(1), doi:10.1177/1609406917733847

Nur Bahiyah Abdul Wahab, Maryati Mohamed, Mohd. Zairi Husain & Mohd. Najib Haron. (2014).The development of science knowledge indicators among indigenous pupils. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 172*, 398 – 404.

Patton, M.Q. (2015). *Qualitative methods and evaluation methods: integrating theory and practice.*Sage Publications: USA.

Renganathan, S. (2016). Literacy and development for the Orang Asli in Malaysia: What matters? *PROSPECTS, 46*(3-4), 479–490. doi:10.1007/s11125-017-9412-y

Renganathan, S., & Kral, I. (2018). Digital preservation of language, cultural knowledge and traditions of the indigenous Semai. *SHS Web of Conferences, 53*, 1.

Rogoff, B., Moore, L. C., Correa-Chávez, M., & Dexter, A. L. (2015). *Children develop cultural repertoires through engaging in everyday routines and practices.* In J. E. Grusec & P. D. Hastings (Eds.), Handbook of socialization: Theory and research (p.472–498). Guilford Press.

Rona, S., Forster, M., & O'Neill, J. (2018). Māori children's everyday learning over the summer holidays. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 17*, 69–78.

Singar, S.N., & Zainuddin, A. (2017). *Exploring the School Dropout Factors among Indigenous Students in Melaka.* Conference Proceedings.

Suet Ching, C. C., & Ross, V. (2015). Preliminary Exploration of a Semai Musician's Transmission of Indigenous Musical Traditions in Peninsular Malaysia. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, 23*(3), 691.

Thambiah, S., Man, Z., & Idrus, R. (2016). *Orang Asli Women Negotiating Education Identity: Creating a Vision of Self with Socially Available Possibilities.* In Endicott, K. (Ed.). (2016). Malaysia's Original People: Past, Present and Future of the Orang Asli. Singapore: NUS Press. doi:10.2307/j.ctv1qv35n

Thomas G. Reio, J.R. (2012). *Socialization-Related Learning. In: Seel N.M. (eds) Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning.* Springer, Boston, MA.

Veintie, T., & Holm, G. (2010). The perceptions of knowledge and learning of Amazonian indigenous teacher education students. *Ethnography & Education, 5*(3), 325–343. https://doi-org.ezproxy.um.edu.my/10.1080/17457823.2010.511443

Wahab, N. R., Mustapha, R. B., & Ahamd, A. R. (2016). The roles of administrators in OA schools: A case study in a Malaysian state. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, 6*(5), 370–374.

Walid N., Ibrahim E.N.M., Ang C.S., Noor N.M. (2015). *Exploring Socioeconomic and Sociocultural Implications of ICT Use: An Ethnographic Study of Indigenous People in Malaysia.* In: Rau P. (eds) Cross-Cultural Design Methods, Practice and Impact. CCD 2015. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 9180. Springer, Cham. https://doi-org.ezproxy.um.edu.my/10.1007/978-3-319-20907-4_37

Warid Mihat. (2015). The English language curriculum in Malaysian indigenous primary classrooms: the reality and the ideal. 3L; Language, Linguistics and Literature, *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, 21* (3). pp. 1-12. ISSN 0128-5157