

ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ORANG ASLI JAKUN AND SEMELAI (MALAYSIAN ABORIGINAL TRIBES) IN ROMPIN, PAHANG: ARE THEY ADVANCING IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, the *Orang Asli* are hunter-gatherers, fishermen and arboriculture cultivators. Recent study shows that the *Orang Asli* are gradually discarding their primitive economic activities to enter into diverse business areas such as retailing, tourism, workshops, food stall, logging and manufacturing. Government efforts in developing the *Orang Asli*, through the provision of basic facilities, regroupment and resettlement, have also gradually transformed the *Orang Asli* population. Repeated exposures to the government's previous projects have impacted the *Orang Asli* to venture into entrepreneurship. This is believed to be the first study of entrepreneurship among *Orang Asli* Jakun and Semelai tribes in Rompin, Pahang. This paper is intended to evaluate the demographic profiles and characteristics of these tribes who have diverged from traditional paths to venture into entrepreneurship and the impact of cultural factors on their progress as entrepreneurs. And also the effectiveness of government-organised development projects in improving their standard of living and in instilling entrepreneurship. The study is concluded with recommendations based on personal interviews with around 100 Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs, 'tok batins' (village chiefs), and the government officers and workers (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli or JHEOA), with specific suggestions on how the Jakun and Semelai are advancing in entrepreneurship.

Key words :Orang Asli, Entrepreneurship, Government, Culture, Settlements.

INTRODUCTION

Orang Asli means "the original people" or "first people". The *Orang Asli* aboriginal group in West Malaysia is a minority group in the multi-ethnic Malaysian society. *Orang Asli* comprises of three main tribal groups namely Negritos, Proto-Malays and Senoi, all three of which can be further separated into 18 dissimilar cultural-linguistic¹ groups. A case study of the impact of development on indigenous people revealed that the *Orang Asli* is not a homogeneous group. Each of the sub-ethnic group has its own language, culture, economy, religion, social organisation and physical characteristics (Dentan, Endicott, Gomes, & Hooker, 1997). As reported by Collin Nicholas, (1997) the Negrito and Senoi speak a language that suggest a historical link with the indigenous people of Burma, Thailand and Indo-China (Nicholas, 1996).

There are approximately 12 million indigenous people in the world that live in forests and depend on forest products. In Malaysia, the total aboriginal population comprises of 0.9 percent of the total population as reported by the APFT Pilot Report (Bahuchet, 1992). The statistic from Department of Orang Asli Affairs or JHEOA (2000) shows that the total number of aborigines in Malaysia is **116,119** people according to the 1999/2000 classification of village data (JHEOA, 2000). The Senoi aborigines make up the biggest number, at approximately 54 percent of the total aboriginal population. In contrast, the Negritos and Proto Malays consist of only 7 and 39 percent respectively of the aboriginal population. Of that number, approximately 21,895 people are from the Jakun tribe, which comprises of 18.86 percent from the total population of aborigines.

¹ Most of them speak Mon-Kmer Language- showing an ancient connection with Mainland Southeast Asia to the north.

THE JAKUN

²Location of Aboriginal Settlements in Rompin, Pahang.



The Semelai is the smallest group of the Proto Malays tribes of Peninsular Malaysia, mostly residing at Tasek Bera, Sungai Bera, Sungai Teriang, Paya Besar and Paya Badak in the centre of Pahang and some of them reside at Sungai Lui, Sungai Serting and Ulu Muar near the border of Pahang and Negeri Sembilan (Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 2002). Total approximate number of Semelai people is 5,026 according to Orang Asli Ethnic Groups in Malaysia³ for the year 2000 by the Department of Aborigines. According to a study, "The Semelai speak Semelai"⁴, which is claimed to be the most ancient language in mainland Southeast Asia" (Gianno, 2002). The Semelai people focussed their lives around the lake, Tasek Bera. Gianno (2002) also mentioned that the Semelai people also like to be called "Semaq Tasik" or in other word the "lake people" (Gianno, 2002).

A pilot study in 1998 entitled "*Pahang Aborigines' Involvement in Businesses*", shows that the Orang Asli are gradually discarding their primitive economic activities in favour of retailing. According to the study, out of 34 samples, 97 percent of Orang Asli entrepreneurs are in the small retailers⁵ industry, with a start-up capital of less than RM1,000.00 (Man, 1998). However, a majority of the

⁵ Small Scale Sundry Shops.

people still depends on the forest in order to survive, but this is gradually changing as awareness of the world outside and the new demands of the economy grows. From the interviews conducted, we have identified Jakun and Semelai who have entered into diverse business areas such transportation, tourism, small auto workshops, restaurants, logging and manufacturing, in response to the changes brought about by the new millennium.

Compared to the Jakun, the Semelai economic activities are mostly derived from the lake "Tasek Bera". While there are outsiders utilizing the lake for their own benefit, economic activities in the lake are still centred around the tradition ways of the Semelai. The lake provides them with animals such as mouse deer, wild boar, porcupine, monitor lizards, wild fowl and turtles. Some of the Semelai collect rattan, bamboo, tree resin and some of them clear the land for vegetables and rubber estate (Khong Tuck Khoon, 2000).

A research done by Narifumi Maeda Tachimoto in 1965 found that the economic activities of the Jakuns were concentrated around locating and seeking resources from the forest. The trading of forest and agricultural products in the market has resulted in a wider use of money. Subsequently, income generation grew in importance over traditional subsistence farming. Collecting and growing subsistence material require considerable time and patience, whereas the forest harvests can yield immediate cash benefits, and these harvests are easily found and have not been exhausted as are the subsistence products (Tachimoto, 2001).

The middlemen that involved businesses with the Jakuns in Rompin, Pahang, especially Chinese, and their frequent interaction with the Orang Asli sometimes lead to intermarriage (Abdul Jamak, Mohd Dali, Ahmad, & Yusuf, 2002).

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JAKUN AND SEMELAI PEOPLE IN MALAYSIA.

The major characteristic found in the Jakun and Semelai aborigines are that they are self-reliant. Studies confirm this self-reliance, and dislike of being controlled by others (Tachimoto, 2001, Man, 1998). This self-reliance is what leads the Jakuns and Semelais not rely on subsistence agricultural products but instead generate cash from the harvests of the forests. Achom Luji, in a Forum entitled *'Aborigines Towards Vision 2020. We Are Not Anti Development'*, mentions that the aborigines should be free from developing an over-dependence on outside assistance, whether it be from the government or other parties (Ibrahim, 1996).

The Jakun And Semelai Cultures In Rompin.

In a research of "Entrepreneurship among the Orang Asli Jakun (2002)"⁶ revealed that the Jakun and Semelai people have no religion but only a small portion were converted to Muslim and a few others converted to Chinese traditions due to intermarriages. Almost all of them are *animists*⁶. Their lives are influenced by nature-based superstitions, such as the hills, rivers, stones, and caves. They believe good and evil spirits rule the aborigines world and they believe that their villages will be in catastrophe if they do not follow, or if they go against, their traditional customs or what the Malays call "*pantang larang*" (Abdul Jamak, Mohd Dali, Ahmad, & Yusuf, 2002).

THE IMPLEMENTATION AND PROGRESS OF GOVERNMENT SERIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR THE JAKUN AND SEMELAI.

The Malaysian government, through its Department of Orang Asli Affairs, has implemented several development programmes in line with its vision of an Orang Asli community that enjoys the same level of socio-economic well-being as enjoyed by other communities, with strengthened ethical values and cultural identity. The programmes aim to achieve the following:-

⁶believe that non-human objects have spirits

- To reduce, and subsequently eliminate, poverty among the Orang Asli;
- To improve the quality of life of the Orang Asli;
- To improve the health of the Orang Asli community;
- To cultivate self-confidence, self-reliance and good ethics;
- To protect and promote the art and culture of the Orang Asli;
- To increase their participation in industry and commerce [12].

One of the plans being implemented is the Regroupment Resettlement Plan (RPS⁷) which was started since 1976 and implemented according to phases, budget and implementation abilities. The objective of this program is to increase the number of aboriginal settlements in Malaysia. According to OBA, approximately 17 Regroupment Resettlement Plan involving 14,253 people has taken place, with the plan involving administration centres, infrastructural facilities and *economic project developments*⁸ (OBA, 2002).

The Regroupment Resettlement Plan, however, did not achieve its targets as it failed to achieve all of its objectives mainly due to the slow speed of its implementation. There are two reasons for the slow implementation of the Regroupment Resettlement Plan, covering security and social welfare factors, as well as cost and suitable land factors (OBA, 2002). In order to rectify problems that arises from the Regroupment Settlement Plan, the government introduced a new plan called "Penyusunan Semula Kampung". In this plan, the Orang Asli will be able to get their land titles for the land⁹ given in the economic development programs (Abdul Jamak, Mohd Dali, Ahmad, & Yusuf, 2002).

From the RPS and PSK plans, we could see that physical infrastructures are vigorously erected such as schools, hostels, village clinics, fields, halls, mosques, and entrepreneur business shop lots. Despite the physical development, the Department of Orang Asli Affairs also attempt to develop the spirit and mind of the Orang Asli through seminars, courses and training programmes. In the 70's, the focus was more towards attitude development of the Orang Asli in education, health, economy and social interaction aspects. The new millennium demands a new direction for the Orang Asli, and the Department of Orang Asli Affairs has rolled out a new programme, entitled "Pembukaan Minda" or Mind Exposure.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the demographic profiles of pure¹⁰, mixed-blood¹¹ Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs in Rompin, Pahang.
2. To determine the relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and cultural factors among the Jakun and Semelai.
3. To assess the impact of demographic profiles on entrepreneurial characteristics and cultural factors that may have affected business progress.
4. To evaluate the levels of dependency and improvements made by the government's development projects in terms of the Jakun and Semelais' standard of living and entrepreneurial capabilities.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, achievement and motivation are measured against four different dimensions, which are: demographic profiles, characteristics, cultural impact, and government assistance. The survey contains questions to get the Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs' point of views on certain issues. The

⁷ RPS stands for an acronym of Rancangan Pengumpulan Semula.

⁸ Agricultural subsistence products

⁹ According to En Asri Bin Yusof (Assistant Social Development Officer of Department of Orang Asli Affairs in Rompin) the land given will not exceed 6 acres of economic lots and 1/4 acre house lot.

¹⁰ *Orang Asli Jakun* who are true aborigine with no mixed marriage through their ancestors.

¹¹ *Orang asli Jakun* who had anyone of the ancestors married to the Chinese origin.

information was obtained using structured questionnaires and personal interviews by the authors. With the assistance¹² of an aboriginal guide, the authors went to see the Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs at their settlements or business premises throughout the Rompin District of Pahang for a period of 15 days and managed to meet with 91 respondents. It is estimated about seventy per cent of the *Orang Asli kampungs* or settlements in Rompin were visited by the authors.

As this is a descriptive study, there are obviously many limitations. The main one is that at the time of the authors' visit some respondents are not available at their homes or business premises. Some *kampungs* that had not been visited were too deeply isolated that they could only be reached by river or through thick forests without proper roads.

RESULTS

Analysis Of Surveys

The questionnaires consist of four major sections that are divided into sections A, B, C, and D. The first section is the demographic profile followed by the entrepreneurial characteristic section, cultural factors section and lastly the government assistance section. With the exception of demographic profile, all sections utilise a 5-point likert scale for measurement.

The questionnaires' content and design were determined by consulting tok batin, an official from the Department of Orang Asli Affairs, and several other influential persons to validate the suitability of the questions within the context of the aboriginal environments.

The data were analysed using SPSS 10.0. Among the techniques used are data descriptives, variance analysis, regression, cross tabulation and correlations analysis.

Demographic profiles of pure and mixed-blood Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs.

The general demographic profiles of both Jakun entrepreneurs with that of Semelai are summarised into eight different areas: gender, income, number of working days per month, educational background, religion, registration of business, preferred way of life and involvement in type of business.

Statistically, all eight areas of their profiles can be summarised that both types of Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs belong to the same average age category of 41-50 years old, with male entrepreneurs outnumbering female entrepreneurs. In the findings show that 73 per cent of pure Jakuns and 90 per cent of Semelai have a monthly income of less than RM 1000.00, with a median income of between RM500 – RM1000, but the mixed-blood Jakuns enjoy a better median income of between RM1000 – RM2000 per month.

In the statistic shows that more than 90 per cent of respondents of both Jakuns and Semelais worked at their business between 25 – 30 days monthly. It also shows that most respondents have a low educational background with the majority (73 per cent of the respondents) reaching only primary 6 education or below and three mixed Jakun respondents who have attained higher levels of tertiary education. The majority (90 percent) of the Jakun and Semelai are practising their own ancestors' beliefs - *animism* -and only a few of them are Muslim and Chinese.

It indicates that 25 respondents (55 per cent) of pure Jakun heritage have registered their business licenses, whereas 14 respondents (70 per cent) of Semelais and almost all (92 per cent) mixed-blood Jakuns have registered their business.

About 70 per cent of all respondents preferred doing business and regard being entrepreneurs as a preferred way of life as compared to being farmers, hunters, fishermen or forest harvesters. Only one

¹² Also acted as an interpreter and introducer.

Jakun entrepreneur would prefer to be a hunter, and two stated that they would rather source for forest-related products as preferable way of livelihood.

The majority of Jakun and Semelai, about 56 per cent (or 51 out of 91) are involved in retailing (sundry shops) at their own village or settlement. As many as 15 out of 71 respondents collect and sell agricultural and forest-related products as their sources of income.

Relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and cultural factors of Jakun and Semelai.

Tables 1 and 2 show the results of regression analysis, where heritage (pure blood or mixed blood Jakun and Semelai) is the dependent variable. The ANOVA test of regression analysis between the dependent variable and the independent variables of entrepreneurial characteristics and cultural factors.

Table 2 shows that the type of aborigine (Jakun and Semelai) has no significant value at 0.231 ($p > 0.05$ which is larger than standard deviation of 0.05) with the variables of entrepreneurial characteristics. However in Table 1, the cultural factors variable (0.047) is highly significant in relation to type of aborigine. As can be seen that the variables of “The business is not against my beliefs (0.046)”, “My village people did not prevent me from doing business (0.040)” and “Should there be bad signage /symptoms, I might stop doing business” (0.039) have strong relationship with the type of aborigine.

TABLE 1
ANOVA For Cultural Factors With Type Of Aborigine

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.52	10	1.15	1.98	0.047*
Residual	46.61	80	0.58		
Total	58.13	90			

TABLE 2
ANOVA For Entrepreneurial Characteristics With Type Of Aborigine

	Sum of Sq.	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.43	5	0.887	1.404	0.231
Residual	53.70	85	0.632		
Total	58.13	90			

Ranking on the aspects of Jakun and Semelai Entrepreneurial Characteristics and Cultural Factors.

In tables 3 and 4, ranking was analysed using descriptive statistics for the mean and standard deviation. The interpretation for the mean scores of aspects of characteristics and cultural factors is based on the table below:-

Mean score	Interpretation
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly agree
1.81 – 2.60	Agree
2.61 – 3.40	Maybe agree/disagree
3.41 – 4.20	Disagree
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly disagree

From table 3, Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs are more inclined to “...try to improve and be more successful” (mean score of 1.97) rather than have the attitude that “What I have achieved is good enough and there is no need for improvement” (mean score of 3.06). However, there is no focus on any variable as the standard deviation scores for all are more than one.

From table 4, it can be seen that the Jakun and Semelai are no longer believers of *Pantang-Larang* (the Malay phrase for prohibition), “prohibited days” (mean score of 4.79), “prohibited places” (4.31) and “bad symptoms or signs” (4.31) in doing business. Again, however, the standard deviation scores of more than one illustrate lack of focus.

To the entrepreneurs, doing business is not a barrier to their interests or way of life, and they would still continue being entrepreneurs even if their community or village peers don’t give sanction. The respondents strongly feel that the wife and children should be helping them in the business.

TABLE 3
Entrepreneurial Characteristics

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Nothing has changed since I started my own business	3.02	1.41
I try to improve and be more successful	1.97	1.00
The business does not refrain me from farming/hunting/etc	1.95	1.18
What I have achieved is good enough and there is no need for improvement	3.26	1.36
The business will not stop me from pursuing my own interests	3.97	1.36
I don't care about the competition. I just concentrate on my own business	2.13	1.19

TABLE 4
Cultural factors

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The business is not against my culture/beliefs	1.22	0.66
My village people do not stop/prevent me from being an entrepreneur	1.19	0.68
My village people always encourage me to do business	2.20	1.38
I must take leave from my business to attend social activities	3.36	1.59
Should my village people ask me to stop doing business, I will not do so	1.97	1.24
The business will not stop me from pursuing my own interests	1.96	1.25
I like to have my wife and children assist me in doing business	1.34	0.86
I believe there are days when doing business is prohibited	4.79	0.75
I believe there are places where doing business is prohibited	4.31	1.28
Should there be bad signage/symptoms, I might just stop doing business.	4.47	1.09

The level of dependency and positive impact of the government’s development projects on the Jakun and Semelais’ standard of living and in instilling entrepreneurial capabilities.

From table 5, it can be seen that the government’s development projects have improved the income level of the Jakun and Semelai (mean score of 1.81). Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs are still hoping that the government may continue helping them to improve their standard of living (mean score of 1.49). Meanwhile, less favourable responses are given to the statement “The government always gives attention and assistance” calculate to a mean score of 3.32. For “I always refer to government officials when I have any problems with government assistance” (mean score of 3.27). Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs seemed to be less dependent on their chief villagers or tok batin (4.05).

Table 6 shows that Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs would like to apply for assistance from the government (mean score 3.72) and also wish to go for training and improving their skills if offered by the government (3.31).

TABLE 5

Yes, I received Govt. assistance (37 respondents)		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
The govt scheme helped to increase my income	1.81	1.00
I hope the scheme may continue to help raise my income.	1.49	0.84
I still need govt assistance to increase my income and skills.	1.92	0.89
The govt always gives attention and assistance.	3.32	1.33
I refer to Tok Batin for any problems concerning government assistance	4.05	1.25
I refer to government officials for any problems concerning government assistance	3.27	1.69

TABLE 6

No, I did not receive any assistance (54 respondents)		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
I don't know of any such scheme or programmes run by the govt.	3.52	1.46
I don't like to apply for government assistance	3.72	1.37
I do not wish to join any skill/training courses offered by the govt	3.31	1.49
The govt always encourage me to improve my livelihood	3.65	1.53
The govt always encourage me to attend entrepreneurial training programmes	3.76	1.33

CONCLUSIONS

The research findings provide important new information on the characteristics and cultural development of Orang Asli entrepreneurs to parties who are concerned about their progress.

The findings have insightful implications for government administrators especially those who are attached to institutions that help the government formulate plans and policies to help the Orang Asli.

Significant points that can be drawn from the study are: -

The emergence of mixed-blood Jakun entrepreneurs who are more dynamic than the pure-blood Jakuns and Semelais in terms of entrepreneurial characteristics and interest. Although, mixed and pure Jakuns and Semelais share the same cultural and ethnic beliefs, the mixed blood Jakuns enjoy a better standard of living through their better understanding of business matters. In fact, some mixed Jakuns have improved largely due to inheritance, and taking over the family business. The achievement of mixed Jakuns in business is better than the achievement of the pure Jakuns and Semelais, as can be seen from their higher median income of between RM1,000 – RM2,000, and also from their higher rates of business registrations (24 out of 26 of them own registered businesses). The mixed-blood Jakuns are more serious about pursuing an entrepreneurial track.

Another interesting finding is that even though mixed-blood Jakuns constitute only a small portion of the Orang Asli population, they have achieved more success in the business sense. However, these mixed-bloods are not expanding or diversifying into other areas or territories, even though these places may offer more and better business opportunities. This could be due to the fact that when their Chinese ancestors married Jakuns, they did not bring their family businesses outside of the settlement's perimeters, preferring instead to remain localised to Orang Asli environments. The inter-marriages often occurred for "business practical" reasons to the Chinese, as like obtaining the rights to cultivate agricultural land or obtaining animal trading licenses. The lower cost of marriage to Jakun ladies also made inter-marriage more appealing and furthermore the Jakun body posture and face are almost similar to the Malays.

Another important finding is that the mixed blood Jakun have brought changes as such the aborigines are exposed to their entrepreneurial capabilities in business trading and contacts. New technology such as usage of personal computers and modern machineries are also being introduced by the mixed blood Jakun innovators in the settlements.

Approximately 90 percent of Orang Asli entrepreneurs have an income less than RM2,000.00 per month, 75 per cent of these entrepreneurs earn less than RM1,000 per month, while 40% of them live on less than RM500.00 per month. One of the factors which contributes to the low income problem is the small population of a *kampung* (village). According to the data on population size of the Orang Asli settlement area for the Rompin district (December 2001), the Orang Asli population of a *kampung* is so small in number that the biggest population size is 1,328 people in RPS Bukit Serok and 1,158 in RPS Kedaik.

From the survey conducted we have identified that 56 percent of Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs venture into the small scale retail sector. The businesses conducted by Orang Asli entrepreneurs are very small in scale and relatively uneconomic to be sustained in the long run. Some of the retailers did not survive because of uncollected debt payments from the customers. This is because most of the Orang Asli retailers open the business in the settlement area due to social obligation rather than profit maximisation. Furthermore, with the tiny population size, the retailers have to compete with each other just to get a sliver of the small market. For example, there are 4 small shops in RPS Buluh Nipis, and a population of only 81 families (345 people).

The Orang Asli prefer to venture into small-scale retail businesses (sundry shops), doing odd jobs or taking contract works within their settlement's perimeter. They have the ambition and desire to move into bigger businesses but their business knowledge is insufficient and more importantly, they are not prepared to take the risk to realise their dreams of becoming successful entrepreneurs.

Our study strongly suggests that although the Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs are willing to spend more time working, they still failed to progress further in business. The extra time does not translate to higher income, mainly due to lack of guidance in expanding and diversifying into other businesses or territories.

The Jakun and Semelai have transformed themselves, being less dependent on forest-related products for their livelihood, and replacing this with their own businesses or doing contract work or odd jobs. The government development projects have introduced the aborigines to modern life. However, government initiatives to modernise the aborigines' lives have been implemented too rapidly, causing severe unwanted changes to a formerly primitive lifestyle, and failing to persuade them to accept the benefits of modern living. The Jakun and Semelai refuse to be displaced from their present settlements and are not ready to diversify and expand their businesses to town or any urban areas. The government should extensively pursue programmes that allow for mental exposures of the Orang Asli to modernity, and include all layers of the community, not just the tok batins. Once the Orang Asli can appreciate the benefits of modern life, they will be more ready to compete with others and establish an independent society.

The Jakun and Semelai still depending more help and assistance in terms of monetary and skill training from government agencies to ensure their business progress. Government assistance should not only be targeted to established entrepreneurs and tok batins but also be extended to all interested Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs of smaller rank. More exposures through entrepreneurial trainings and thinking seminars should be stressed as the Orang Aslis are lowly educated people.

Most tok batins are poorly educated themselves and hence the messages and training given by the government could not be properly delivered to the people including the entrepreneurs. The strong relationship between entrepreneurial attitudes and motivations and educational levels highlights the importance of education. The Jakun and Semelai have the ambition to move into bigger business but do not have the mental aptitude and education background to help them achieve their desires.

Nowadays, Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs are changed people; they are no longer influenced by superstitious beliefs in their daily business dealings. For their daily livelihood, they have set aside some cultural values, such as ignoring orders from their peers or heads to stop doing business. A few of the older, pure Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs still have the superstitious beliefs of prohibition (*pantang larang*) on days, places and signs but the younger and new generation of Jakuns and Semelais refuse to be influenced by such beliefs.

On further examination of the sample of Jakun and Semelai entrepreneurs, it was found that they have strong desires to improve themselves, and as such are willing to participate or apply for any government projects as long as it benefits their livelihood and hence, standard of living. Nowadays they are more willing to mix with outside people or other races especially Chinese and Malays when it comes to business dealings or working odd jobs with other races employers to earn a living.

Repeated exposures to the government's previous programmes have impacted the Orang Asli to venture into entrepreneurship. Their awareness of the present economic environment has increased their willingness to readily accept change.

Since this is one of the few studies about entrepreneurship among Malaysian aborigines, it is hoped that these results will form the basis for further research to enable more to be made known about entrepreneurship and the aborigines in Malaysia.

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