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Quality of Life Among the Penan Community at Murum Resettlement Site (MRS), Belaga Sarawak

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Abstract: The main goal of development in a country is to provide a better quality of life for all levels of society. A quality life is determined by several factors, such as home ownership, safety, health, education, amenities and many more. All these affect people's well-being and satisfaction in life. It is the same for the Penan community at Murum Resettlement Site (MRS) in Belaga District, Sarawak which is affected by the construction of the Murum Dam. The relocation of the Penans to MRS was to ensure they have a better life because the resettlement area is provided with all kinds of facilities and infrastructure. After almost eight years, there has been no study on the quality of life of the relocated Penans at this resettlement area Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the quality of life of the affected Penans at MRS. This study was conducted from December 2020 to February 2021 at MRS using quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected using questionnaires, in-depth interviews and field observations. A total number of 269 household heads and six key informants were interviewed. SPSS software was used to analyze the data collected. The findings indicated that there were positive changes in the quality of life of those who were affected. However, elements such as education, health, road system and land compensation still need to be looked into and improved. Their views and involvement in development programmes should be enhanced. Overall, the construction of Murum Dam that caused resettlement of the Penans managed to improve their quality of life.

Keywords: Penan, Quality of Life, Resettlement Site, Belaga, Sarawak

1. Introduction

Quality of life refers to the overall level of satisfaction with various aspects of one's life (Johnston et al., 2011). It is a standard level consisting of the expectation of the individual or society for a good life. This is influenced by the values, goals and sociocultural contexts where the individual resides. Quality of life is a subjective, multidimensional concept that defines standard levels for emotional, physical, material and social well-being (Costanza et al., 2007). The quality of social life serves as a reference by which individuals or groups of society can measure different indicators in their lives. This indicates that whether an individual has reached the desired standard of living is different. These indicators provide satisfaction and contribute to a person's subjective well-being and refer to life satisfaction. Besides being used to determine the quality of social life, the indicators are also catalysts for national progress (Peterson & Malhotra, 2000). This means that every resident has the right to obtain and enjoy a good and necessary quality of life. Veenhoven (2006) stated that quality of life is associated with joy. Joy can be defined as the degree to which an individual enjoys the life he or she is living or the degree to which an individual views his or her entire life positively.

Moser (1970) defined the quality of life as getting healthy food, having a good home, satisfaction with the job, having time for leisure activities and also being safe from any threats. According to a study conducted by (Liu, 1976) on metropolitan society in the United States, the measurement of quality of life includes five major components, namely politics, economy, social setting, health and education. Whereas Boyer & Savageau (1981), they have emphasized the important aspects of quality of life that include nine major components, namely the state of one's health, the environment,

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housing, crime, transportation, recreation, arts, economics and education. According to this principle, high quality of life is very important in a country because it is one of the most effective indicators of a community's level of development. Quality of life is also a significant factor in determining whether a country's citizens have a comfortable standard of living. Although various approaches and assessments are used to measure quality of life. Overall, the level of quality of life is considered perfect when it brings joy in life.

The Malaysian Department of Statistics uses several basic indicators to measure the population's quality of life and well-being at the national and state levels. Key indicators used to measure the quality of life include population size, housing, health, education, employment, welfare services, public safety, communication and recreation (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2019). Other government agencies have conducted studies to measure the quality of social life and well-being of the population, such as the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), Town and Country Planning Department of Peninsular Malaysia (JPBD) and the Women, Family and Community Development Board (LPPKN). Therefore, the quality-of-life index and well-being of the population can be seen through the Malaysian Quality of Life Report 1999-2011 (MQLI), Happiness Index of Malaysian and Sustainable Cities through MURNIet 2.0 by JPBD and Family Well-being Index (IKK) by LPPKN.

1.1 Resettlement Programme and Quality of Life

Resettlement is a programme whereby a community is being relocated from one place to another to make way for large-scale development projects (Ogaboh, 2010) explained that resettlement is a big scale relocation of a community from their place of origin to a new site whether willingly or by force. Resettlement can be done spontaneously or with proper planning from and original residential area to a new place where the community need to get used to the biophysical, social and new administrative system. The main purpose of resettlement is to gather the population affected by any development project on a large scale. Resettlement was also built with the aim of structuring the community to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of its people. This is because resettlement is a well-planned settlement and provides amenities such as comfortable housing, schools, 24-hour electricity, and safe drinking water.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This paper investigates the quality of life of the resettled Penans at Metalun and Tegulang resettlement areas. The resettlements were built to place the community affected by the construction of Murum Dam, Belaga. The socio-economic survey was conducted involving communities from four affected villages, namely Long Menapa, Long Singu, Long Luar and Long Tangau, all of who were resettled at Metalun Resettlement Site. Two villages represented Tegulang Resettlement Site, namely Long Wat and Long Malim. The specific objectives of this paper are;

a. To evaluate the socio-economic conditions of Penans at MRS.
b. To ascertain the satisfaction level of Penans toward the resettlement programme.
c. To provide possible rectifications for better income and quality lifestyle of Penan community at MRS.

2. Literature Review

The Penan is one of 28 indigenous communities residing in Sarawak. Penan is in the same group as Dayak but categorized as Orang Ulu together with Kayan, Kenyah, Kelabit and many more. This is as spelled out in Article 161 (A) Clause 6 (a) and Clause 7 in the Federal Constitution of Malaysia and Section 3 Sarawak Interpretive Ordinance (Chapter 61, 2005) that recorded the Penan as a native race and people of Sarawak. According to the Year Book of Statistic Sarawak (2015), the Penan population was estimated to be about 12,485 people. A majority of them resides around Mt. Mulu, Ulu Baram, Tutoh Apoh, Patah, Pelutan, Hulu Akah, Selaan, Baram valley to the border of Brunei and Hulu Sungai Limbang (Ahmad, 1993) Sarawak.

In Bintulu and Kapit divisions, they can be found along Balui, Belaga, Murum and Linau rivers (Langub, 1975). The main economic activities of the Penans are farming, collect forest produce, fishing and hunting. Besides that, some of them also work at logging camps and oil palm plantations. The economic activities and occupation choices depend on their abilities and skills. Other factors include the development of a certain area and job opportunities that are being offered to them.

The majority of the Penans reside in longhouses, much like the other natives in Sarawak. Their longhouses are simple and usually do not have basic necessities like continuous clean water supply, 24-hr power supply, or facilities like clinic, school and good road system. The living condition contributes to the limited number of educated Penans and poor healthcare and makes it difficult for them to get out of poverty.

2.1 Resettlement and Quality of Life Study's

Quality of life studies on the resettlers has garnered much interest among researchers. In Africa, a study conducted by (Zeleke et al., 2008) found that resettlement programmes in Ethiopia had positive effects on resettlers, such as improved income status and strengthened social capital. However, there were also negative issues, such as lack of health services, lack of clean water supply and unclear land ownership by resettlers. The same has happened in implementing of resettlement programmes in Ghana, as seen in a study conducted by Ackuayi et al. (2014). They found that the

resettlement programmes had increased population income, improved infrastructure facilities and shifted agricultural activities to manufacturing. On the other hand, a study conducted by (Bereket, 2020) in Ethiopia found that negative impacts, such as job loss, social problems, marginalization and food insecurity have increased after the resettlement, indicating that the displaced people are underprivileged.

In Asian countries, a study conducted by (Tong et al., 2020) found that resettlement projects have had a positive impact on resettlers in China. The resettlement programme has improved the living standards whereby the condition of the houses as well as the infrastructure facilities available in the resettlement area have improved their quality of life. In addition, job opportunities and income of the resettlers also increased. In the Philippines, a study conducted by Wokekoro (2015) on resettlement at Marine Base found that the majority of residents were unhappy with their residential quality of life. Besides, a study in disaster-induced resettlement sites in Cagayan de Oro concluded that the residents were dissatisfied with the housing infrastructure (Carrasco et al., 2016). The residents have made extension because of the lack of service areas for cooking, storage and laundry (Carrasco et al., 2017). A study conducted along the Mekong River basin found that a more detailed understanding of the residents' adaptation process is crucial in rebuilding and improving their livelihood affected by development projects (Kura et al., 2017).

In Malaysia, a study on the impact of resettlement of Orang Asli located in Cameron Highlands, Pahang, has been conducted by Ali (2016). The results of the study found that there is an improvement in the quality of life of the Orang Asli at the resettlement site. The community's satisfaction level has increased compared to when living at their previous village dwellings. Positive findings were also obtained by (Well & Iman, 2019) on the study of the impacts of Ghana Resettlement and Integrated Development Programme in Sabah. The residents were satisfied with the easy access to infrastructure and increased educational opportunities. In addition, studies by Hassan et al. (2016) and Lee et al. (2018) discovered that the Orang Asli were satisfied with the facilities provided compared with their previous residences. Their quality of life increased with healthcare access, better income source and education opportunity after the relocation.

Nevertheless, there are also studies with negative impacts on the quality of life of resettlers (Abdullah et al., 2018) found that they were dissatisfied with the resettlement project in terms of livelihood, traditional lifestyle and cultural needs (Ab Wahid et al., 2019) found that the resettlement project failed to provide quality of life for resettlers at the Resettlement Project in Pahang. Findings indicated that this project was initiated without considering the traditional lifestyle of the Orang Asli, who still insisted on practicing their old lifestyle. Their quality of life may be enhanced by providing suitable and simple farming activities to occupy them with their customary activities.

In Sarawak, Lyndon et al. (2013) made a study on the views of the Penan community at the Long Urun in Belaga about the quality of life. They found that this community viewed the accessibility of facilities and infrastructure as the most vital, followed by the resources and environment, physical and psychological well-being, family relationships, participation, and capability. Besides, Jehom (2017) found that the construction of the Bakun Mega dam project has affected the Kenyah-Badeng community in Sg. Asap, Sarawak. The community had to move to the resettlement area due to the construction of the Bakun Dam. The resettlement has made it difficult for them to carry out daily activities, such as collecting forest produce and hunting, having to change their activities to agriculture. The situation caused most of the male residents to choose not to live in the resettlement areas as they worked as fishermen and hunted wild animals. Meanwhile, the residents living in the resettlement area have chosen to farm as their new daily activity. Ahsan et al. (2016) also found the same findings for communities at Resettlement Site at Sg. Asap affected by the construction of Bakun Dam.

Overall, the quality of life in resettlement areas depends on various factors that affect their daily lives. Positive impacts resulting from resettlement programmes will contribute to a better quality of life while the negative impacts will cause the affected population to be dissatisfied. Good quality of life will make its people happy and, in turn produce a prosperous society. The community's quality of life implicates the country's development.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Site

This study was conducted at two Penan resettlement sites, namely Tegulang Resettlement Site and Metalun Resettlement Site. The resettlement near Tegulang River is approximately 60 kilometres whereas the one near Metalun River is about 130 kilometres from the Bintulu-Bakun road. Fig. 1 shows the locality of the study areas on the Sarawak map.



Fig. 1: Circle Shows the Locality of the Study Area at Metalun and Tegulang Resettlements Site, Belaga Sarawak

3.2 Data Collections and Analysis

This study applies various data collection techniques. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted to grasp more accurate findings for more informative findings. Several physical observations and in-depth interviews were carried out at the settlement area. This was conducted to determine the problem and issues of the area. The site visits involved close physical observation of the affected location on the ground and the land use within close proximity on various indicators such as the physical conditions, infrastructure, economic activities and socio-culture. A casual conversation with affected families was carried out to retrieve preliminary responses with regard to the new resettlement area. Discussions with several leaders were executed to reconfirm information assembled at the preliminary study. In addition, the respondent was also asked about the current state of resettlement houses, surrounding areas, daily activities, and amenities provided by the government. The targets in this survey are 269 respondents who were resettled from six villages, namely, Long Luar, Long Menapa, Long Tangau, Long Singu, Long Waat and Long Malim. Table 1 shows the number of respondents from six villages was able to be surveyed and analyzed. They were the Heads of Households of each family.

Table 1: Number of Respondents from Six Villages

Resettlement Site	Village	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Metalun	Long Menapa	32	11.896
	Long Luar	45	16.729
	Long Tangau	28	10.409
	Long Singu	51	18.959
Tegulang	Long Malim	41	15.242
	Long Wat	72	26.766
	Total	269	100

4. Findings

4.1 Sociodemographic

Table 4 shows the sociodemographic profile of respondents in Tegulang and Metalun interviewed through the questionnaire survey. The profiles of Penans in the study area shows that almost 48% are aged between 25-34 years old. This age group was followed by those between 35-44 years old (36.4%), 45-54 (8.9%), 15-24 (5.6%), while the least was (1.1%) from those between 55-64 years old. Out of the total number of respondents, 96.3% were men, while the rest were women. Most of the respondents, 97%, were married. Single respondents made up 1.9%, while the rest were divorcees. It was also found that all 100% (269) respondents are Christians.

In terms of education, most of the respondents have no formal education, which is 83.3%. 14.1% of the respondents have primary level education while only 2.6% have been to secondary school. None of the respondents has been to college or university. This proves that the field of education of the Penan community is very far behind. Most of the respondents did not get education because the school was once very far from their homes. This makes it difficult for them to attend primary or secondary school. For their main job background, 43.1% were self-employed, followed by 33.5% who work in oil palm plantations, 10.4% work in other fields, while 6.3% work with logging companies. A total of 2.6% were government servants. Self-employment is what it means to be a farmer, a gatherer of forest products. This occurs in both settlements, either reinforced or Metalun. For those in Tegulang settlements, the majority of respondents worked in nearby oil palm plantations as labourers and drivers of farm machinery. Meanwhile, for those who are in the stronghold, most of them are self-employed and only a small number work in logging, construction and other companies.

For the income aspect, a total of 44.2% of respondents has monthly incomes that is RM500 and below, while 38.7% of respondents earn between RM501-RM1000 monthly. Besides that, 14.5% respondents earned between RM1001-RM1,500 while 2.6% respondents earn between RM1,501-RM2,000. None of them earns RM2,000 and above. The above statement proves that most Penans are still in poverty. Practicing traditional economics such as collecting forest products as a source of income is a factor to the poverty. Forest resources are increasingly limited, while some of the resources obtained are used for self-employment. In addition, agricultural activities are also not very helpful in increasing the income of the Penan community because agricultural activities are carried out as a source of livelihood.

Table 2: Sociodemographic Profile of the Respondents

Demography	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	15-24 years	15	5.600
	25-34 years	129	48.000

	35-44 years	98	36.400
	45-54 years	24	8.900
	55-64 years	3	1.100
Gender	Male	240	89.200
	Female	29	10.800
Marital status	Single	5	1.900
	Married	261	97.000
	Divorced	3	1.100
Religion	Christian	269	100.00
	Muslim	0	0.000
	Pagan	0	0.000
	Others	0	0.000
Education level	No formal education	224	83.300
	Primary school	38	14.100
	Secondary school	7	2.600
	College/University	0	0.000
Main Job	Self-employed	126	43.100
	Working at timber company	18	6.300
	Working at plantation company	90	33.500
	Government servant	7	2.600
	Others	28	10.400
Monthly income	RM500 and below	104	38.700
	RM501-RM1,000	119	44.200
	RM1,001-RM1,500	39	14.500
	RM1,501-RM2,000	7	2.600
	RM2,000 and above	0	0.000

4.2 Ownership of durable items

Table 3 shows the sociodemographic profile of respondents in Tegulang and Metalun interviewed through the questionnaire survey.

Table 3: Ownership of Durable Items of the Respondents

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
House	216	80.297
Handphone	186	69.145
Motorcycle	195	72.490
Longboat	111	41.264
Outboard Engine	86	31.970
Refrigerator	65	24.164
Television	70	26.022
Chainsaw	44	16.357
Car	35	13.011
Washing Machine	33	12.268
Bicycle	2	0.743
Computer	0	0.000

Table 3, it is found that 80.29 % of the respondents are the owners of the house they live in now, while 19.71 % stated that the house belongs to their father or father-in-law. The majority of respondents stated that they own motorcycles (72.49%) and mobile phones (69.15%). Motorcycles are an essential item because they are the main transportation for them to move from one place to another. Respondents also stated that they needed a mobile phone to communicate with outsiders. In addition, mobile phones are also important for them to get information from the outside world because broadcasts such as radio and TV are not clear in their area.

Table 3 shows the ownership of durable items of respondents, namely longboat (41.26%), outboard engine (31.97%), television (26.02%), refrigerator (24.16%), chainsaw (16.36%), car (13.01%), washing machine (12.26%) and bicycle (0.74%). None of the respondents owns a computer based on the study.

4.3 Infrastructure Facilities Perception

Table 4 shows the sociodemographic profile of respondents in Tegulang and Metalun interviewed through the questionnaire survey.

Table 4: Respondent's Perception Towards Infrastructure Facilities at Resettlement Site

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am satisfied with the accommodation provided in resettlement site	3.650	0.750
I am satisfied with the water resources in resettlement site	2.910	1.047
I am satisfied with electricity supply in resettlement site	3.300	0.835
I am satisfied with road accessibility in resettlement site	2.040	1.116
I am satisfied Religious Building provided in resettlement site	3.780	0.662
I am satisfied with Sports facilities provided in resettlement site	3.490	0.741

Table 4 shows respondent's perception towards infrastructure facilities at the resettlement site. The highest mean score is for religious building at 3.78. This is followed by the mean score for accommodation at 3.65, sports facilities at 3.49, electricity supply (3.30) and water supply (2.91). The lowest mean score is for road accessibility at 2.04.

4.4 Education

Table 5 shows the satisfaction level of respondents toward education provision within their resettlement site. The majority of respondents are satisfied with the state of education in their settlement site, with the average mean score for scholarship (3.81), followed by education opportunities (3.48), School condition (3.47), Level of awareness (3.42) and school location with 3.12. Satisfaction with education owned by the local community got the lowest mean score with 3.04.

Table 5: Satisfaction of Respondents Toward Education Provision at Resettlement Site

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
The school in resettlement area are in excellent condition	3.470	0.770
The location of the school is a short distance away and easy to access	3.120	1.019
The opportunities for getting education have increased tremendously	3.480	0.726
The level of awareness on the importance of education has increased significantly	3.420	0.727
I am very satisfied with the level of education in my community	3.040	0.865
Scholarships	3.810	0.573

4.5 Health Services

Table 6 shows the perception of respondents toward health services provided. A total of 98.9% of the respondents agreed that the village clinic is their top choice to get medical attention. 87.8% of the respondents felt comfortable when seeking medical advice at the village clinic. 98.1% of the respondents also agreed that the frequency of visit by medical officers has increased to their area.

Table 6: Respondent's Perception Towards Health Services

Questions	Yes	No	Not Sure
	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
Do you or your household members go to the village clinic for medical services?	98.900	1.100	0.000
Do you or your household members go to village clinic first to get medical attention/medication?	98.900	1.100	0.000
Do you feel comfortable at the village clinic?	87.800	6.300	5.900
Do you think that the frequency of visits to your area by the medical personnel is higher now	98.100	1.900	0.000

4.6 Communication Facilities

Table 7 shows the respondent's perception towards media accessibility within their resettlement site. Internet connectivity shows the highest mean score at 3.04, followed by radio reception (2.91) and television reception at 2.87. The lowest mean score was for newspaper availability at 2.54.

Table 7: Satisfaction of Respondents Towards Communication Accessibility at Resettlement Site

Communication Accessibility	Mean	Std. Deviation
Radio	2.910	0.801
Television	2.870	0.876
Newspaper	2.540	0.643
Internet connectivity	3.040	0.880

4.7 Safety Condition at Resettlement Site

Table 8 shows the respondent's perception of the safety condition within their resettlement site. Based on results in Table 8, safety concerns like crime, social problems and disease are not the main issues. Mean scores for every issue measured are quite low. However, there is one high mean score for the issue of wide-scale forest clearing that caused the community to lose food sources. Thus, the Penans felt that their food security was at stake due to the loss of forest resources, e.g., wild meat, fish, herbs etc.

Table 8: Respondent's Perception Towards Safety Condition at Resettlement Site

Issues	Mean	Std. Deviation
Increasing accessibility to your area has cause social problem	2.270	0.689
Wide-scale forest clearing has caused your community to lose food sources	3.600	1.207
The presence of outsider workers has caused transmission of contagious diseases	2.170	0.697
Presence of outsider workers at their area increase Crime rate	2.290	0.707
Increasing of Inter-marriage with outsiders has increased crime rate	2.260	0.882

4.8 Expectation Toward Development Programmes to Penan Community at Resettlement Site

Table 9 shows the perception of respondents towards development programmes that can improve their socio-economic standards and quality of life. A majority of them agreed that they wanted to be involved in commodity plantation, fish farming, livestock farming, tourism industry and job opportunities in different sectors. The mean score for commodity plantation is the highest at 3.98, followed by tourism industry (3.92), fish farming (3.88), other job opportunities (3.67) and livestock farming (3.41).

Table 9: Respondent's Perception Towards Development Programmes at Resettlement Site

Development Programmes	Mean	Std. Deviation
Involve community in commodity plantation	3.980	0.911
Involve community in fish farming	3.880	0.790
Involve community in livestock farming	3.410	0.842
Involve community in tourism industry	3.920	0.790
Create job opportunities in different sectors	3.670	0.778

5. Discussion

Based on the results, the majority of respondents in the Metalun and Tegulang resettlement sites are satisfied with their living conditions. The house provided is deemed very comfortable and is supplied with water and 24-hour electricity. This is different from their previous residences, where their electricity sources were so limited where they relied on the generator to generate electricity, too costly for them. With the 24-hour electricity now, they are free to get more work done even in the evening without a time limit.

The availability of primary schools in the settlement sites also provides an educational opportunity for Penan children. Transportation and distance issues previously experienced are no longer problems now. Previously, they depended on transportation from the logging company to and from school because the primary school is too far away. This opportunity is also hoped to reduce school dropouts while increasing the number of children attending school.

Medical clinics at Belaga and Sungai Asap provide good and comfortable services, according to the Penans. They now prefer to seek treatment and get medicine more than before. Health education from various parties such as NGOs, SEB and others have raised awareness among the Penans about health issues. In addition, medical checkups from Belaga medical officers have also become more frequent to their resettlements. All this has proven that the health condition of the Penans has improved since the relocation.

Recreation facilities, such as football fields and futsal courts, are also provided in all the villages within the resettlement area. These fields and courts were built to meet the recreational needs of the resettlers. Apart from that, several sports tournaments have also been held at these fields to provide space for young Penans to show off their skills as well as foster their ties among different villages.

The existing road facilities have also made the connection with the outside world easier and safer. This connectivity indirectly exposed them to the modern way of living more quickly. The roads are also the main route for the Penan community to go to work, school, clinic and daily activities that improve their quality of life.

Other improvements observed at the resettlement include the way the Penans were now able to use mass media to get news from the outside world. This is because internet accessibility has been provided in almost all villages in the settlement area. In addition, they can use mobile phones to communicate with one another. Previously, they were cut off from the outside world due to very limited communication access. Most of the previous information and news was only obtained through local leaders as well as individuals who were dealing with the outside world. This is also because Malaysian television channels and radio cannot be accessed in their settlement areas even now.

In terms of safety, the aspect of security that is often associated with the Penans is related to forest clearing. This is because the forest is a source for them to get food supplies, such as meat, vegetables, fruits, fish and other forest produces. Forests are a place for them to generate income, for example, bamboo shoots, rattan, wild ferns etc. Therefore, the majority of respondents agreed that big scale clearings pose a huge threat to them. The presence of outsiders at their area, whether for work, marriage or other reasons, is not seen as a threat to them. They are open to mingling and interacting with outsiders as long as they respect the community and do not threaten their safety.

Based on the above-stated results and discussion, the life of the Penan community has seen many changes and improvements. However, the majority of the population still live in poverty with an income of around RM 500 per month. They still rely on natural resources to generate income. Working in the economic sectors such as oil palm, construction, logging and others also do not help them much to get out of the grip of poverty. This is because their involvement in this sector is limited to labour work which offers low wages.

Therefore, they are very hopeful that commercially-oriented projects can be introduced to them. They showed excitement and agreed to participate if they are given the opportunity to get involved in projects such as oil palm plantation, fish farming, animal farming, tourism etc. They believe that the projects can improve their socio-economic condition. The Penan are hardworking and are willing to venture into new fields (Selvaratnam, 2015). Besides that, they still hope to be given the opportunity to work in the government or private sectors and to be a part of the country's development.

6. Conclusion

The majority of Penans housed in the resettlement areas feel satisfied with their standard of living after relocation. Many of the facilities they enjoy now were not available in their previous residences. These facilities are beneficial and have indirectly improved the quality of life of the Penans.

However, there are certain things that did not meet the Penans' satisfaction. The issue is related to the poor road condition in their resettlement area. The road is often impassable, very slippery and dangerous for them when it rains. This situation made it difficult for them to move about for daily activities, such as working, sending children to school and many more.

The lack of health clinics in their resettlement area is the second issue that is unsatisfactory for them. Although they can enjoy good health services, they still hoped that clinics could be developed in their resettlement area. The availability of clinics in the resettlement area will make it easier for them to obtain health services. There is no need for them to travel six hours to and from to Belaga or Sungai Asap if they want to get health services. This is because these two clinics are very far from the resettlement area.

The third issue that caused unhappiness to the Penan community in the resettlement area is related to the ownership of land that has been allocated to them in exchange for their homeland. The land assigned to them remains vague, both on the ground and in writing. This made it difficult for them to convert into agricultural lands. Disputes often occur among them related to the issue.

In conclusion, the quality of life of the Penans in the resettlement area sees improvement from their pre-relocation lives. They are already beginning to adapt to the environment as well as their new life. They have begun to enjoy the benefits of development that have long been experienced by other races in Malaysia. Support from various parties is

needed to further develop the Penan community. This is in line with the Sustainable Development Policy, which emphasizes that nobody should be left out of the development process.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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