

Perceptions towards Government Delivery System: A Case Study in Kudat, Sabah

Dullah Mulok ^{a*}, Mori Kogid ^b and Kasim Mansur ^c

^{a, b, c}Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy, Universiti Malaysia Sabah

Abstract

Poverty eradication project is an effort by the Sabah government to help the poor. This effort is multifaceted, first; to eradicate poverty and second to raise per capita income of the rural community so that Malaysia can achieve the Vision 2020 with zero hardcore poor. The prerequisite for this objective that can be achieved is to have a good and reliable delivery system of the poverty eradication programme. The aim of this paper is to explore respondents' perception particularly the hardcore poor towards government project delivery system in Kudat. The study found that, overall; respondents' perceptions towards the delivery system of poverty eradication projects in the three areas are positive and encouraging. In addition majority of the respondents also agree that poverty eradication projects have benefited them. They also perceived that poverty eradication projects tend to provide new job opportunities for the rural population and increase income for project participants. However there are limitations to this study particularly in terms of the areas covered. The results cannot be generalized to all regions or districts in Sabah due to several reasons such as different demography, characteristics, ethnic groups and so forth.

Keywords: poverty, perception, kudat, less-developed, Sabah

1 Introduction

Poverty has become one of the main agenda in Malaysia. The problems of poverty have been present in the country since independence. Even though the level of poverty in the country is decreasing, the number of poor people is still large in several states, particularly in Sabah. Sabah is categorized as less-developed state together with Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, Perlis and Pahang, lagging behind other states in Malaysia. Since independence, Sabah has taken and implemented several programme and projects for the eradication of poverty. A large amount of resources have been invested for that purpose. Millions of dollars and much effort have been spent to solve the problem. Despite the drastic changes and improvement in the economic activities, the problems of poverty are still the main concerns in Sabah. Issues relating to limitations and inefficiencies in the project delivery systems in Sabah have raised much concern from various parties.

Sabah, which is the second largest state in Malaysia consists of five zones, namely, Tawau, Sandakan, Kudat, the West Coast and the Interior. This study will specifically focus on zone of Kudat. The purpose of this paper is to explore respondents' perception particularly the hardcore poor towards government project delivery system in Kudat (including Matunggong and Banggi Island), Sabah, Malaysia. This paper is structured as follows. The following section outlines the data sources and methodology for this study. The next section outlines the empirical analysis, as well as presenting the results obtained. The last section summarises our main conclusion.

2 Data and Method

The poverty-related studies that have been undertaken in the past years are numerous. There are many studies done focusing on poverty and poverty alleviation. However studies on assessment or evaluating public delivery system are scarce.

There are constant feedback from the public pointing to inefficiency, wastage, poor governance standards, and other negative traits of various public sector bodies, and recurring calls for improvement made by leaders from all sectors. However, little has been accomplished to-date in terms of improving speed, efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service as a whole. This limitations encourage for this particular study in Kudat, Sabah.

The study uses two sources of data to identify key problems, establish goals and formulation strategies from key stakeholders' perspectives: (1) primary data targeting the hardcore poor, and (2) secondary data, from government documents. The study collects information from the list of the hardcore poor provided by the district office of Kudat. The study employed a purposive sampling technique. A total of 711 respondents which are hard-core poor are selected for this study. The instruments of study involve interview using structured questionnaires. The discussion in this study will emphasize only on the perception of respondents towards the government delivery system of poverty eradication projects.

3 Empirical Results

Respondents Perception towards the Delivery system of Poverty Eradication Projects

Poverty eradication project is an effort by the Sabah government to help the poor. This effort is not only to eradicate poverty but also to raise income as a whole for all Malaysians so that Malaysia can achieve the Vision 2020 with zero hardcore poor.

Table 1 shows the perception of respondents towards development officers who are responsible for poverty eradication project in their area. Majority of the respondents agreed that development officers usually discuss in advance with them before any project is undertaken. From a total of 187 respondents who are involved in development projects, 126 respondents (17.7%) agreed and only 61 respondents (8.6%) did not agree. One respondent did not respond to this question. Some of the reasons as to why the respondents disagreed include lack of information on the project, they are not sure and did not apply for any project.

Table 1 Respondents' perception towards project officers

Respondent Perception: Officers discuss in advance	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	126	17.7
No	61	8.6
Total	187	26.3
Not related (not involve with any projects)	524	73.7
Total	711	100.0

On project monitoring, 121 respondents (17%) agreed that their projects were monitored by the respective officers after the projects were implemented (Table 2) and only 66 respondents (9.3%) reported no monitoring of projects were conducted by those officers. There are several reasons for lack of monitoring in the project site such as; the project is new, officers came only to take payment and meeting with project leader was usually done in the district office.

Table 2 Project monitoring

Whether project monitoring was conducted	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	121	17.0
No	66	9.3
Not involved with any project	524	73.7
Total	711	100.0

Table 3 shows respondents' views on the effectiveness of poverty eradication projects that they have been involved. The results indicate that in general, overall respondents agreed that the projects are effective. Out of 187 respondents involved in the projects, 128 respondents or 68 per cent agreed that the process of application of project is effective (based on three levels: somewhat effective, effective, and most effective). On the effectiveness of advisory aid services, 137 respondents or (73%) agreed that there are effective, 147 respondents or (78%) agreed that matters pertaining to projects are transparent, 119 respondents or (63%) and 118 respondents

(63%) respectively agreed that the monitoring method and marketing system are effective. In addition, 110 respondents or (59%) percent agreed that the response towards their complaints are fast and effective. Figure 1 simply shows the bar chart based on table 3.

Table 3 Respondents opinion on effectiveness of poverty eradication

Measures of effectiveness	Not very effective		Not effective		Somewhat effective		Effective		Very effective		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Project application process	13	1.8	44	6.2	57	8.0	63	8.9	8	1.1	185	26.0
Assistance/aid received	11	1.5	43	6.0	58	8.2	68	9.6	5	.7	185	26.0
Advisory service aid/ assistance	11	1.5	37	5.2	42	5.9	89	12.5	6	.8	185	26.0
Transparency	15	2.1	22	3.1	57	8.0	79	11.1	11	1.5	184	25.9
Monitoring method	22	3.1	43	6.0	35	4.9	72	10.1	12	1.7	184	25.9
Marketing system	18	2.5	46	6.5	68	9.6	41	5.8	9	1.3	182	25.6
Speed of response of complain	20	2.8	51	7.2	73	10.3	30	4.2	7	1.0	181	25.5

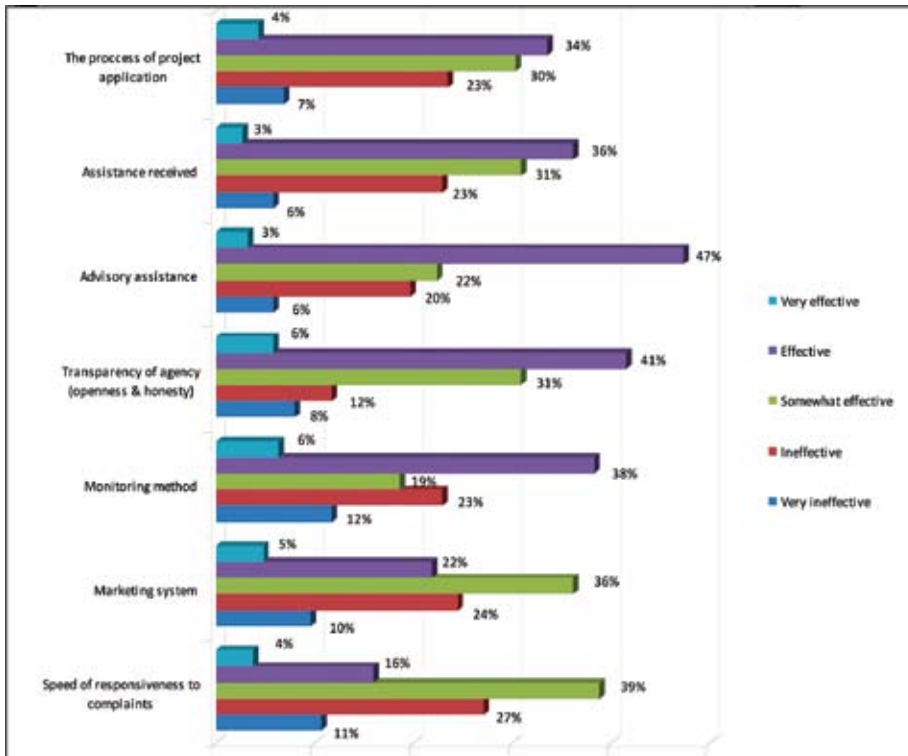


Figure 1 Respondents opinion on effectiveness of delivery system

Table 4 shows the respondents' general view on the benefit of poverty eradication projects in their area. Majority of the respondents also agree that poverty eradication projects have benefited them. They also perceived that poverty eradication projects tend to provide new job opportunities for the rural population and increase income for project participants. From a total of 711 respondents, 655 (92%) agreed (based on the scale ranging from (somewhat agree + agree + strongly agree) that poverty eradication projects provide new job opportunities, while 673 respondents (95%) agreed that this projects can increase the household income of the project participants.

Table 4 Respondents' views on benefits of poverty eradication projects

Types of benefit	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Somewhat agree		Agree		Strongly agree		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Provide new job opportunities	8	1.1	41	5.8	61	8.6	318	44.7	276	38.8	704	99.0
Increase income of participants	2	.3	31	4.4	63	8.9	333	46.8	277	39.0	706	99.3

4 Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, overall, we can say that respondents' perceptions towards the delivery system of poverty eradication projects in Kudat are positive and encouraging.

The results indicate that overall, the respondents agreed that the projects are effective. Out of 188 respondents involved in the projects, 128 respondents or 68 per cent somewhat agreed that the process of application of project is effective (based on three levels: somewhat effective, effective, and most effective). 131 respondents (70%) agreed that the aid given were effective. On the effectiveness of advisory aid services, transparency of projects, monitoring method and marketing system, 137 respondents (73%), 147 respondents (78%), 119 (63%) and 118 respondents (63%) agreed respectively that they have been effective. In addition, 110 respondents (59%) agreed that their response towards complaints are fast and effective.

In addition majority of the respondents also agree that poverty eradication projects have benefited them. They also perceived that poverty eradication projects tend to provide new job opportunities for the rural population and increase income for project participants. From a total of 711 respondents, 655 (92%) agreed (based on the scale ranging from (somewhat agree + agree + strongly agree) that poverty eradication projects provide new job opportunities, while 673 respondents (95%) agreed that this projects can increase the household income of the project participants.

Thus, the findings based on the responses received show that problems related to the delivery system in poverty eradication projects are not serious. Only a few were not satisfied with the delivery system in their area. Nevertheless, the study also indicates that there is a need for improvement and transparency in the implementation process of the delivery system mainly in the application process, advisory services and marketing to ensure that the overall objectives of the project are achieved.

This study indicates that overall the perception among respondents is that there is no problem with the project delivery system in Kudat. However there are limitations to this study particularly in terms of areas covered. The result cannot be generalized to all region or district in Sabah due to several reasons such as different demography, characteristic, ethnic groups, etc. Furthermore this study focuses only on the demand side. A comprehensive study which covers both supply and demand are needed in future to get a clear picture of the strength and weaknesses of the delivery system.

References

- Abdul Sami' Al Misri. (1993). In Ahmad Hj Hasbullah (Ed.), *Perniagaan dalam Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Abul Al Hassan Nadwi. (1997). *Sepuluh tokoh yang mengubah dunia*. Selangor: Pustaka Ilmi.
- A. Ghani Othman. (1983/1984). In Institut Pertanian Malaysia (AIM), *Kemiskinan luar bandar*. Kuala Lumpur.
- Akram Diya' Al-'Umari, terj. Zainab Abdul Kadir. (2000). *Masyarakat Madani di zaman Nabi*. Kuala Lumpur: The International Institute of Islamic Thought Malaysia dan Thinker's Library Sdn Bhd.
- Anand, Sudhir. (1983). *Inequality and poverty in Malaysia: Measurement and decomposition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Andre Bayo Ala, (Ed.), (1981). *Kemiskinan dan strategi memerangi kemiskinan*. Yogyakarta. Indonesia: Liberty.
- Anwar Ibrahim, (1983/1984). In Institut Pertanian Malaysia (AIM), *Kemiskinan luar bandar*. Kuala Lumpur.
- Balogh, Thomas, (1966). *The economics of poverty*, london: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.
- B.A.R. Mokhzani, Khoo Siew Mun. (1977). *Some case studies on poverty in Malaysia - Essays presented to Profesor Ungku A. Aziz*. Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Ekonomi Malaysia.
- Biro Kemiskinan Pergerakan Pemuda UMNO Malaysia. (1987). *Konvensyen Kemiskinan Kebangsaan*, Biro Kemiskinan Pergerakan Pemuda UMNO Malaysia Dewan Tun Hussein Onn, PWTC, Kuala Lumpur, 12 September.
- BIRT (BIMB Institute of Research and Training Sdn. Bhd.). (1998). *Konsep syariah dalam sistem perbankan Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: BIRT.
- Booth, Charles. (1903). *Life and labour of the people in London* (Vol. 17). London: Macmillan.
- Chamhuri Siwar. (1988). In Chamhuri Siwar Mohd. Hafiah Piei (Ed.). *Isu, konsep dan kemiskinan*: Kumpulan Rencana Tentang Kemiskinan. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

- Dullah Mulok, Kasim Mansur, Mori Kogid, Christina Peter Ligadu, Na'imah Yusoff. (2010). quality of living: poverty, infrastructure, health and education.
- Ramzah Dambul, Marja Azlima Omar, Sabihah Osman (Eds.). *Sabah priority issues: Setting the course for change*. Kota Kinabalu: Penerbit UMS.
- H. M. Dahlan. (1991). In Mohd. Yaakub Hj. Johari (Ed.). *Issues and strategies in rural development*. Kota Kinabalu: IDS.
- Kamal Salih. (1983/1984). In Institut Pertanian Malaysia (AIM). *Kemiskinan luar bandar*. Kuala Lumpur.
- Khairuddin Yusof. (1991). In Mohd. Yaakub Hj. Johari (Ed.). *Urban poverty in Malaysia*. Kota Kinabalu: IDS.
- Kementerian Pembangunan Luar Bandar, Sabah (KPLB), Laporan KIRT (2005/2006).
- Mohd. Yaakub Hj. Johari. (1991). *Poverty profile in sabah and rural development Strategies After 1990*.
- Mohd. Yaakub Hj. Johari (ed). *Issues and strategies in rural development*. Kota Kinabalu: IDS.
- Mohd. Yaakub Hj. Johari & Chang Shui Kiong. (1991). In Mohd. Yaakub Hj. Johari (Ed.). *Urban poverty in Malaysia*. Kota Kinabalu: IDS.
- Osman Rani Hassan & Abd. Majid Salleh. (1988). In Chamhuri Siwar & Mohd. Hafilah Piei (Eds.). *Isu, konsep dan kemiskinan: kumpulan rencana tentang kemiskinan*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Syed Othman Alhabshi. (2000). *Solving absolute poverty using answers found in religion*. Retrieved from <http://vlib.unitark11.edu.my/staff-publications/datuk>.
- Townsend, P. (1979). *Poverty in the United Kingdom – A Survey of household resources and standards of living*. England: Penguin Books.
- Ungku Abdul Aziz. (1964). Poverty and rural development in Malaysia. *Kajian Ekonomi Malaysia*, 1 (1).
- Ungku Abdul Aziz. (1965). Poverty, proteins and disguised starvation. *Kajian Ekonomi Malaysia*, 1 (1).
- Unit Perancang Ekonomi (EPU), Kuala Lumpur.
- Unit Perancang Ekonomi Negeri UPEN), Sabah.

Location of study: Kudat, Matunggong and Pulau Banggi

