Malaysia’s Original People
Past, Present and Future of the Orang Asli

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INTRODUCTION

Malaysians' general view of Orang Asli in education is that they are academically weak, lack confidence, are incapable of making decisions on their own, depend on others to do everything for them and are lazy (Chempil and Joseph 2003). This prejudiced view has hindered the delivery of quality education to the Orang Asli. This has led to poor educational results, which have limited social and economic mobility, thus causing the Orang Asli to remain the poorest segment of the Malaysian population (Nadchattum 2007; Nicholas 2010).

The Orang Asli face many educational disadvantages. The teaching method, which follows the rigid curriculum of the national school system, does not take account of their cultural differences from other populations (Nicholas 2010). Because most Orang Asli live in rural areas, they often live far from the nearest schools, which causes low rates of enrolment and attendance, thus impeding their academic