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Research Management Unit
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Embracing New Horizons: A Fresh Start for 2025



As we stand at the threshold of a new year, I welcome you to RMU4U Third Edition (January 2025). The start of a new year symbolizes renewal, an opportunity to recalibrate our aspirations and refresh our collective commitment to academic excellence, research endeavours, and impactful scholarly contributions.

The year 2024 saw significant progress within our academic and research community. It was a testament to the passion, perseverance, and creativity of all members of the UiTM Kedah family. As we reflect on those accomplishments, let us also look ahead with determination to elevate our efforts in research, publication, and innovation. Let 2025 be the year we chart new pathways for discovery and collaboration, bringing our work to greater heights.

This year, I encourage all of us to reaffirm our scholarly goals by setting clear, measurable targets for research outputs, impactful writings, and knowledge sharing, aiming to contribute meaningfully to society both locally and globally. Let us strengthen research collaborations by building networks across disciplines, faculties, and institutions to foster cross-disciplinary solutions to real-world challenges. At the same time, we must focus on innovation by exploring new ideas, embracing digital tools, and pioneering creative solutions that align with global trends and local needs. Above all, let us support each other by sharing expertise, mentoring the next generation, and collaborating to overcome challenges, creating a thriving research ecosystem where everyone uplifts one another.

Let this be a year where we balance ambition with reflection, passion with purpose, and innovation with impact. The Research Management Unit (RMU) remains steadfast in supporting your research journey through resources, platforms, and opportunities for growth.

As we embark on this new chapter, I wish each of you the strength to pursue your aspirations and the resilience to overcome any obstacles. Together, let us make 2025 a year of breakthroughs, achievements, and shared successes.

Here's to a productive and inspiring year ahead.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Roshima Said

Acting Rector, UiTM Kedah



A Message from the Chief Editor

Dear Readers,

I am pleased to announce the return of the RMU4U Bulletin with Volume 3, showcasing a diverse array of academic inquiries and professional perspectives across multiple themes. This edition continues our commitment to facilitating intellectual exchange and presenting research that engages with contemporary issues.

In this volume, the Law & Policy theme stands out with the highest number of contributions, featuring 14 papers that explore significant aspects of governance, justice, and societal well-being. These papers highlight the role of legal frameworks and policies in addressing current challenges and contributing to societal development.

Highlighted works include topics such as "Enhancing Access to Justice: The Role, Challenges, and Future of Small Claims Courts in Malaysia" and "Environmental Public Interest Litigation: Broadening Locus Standi to Safeguard Collective Interests," which examine the evolving landscape of legal rights and public interest. Additional discussions, such as "Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in Islamic Banking and Finance in Malaysia" and "Balancing Nature and Faith: Protection and Conservation of Water Resources from the Perspective of Islamic Law," shed light on the interplay between ethics, faith, and law in addressing societal challenges.

In addition to the focus on Law & Policy, this issue covers a range of topics that contribute to understanding innovation and societal change. Articles such as "AI-Driven Recommendations in Mobile Shopping Apps, Podcasts, Animations & Gen Z: Revamping Organizational Behavior Learning, and The Role of Social Media in Shaping Islamic Entrepreneurship" explore the intersections of technology, education, and culture in today's world.

This edition represents the collaborative work of our contributors, whose insights and expertise have shaped the content of this bulletin. We encourage readers to engage with these ideas and consider their implications for further research and practical applications.

I would like to thank the authors, reviewers, and editorial team members who made RMU4U Bulletin Volume 3 possible. We hope this publication serves as a resource for understanding key issues and inspires further exploration.

Thank you for being part of this endeavor. Let us continue to learn and exchange ideas

Warm regards,

Dr Azyyati Anuar
Chief Editor, RMU4U E-Bulletin





ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION: BROADENING LOCUS STANDI TO SAFEGUARD COLLECTIVE INTERESTS

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In Malaysia, our legal system operates under common law, which shapes the accessibility of civil litigation, particularly in environmental cases. An important principle to recognise is locus standi, which indicates that only individuals or entities with a significant interest or stake in a matter are eligible to seek judicial remedies. Understanding this concept is crucial in the context of legal proceedings. In addition, this principle aims to ensure that the right people are involved in legal proceedings; it can limit opportunities for redress, especially in cases concerning environmental damage.

As awareness of the need to protect our environment continues to grow—especially given the increasing environmental crises we face—there’s a pressing need to balance development with conservation. Countries like Malaysia, navigating the path toward development, often struggle between economic growth and environmental protection. Unfortunately, the environment, the actual victim in many of these scenarios, lacks a voice in legal matters to express its grievances. This is where public interest litigation holds promise for advocacy. Granting the public locus standi empowers concerned citizens to take a stand on environmental issues, as these concerns resonate with the greater good, impacting everyone in our society.



Locus standi refers to individuals' right to bring cases before the court. However, issues related to standing often prove to be a significant hurdle in public interest litigation. Typically, only those whose personal interests have been infringed can bring matters before the court. Yet, this needs to reflect the realities of environmental issues. Dedicated individuals—like environmental advocates and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)—often raise concerns about government actions that could harm our environment. The challenging aspect is that this ownership of the legal process frequently acts as a barrier, making it difficult for these advocates to seek justice or hold authorities accountable.

One significant case demonstrating the stringent application of locus standi is the *Government of Malaysia v Lim Kit Siang, United Engineers (M) Berhad v Lim Kit Siang* [1988] 2 MLJ 12. The court concluded that Lim Kit Siang did not possess the requisite locus standi to challenge the legitimacy of the government's award of the tender to UEM. The decision indicated that an individual only has locus standi to sue if he can prove "that he has suffered special damage peculiar to himself". A similar approach was emphasised in *Ketua Pengarah Jabatan Alam Sekitar & Anor v Kajing Tubek & Ors* [1997] 4 CLJ 253, in which the court held that the respondents lacked locus standi to institute the action. However, a more hopeful development arose from the Federal Court's decision in *Malaysian Trade Union Congress & Ors v Menteri Tenaga, Air dan Komunikasi & Anor* [2014] 3 MLJ 145, which marked a significant shift in the interpretation of locus standi. This decision reinvigorated public interest litigation in Malaysia by recognising the genuine concern of the Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) regarding the Minister's refusal to grant access to important documents. The court acknowledged that MTUC demonstrated a genuine and legitimate interest, marking a critical step forward in allowing public interest cases to make headway in our legal system.

Malaysia's evolving environmental law landscape presents a positive outlook for future developments. By acknowledging the value of public interest litigation and embracing a broader interpretation of locus standi, we can empower individuals and groups to pursue environmental justice. This reflects a growing recognition that the health of our planet is a shared concern for us all, and everyone should have a voice in advocating for its protection. Together, we can work toward a future where environmental issues can be addressed, ensuring a healthier planet for generations to come!

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