

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**INCORPORATING LOGIC OF  
INDIGENEITY IN SAFEGUARDING  
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE OF  
MEDICINAL PLANTS IN  
MALAYSIA: CASE STUDY OF THE  
BIDAYUH IN THE DISTRICT OF  
SERIAN, SARAWAK**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Faculty of Administrative Science  
and Policy Studies**

**January 2016**

## **CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS**

I certify that a panel of examiners has met on 21 April 2015 to conduct the final examination of Jasmine anak Edmund Andrew on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “Incorporating Logic of Indigeneity in Safeguarding Indigenous Knowledge of Medicinal Plants in Malaysia: Case Study of the Bidayuh in the District of Serian, Sarawak” in accordance with Universiti Teknologi MARA Act 1976 (Akta 173). The Panel of Examiners recommends that the student be awarded the relevant degree. The Panel of Examiners was as follows:

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I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In recent years there has been a remarkable revision of the negative perceptions on knowledge traditionally held and practiced by indigenous peoples. A particular aspect of traditional knowledge that has been attracting much attention is indigenous people's knowledge and uses of medicinal plants. This indigenous knowledge has attracted particular attention for the economic potential it brings from new drug development, as leads provided by indigenous use constitute an important cost-savings factor in research and development. However, knowledge of medicinal plants among indigenous communities is facing the threat of erosion due to rippling forces of globalization and modernization. Studies among the country's indigenous communities have indicated that Malaysia is equally affected by this phenomenon. The impending loss of this valuable resource has stimulated policy intervention for affirmative action both at the international and national levels aimed at preserving, reinforcing, recording or adapting indigenous knowledge on medicinal plants, primarily through documentation and recording of medicinal plants specie and their uses in traditional treatments. Malaysia's recent membership to the 2003 Convention on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage provide an opportunity for an indigenous stakeholder lens at policy intervention towards ensuring viability of the knowledge. The findings indicated that in spite of a lack of awareness of policy on traditional knowledge of indigenous plants, there is high appreciation and value of the knowledge among the elder generation as a cultural heritage and as a first course of treatment for illnesses and ailments; and that awareness and education on the value of this traditional knowledge among the younger generation impacts upon intergenerational transmission of knowledge. The study also identified several constraints and factors affecting public education and awareness of government policies and programs, as well as inter-generational transmission of knowledge and management of this knowledge among rural populations. Suggestions by the younger generation on ways to facilitate inter-generational transmission were incorporated into a logic model to encourage viability of the knowledge among indigenous communities in Malaysia.

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