

**HOPE OR DESPAIR: A SOCIO-LEGAL STUDY ON THE RIGHTS OF
UNDOCUMENTED CHILDREN IN MALAYSIA**

By

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Bachelor in Legal Studies (Hons)

**University Teknologi MARA
Faculty of Law**

October 2009

The students/authors confirm that the work submitted is their own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to give special thanks to those who contributed and kindly assisted and helped us in working towards the completion of this project paper:

1. Miss Norliza Binti Abdul Hamid, a lecturer in the Faculty of Law at Universiti Teknologi MARA, who is the supervisor of this project paper deserves a special mention for her role in this work. We would like to thank her for her admirable and unrewarded dedication in assisting and guiding us from the beginning until completing of this project paper. Her professional standards and goals have made us strive to do better in presenting this project paper.
2. We are also grateful for the support and assistance from Prof Madya Rohani Binti Md Shah who was willing to supervise the outline of the project paper together with the contact numbers and persons to interview for the purpose of this project paper.
3. Further, we would like to thanks Universiti Teknologi MARA for allowing us to use their facilities, documents and materials.
4. We acknowledge Prof Madya Rohani Binti Md Shah, lecturer of the Faculty of Law in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Prof Madya Dato' Chiam Heng Keng, commissioner of SUHAKAM (Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia), and Prof Madya Datin Noor Aziah Binti Mohd Awal, lecturer of Faculty of Law at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia who is also an active committee of YADIM (*Yayasan Dakwah Islam Malaysia*) for rendering full co-operation and assistance in answering the interview questions.

5. Last but not least, to our families and close friends, for the encouragements, financial and eternal support throughout the completion of this project paper, we give heartfelt thanks to them.

ABSTRACT

This project paper is a social-legal review and study on the rights of undocumented children in Malaysia. Undocumented children mean those who are without birth certificate or are unregistered with the National Registration Department of Malaysia. The focus is on the undocumented children of Malaysian parents which are deprived of their rights in their own country.

This project paper shall cover the rights of children governed by the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and several other laws in Malaysia, such as the Child Act 2001. Besides that, the study will be on the relevancy of reservations in certain Articles by Malaysia in the CRC and also the reasons for children being undocumented and its consequences.

The purpose of this paper is to review the laws that govern the rights of these undocumented children. If they are registered, then they are protected under the laws.

Along the journey to complete this task, the researchers have discovered that there are quite a number of reasons for children being undocumented and numbers of very sad cases pertaining children being undocumented are phenomenal.

The Government of Malaysia recognises that a child is the key to the country's survival, development and prosperity.¹ Thus, it is hoped that the study will help Malaysians to gain awareness of the problems faced by children.

¹ Malaysia's First Report - Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Child, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Malaysia, 2006.

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