

# Educational Accessibility Barriers among Homeless and Asnaf Communities in Malaysia: A Systematic Literature Review

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## Abstract

This study examines educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The review was conducted based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework to ensure a systematic and transparent process of source identification, screening, and selection. A total of 17 selected studies published between 2020 and 2026 were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that marginalised communities continue to experience multiple forms of educational exclusion influenced by structural poverty, documentation issues, social discrimination, psychosocial pressures, and weaknesses in institutional support systems. The study also highlights the significant role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), zakat institutions, social workers, schools, and alternative education initiatives in expanding educational opportunities for vulnerable communities. The novelty of this study lies in its integrated synthesis of homeless and asnaf communities within a single educational accessibility framework, as both groups are often discussed separately in previous studies. Overall, the findings contribute to the social sciences literature by strengthening the understanding of educational exclusion as a multidimensional issue and by offering broader insights for inclusive education, welfare support, and social intervention planning in Malaysia and other developing and multicultural contexts.

**Keywords:** Educational Accessibility, Homeless Communities, Asnaf Communities, Social Exclusion, Systematic Literature Review

## Introduction

Education is widely recognised as a key mechanism for strengthening social mobility, community well-being, and human capital development. In the field of social sciences, educational accessibility is not only understood as the opportunity to enter formal schooling, but also as the ability of individuals and communities to obtain learning resources, institutional support, legal recognition, psychosocial stability, and a conducive environment for continuous educational participation. Therefore, unequal access to education may reproduce broader patterns of poverty, social exclusion, and intergenerational disadvantage, particularly among vulnerable and marginalised communities.

In Malaysia, various educational and welfare initiatives have been introduced to improve access to learning opportunities among disadvantaged groups. However, marginalised communities such as homeless individuals, homeless children, undocumented children, and asnaf households continue to face multiple barriers that limit their educational participation. These barriers include structural poverty, unstable living conditions, lack of legal documentation, limited access to learning facilities, social discrimination, psychosocial pressures, and weaknesses in institutional support systems (Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin, 2022b; Loganathan et al., 2023; Sulaiman, 2021). As a result, educational exclusion among these communities should not be viewed merely as an individual or family problem, but as a multidimensional social issue shaped by structural, institutional, and socio-economic inequalities.

The issue becomes more significant when educational accessibility is examined among homeless and asnaf communities. Homeless communities often experience unstable shelter, social stigma, weak family support, and limited continuity in education, while asnaf communities are frequently affected by poverty, financial hardship, low educational awareness, and limited access to sustained educational assistance (Ismail & Ismail, 2022; Rohimi et al., 2025). Although both groups may differ in terms of social background and welfare classification, they share similar experiences of vulnerability, limited resources, and exclusion from mainstream educational opportunities. This indicates the need for a more integrated understanding of educational barriers among vulnerable communities in Malaysia.

From the perspective of Social Exclusion Theory, educational marginalisation occurs when individuals or groups are systematically prevented from participating fully in major social institutions, including education. In this context, poverty, documentation problems, discrimination, psychosocial instability, and institutional limitations may operate as exclusionary mechanisms that restrict educational access among homeless and asnaf communities. This theoretical perspective is useful in explaining how educational barriers are not isolated issues, but are interconnected with wider social inequalities and structural disadvantages.

Previous studies have examined issues related to homelessness, asnaf assistance, undocumented children, alternative education, zakat distribution, and welfare support in Malaysia. However, existing discussions remain relatively fragmented because homeless and asnaf communities are often studied separately. There is still limited systematic synthesis that integrates structural, psychosocial, social, and institutional factors influencing educational accessibility among these vulnerable groups within the Malaysian context. This gap limits a broader understanding of how educational exclusion operates across different marginalised communities and how support institutions may contribute to improving inclusive educational opportunities.

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic integration of literature on homeless and asnaf communities within a single analytical framework of educational accessibility. Unlike previous studies that tend to focus on one vulnerable group or one form of intervention, this review synthesises multiple dimensions of exclusion, including poverty, documentation, psychosocial well-being, discrimination, institutional support, and alternative educational initiatives. In doing so, this study contributes to the field of social sciences by

expanding the discussion on educational inequality, social exclusion, welfare intervention, and inclusive education for marginalised communities in Malaysia.

Accordingly, this study aims to systematically examine educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. Specifically, this review synthesises previous findings and examines structural, psychosocial, social, and institutional factors influencing educational accessibility among marginalised communities. Therefore, the objectives of this Systematic Literature Review are as follows:

- 1) To identify the forms of educational access barriers experienced by homeless and asnaf communities.
- 2) To analyse the factors influencing limited educational accessibility among marginalised communities.
- 3) To examine the role of support institutions in strengthening educational accessibility for vulnerable groups.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. The SLR method was selected because it enables previous studies to be identified, evaluated, and synthesised systematically, transparently, and comprehensively. In addition, the SLR approach assists researchers in identifying research patterns, thematic relationships, knowledge gaps, and major issues discussed within existing literature related to educational exclusion among marginalised communities. This study adopted the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework introduced by Moher et al. (2009) as the primary guideline for article identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final selection processes.

### *Search Strategy*

The article search process was conducted systematically using several major academic databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), Google Scholar and MyJurnal. These databases were selected due to their extensive coverage of educational, social science, welfare, and community development studies relevant to the focus of this review. The search process was carried out between January and March 2026 using several predetermined keywords related to educational accessibility, homelessness, asnaf communities, marginalisation, educational exclusion, alternative education, and vulnerable communities.

Among the keywords used were “educational accessibility”, “homeless children”, “asnaf education”, “marginalised communities”, “educational exclusion”, “alternative education”, and “social support”. Boolean operators such as AND and OR were also applied to expand and refine the search process. The use of multiple databases and keyword combinations aimed to ensure broader literature coverage and minimise the possibility of overlooking relevant studies related to the research objectives. In addition to database searching, supplementary manual searching was conducted to identify relevant scholarly sources that were not fully captured through database searching but substantially

contributed to understanding educational accessibility issues among marginalised communities.

Table 1

*Literature Search Strategy and Keyword Combinations Used in Database Searching*

No.	Database	Keyword Search Strings
1	Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("homeless" OR "asnaf") AND ("educational access" OR "educational barriers") AND ("Malaysia" OR "marginalised communities"))
2	Web of Science (WoS)	TS= (("homeless" OR "asnaf") AND ("education access" OR "social exclusion") AND ("Malaysia"))
3	Google Scholar	("homelessness" OR "asnaf") AND ("educational access" OR "learning dropout") AND ("Malaysia")
4	MyJurnal	("homeless communities" AND "educational access") OR ("asnaf" AND "educational accessibility")

*Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

Several inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to ensure that only relevant and high-quality studies were selected for analysis. The inclusion criteria consisted of: (i) articles published between 2020 and 2026, (ii) studies focusing on educational accessibility among homeless, asnaf, or marginalised communities, (iii) empirical and conceptual studies related to education, social welfare, or vulnerable populations, and (iv) scholarly publications including peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, systematic reviews, conceptual papers, and relevant scholarly book chapters that provided substantial contributions to understanding educational accessibility issues among marginalised communities.

Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria involved studies that were unrelated to educational accessibility, duplicate publications, non-academic materials, inaccessible full-text articles, and studies that did not specifically address homeless, asnaf, or marginalised communities within the educational context. Relevant scholarly book chapters were included when they directly addressed educational accessibility issues among vulnerable communities and provided substantial evidence related to the objectives of this review. The inclusion and exclusion criteria applied in this review are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

*Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Year	2020–2026	Before 2020
Language	English or Malay	Languages other than English or Malay
Type of Publication	Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, systematic reviews, conceptual papers and scholarly book chapters	Non-academic articles, newspapers, magazines, reports without academic review
Research Focus	Educational accessibility, homeless communities, asnaf, marginalised groups, educational exclusion	Studies unrelated to education or vulnerable communities

Accessibility	Full-text articles	Abstract-only or inaccessible articles
Study Context	Malaysia and relevant global references	Studies with no relevance to the Malaysian educational context

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The application of these criteria was important to ensure the relevance, consistency, and quality of the selected studies throughout the systematic review process.

#### *Data Screening and Selection Process*

The screening and selection processes were conducted systematically based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. A total of 295 records were initially identified through database searching across Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), Google Scholar and MyJurnal databases. Subsequently, 40 duplicate records were removed during the duplicate removal stage, resulting in 255 records being retained for title and abstract screening.

During the screening stage, 205 articles were excluded because they did not meet the established inclusion criteria or were not directly related to the focus of the study. Following the screening process, 50 full-text articles were further assessed for eligibility. However, 33 articles were excluded due to limited relevance, insufficient discussion on educational accessibility, or lack of focus on homeless and asnaf communities within the educational context.

Finally, 17 articles were selected and included in the final analysis of this systematic literature review. The overall article identification, screening, eligibility, and selection process is illustrated in Figure 1.

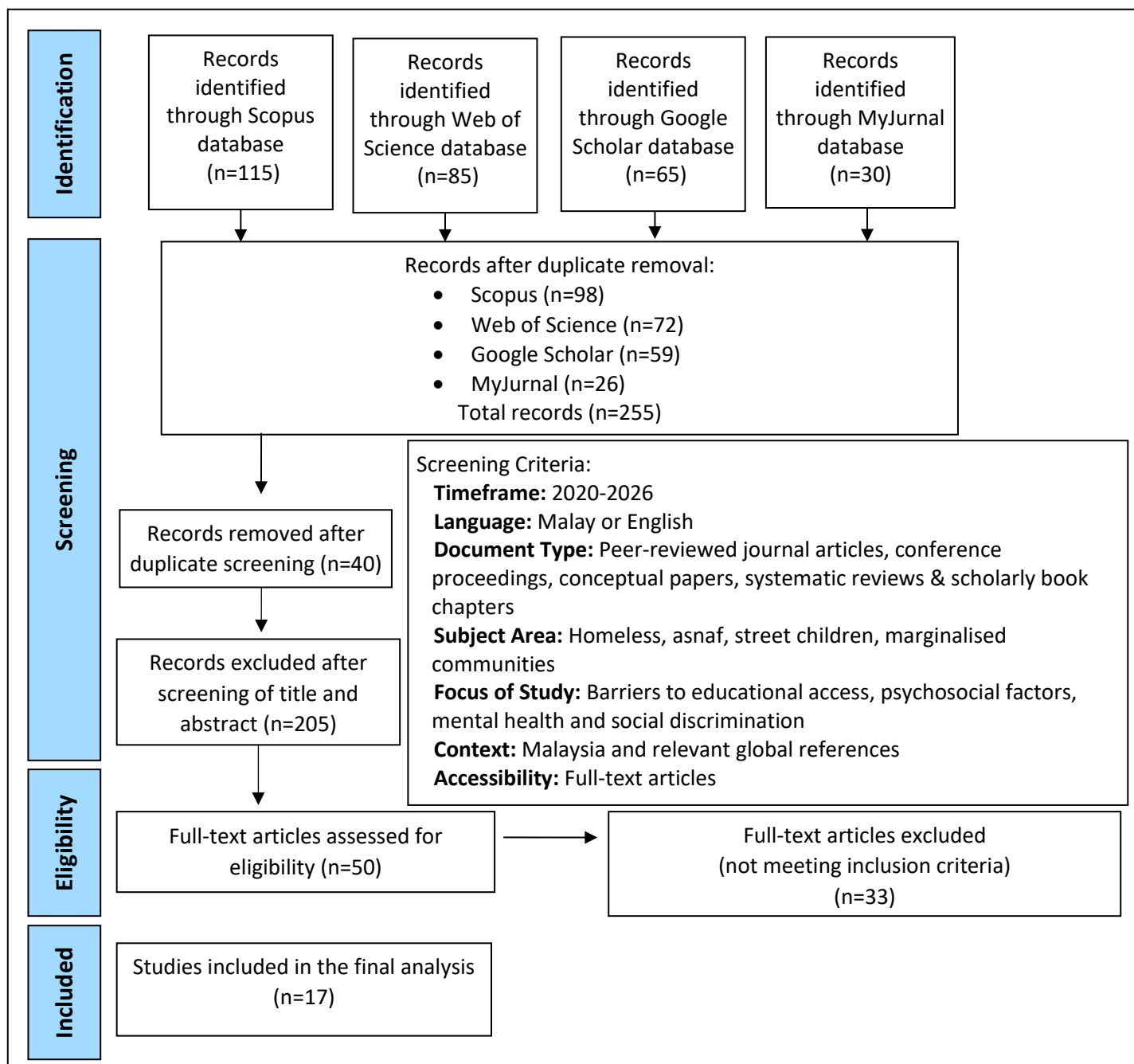


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram (Moher et al., 2009)

The PRISMA framework enabled the screening process to be conducted systematically and transparently while ensuring that the selected studies were relevant to the objectives and scope of the study.

*Data Analysis*

The selected studies were analysed using thematic analysis to identify major patterns, themes, and relationships related to educational accessibility barriers among homeless and

asnaf communities in Malaysia. Thematic analysis was chosen because it enables the systematic organisation, interpretation, and synthesis of qualitative findings derived from multiple studies within a systematic literature review.

The analysis process involved several stages, including data familiarisation, coding, theme categorisation, theme interpretation, and synthesis of findings across the selected studies. During the familiarisation stage, all selected studies were reviewed thoroughly to identify recurring issues and significant discussions related to educational accessibility among vulnerable communities. Subsequently, relevant data were coded and organised into several thematic categories based on similarities in concepts, issues, and patterns identified across the studies.

Through the thematic analysis process, three major themes were identified, namely: (i) forms of educational access barriers experienced by homeless and asnaf communities, (ii) factors influencing limited educational accessibility among marginalised groups, and (iii) the role of support institutions in strengthening educational opportunities for vulnerable communities. These themes were then synthesised and interpreted to generate a more comprehensive understanding of educational exclusion within the Malaysian context.

The use of thematic analysis contributed to a more structured synthesis of previous findings while enabling the identification of significant relationships between structural, psychosocial, economic, and institutional factors affecting educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities. In addition, this approach assisted in identifying existing research gaps and highlighting important implications related to inclusive education and social well-being among marginalised populations.

### **Findings**

This section presents the findings derived from the thematic analysis of 17 selected studies related to educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. The findings are organised into three major themes based on the objectives of the study, namely: (i) forms of educational access barriers experienced by vulnerable communities, (ii) factors influencing limited educational accessibility among marginalised groups, and (iii) the role of support institutions in strengthening educational opportunities among homeless and asnaf communities.

The thematic analysis revealed that educational exclusion among vulnerable groups is influenced by multiple interconnected structural, psychosocial, economic, and institutional factors. In addition, the selected studies consistently highlighted the importance of alternative educational support systems, social welfare interventions, and community-based initiatives in reducing educational marginalisation among disadvantaged populations in Malaysia.

Table 3

*Summary of Selected Studies Included in the Systematic Literature Review*

No	Author(s) & Year	Study Title	Methodology	Key Findings
1	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022b)	Isu Gelandangan dan Kecirikan Pendidikan dalam kalangan Gelandangan Kanak-kanak	Qualitative (document analysis and social observation)	Homeless children are highly vulnerable to educational dropout due to unstable living conditions and limited social support.
2	Sulaiman (2021)	Perkhidmatan Pendidikan di Malaysia: Aksesibiliti Kanak-Kanak Jalanan Tanpa Dokumen terhadap Kemudahan Pendidikan	Qualitative (policy analysis and field study)	The absence of birth certificates and legal documents constitutes a major barrier to formal educational access.
3	Loganathan et al. (2023)	Barriers and Facilitators to Education Access for Marginalised Non-Citizen Children in Malaysia: A Qualitative Study	Qualitative (semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis)	Social discrimination and citizenship status significantly affect educational opportunities among vulnerable groups.
4	Ismail & Ismail (2022)	Empowering Education Among Asnaf Through Distribution of Zakat from the Perspective of Maqasid Syariah	Conceptual qualitative study (content and document analysis)	Educational zakat assistance contributes to strengthening the social mobility of asnaf families.
5	Samsudin & Ismail (2022)	Pendidikan Alternatif Sebagai Wadah Dakwah dalam Kalangan Minoriti Rohingya di Malaysia	Qualitative design (case study and interviews)	Alternative education initiatives help improve educational access among Rohingya refugee communities.
6	Rose et al. (2025)	The Conceptual Framework Model of Stress and Conflict Among Asnaf Families	Conceptual qualitative study (literature analysis and conceptual framework development)	Economic hardship and family conflict negatively affect the educational stability of children from asnaf families.
7	Mohammad et al. (2024)	Keberkesanan Ruang Pembelajaran Sedia Ada bagi Gelandangan Kanak-Kanak: Kajian Kes Sekolah Bimbingan Jalinan Kasih, Kuala Lumpur	Qualitative (field observation and interviews)	Inadequate and uncondusive learning spaces negatively influence the learning process of homeless children.
8	Abiddin (2024)	Empowering Communities: The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Education and Welfare Development in Malaysia	Qualitative (literature analysis and conceptual discussion)	NGOs play a significant role in expanding educational access and welfare services for marginalised communities in Malaysia.
9	Johari et al. (2025)	Classification of the Homeless as One of Asnaf Zakat: A Case Study of the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur	Case study (interviews and document analysis)	Homeless individuals should be classified as asnaf to enable more systematic welfare assistance and social support through zakat institutions.
10	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, Kamaluddin, et al. (2022)	Meninjau Bentuk Pemulihan dan Bantuan untuk Gelandangan dari Institusi	Qualitative (interviews and field observation)	Government institutions and NGOs play important roles in providing welfare assistance, social rehabilitation, and

		Kerajaan dan Organisasi Bukan Kerajaan di Malaysia		community support for homeless individuals in Malaysia.
11	Jasni, Sulaiman, et al. (2025)	Peranan dan Cabaran Pekerja Sosial dalam Menyalurkan Perkhidmatan kepada Gelandangan	Qualitative (in-depth interviews)	Limited resources and social stigma are major challenges faced by social workers in assisting homeless communities.
12	Nasharuddin & Asalal (2025)	Exploring Mental Health Issues Among the Homeless in Malaysia: A Focus on Anxiety and Depression	Qualitative (interviews and thematic analysis)	Mental health issues such as anxiety and depression affect life stability, self-motivation, and social functioning among homeless individuals.
13	Rohimi et al. (2025)	Challenges Faced by the Asnaf Community in Understanding the Importance of Education in Chemor, Perak	Qualitative (interviews and thematic analysis)	Economic constraints, parents' educational background, and low awareness of educational importance are major challenges within asnaf communities.
14	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022a)	Gelandangan dalam Kalangan Belia dan Kanak-Kanak Terbiar di Malaysia: Satu Perbincangan	Qualitative (document analysis and literature review)	Poverty, family neglect, and social exclusion contribute to the increasing homelessness issues among youth and abandoned children.
15	Zolkifely & Hisham (2025)	Empowering Marginalized Students through Leadership Roles	Qualitative (case study and interviews)	Participation in leadership roles helps improve self-confidence, educational engagement, and social development among marginalised students.
16	Jasni, Jamaluddin, et al. (2025)	Tahap Kesejahteraan Hidup Penentu Risiko Gelandangan dalam Kalangan Gelandangan Bekas Banduan: Kajian Empirik di Jalan Chow Kit	Quantitative (empirical survey study)	Poor quality of life increases the risk of recurring homelessness and social marginalisation among former prisoners.
17	Iskandar & Harifuddin (2026)	School, Family, and Children's Educational Participation in Marginalized Urban Communities: A Class Consciousness Perspective	Mixed-method (questionnaires, interviews, and social analysis)	Family factors, class consciousness, and school support influence educational participation among children in marginalised urban communities.

Table 3 presents the summary of selected studies included in this systematic literature review, including the authors, publication year, methodology and key findings related to educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities.

#### *Forms of Educational Access Barriers Among Homeless and Asnaf Communities*

The analysis identified several major educational barriers experienced by homeless and asnaf communities, including structural poverty, lack of legal documentation, social discrimination, limited educational facilities, unstable family environments, psychosocial pressures, and weak institutional support systems. These interconnected barriers contribute to educational exclusion and increase long-term educational vulnerability among marginalised communities.

Financial hardship and unstable living conditions were frequently identified as major barriers restricting educational participation, particularly among children from vulnerable households. Economic limitations reduce access to school necessities, learning resources, transportation, and supportive educational environments. Documentation barriers such as the absence of birth certificates and official identification records further restrict access to formal educational institutions.

In addition, social stigma, discrimination, unstable family conditions, and limited institutional support contribute to educational disengagement and increased risks of long-term educational exclusion. These findings indicate that educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities extends beyond school enrolment and involves broader structural, psychosocial, and institutional dimensions.

Table 4

*Forms of Educational Access Barriers Among Homeless and Asnaf Communities*

<b>Forms of Educational Barriers</b>	<b>Description of Issues Identified</b>	<b>Publications</b>
Structural Poverty	Financial hardship limits educational access and learning resources.	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, Kamaluddin, et al. (2022); Rohimi et al. (2025)
Lack of Legal Documentation	The absence of birth certificates and official identity documents prevents children from enrolling in formal educational institutions.	Sulaiman (2021); Loganathan et al. (2023)
Social Discrimination and Stigma	Marginalised communities frequently experience negative societal perceptions, exclusion, and unequal treatment that affect educational participation.	Loganathan et al. (2023); Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022b)
Limited Educational Facilities	Inadequate and uncondusive learning spaces negatively influence the learning process among homeless children and vulnerable groups.	Mohammad et al. (2024)
Family Instability and Psychosocial Pressure	Family conflict, emotional instability, and psychosocial stress contribute to educational disengagement among vulnerable children.	Rose et al. (2025); Nasharuddin & Asalal (2025)
Weak Institutional Support Systems	Limited welfare assistance, educational intervention, and social support systems restrict educational continuity among homeless and asnaf communities.	Abiddin (2024); Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022a)
Unsafe and Unstable Living Environments	Overcrowded urban settlements and unstable living conditions intensify educational difficulties among marginalised groups.	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, Kamaluddin, et al. (2022); Mohammad et al. (2024)

*Factors Influencing Limited Educational Accessibility Among Marginalised Communities*

The thematic analysis identified several major factors influencing limited educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. The findings revealed that

educational exclusion among vulnerable communities is influenced by interconnected socioeconomic, psychosocial, family-related, social, and institutional factors that continuously increase educational vulnerability and long-term social marginalisation.

Structural poverty emerged as one of the dominant contributing factors limiting educational participation among vulnerable groups. Financial hardship restricts access to school necessities, learning resources, transportation, and supportive educational environments. Low parental educational background, limited educational awareness, and unstable family conditions further contribute to educational disengagement among children from homeless and low-income communities.

Psychosocial pressures, family instability, social discrimination, documentation issues, and limited institutional support were also found to significantly influence educational accessibility among marginalised communities. Emotional stress, social exclusion, unequal opportunities, and weak educational support mechanisms collectively intensify educational difficulties and reduce educational continuity among vulnerable populations.

Table 5

*Factors Influencing Limited Educational Accessibility Among Marginalised Communities*

Factors	Publications	Key Findings
Socioeconomic and Poverty Factors	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022b)	Educational dropout among homeless children is strongly associated with unstable living conditions and urban poverty.
	Rohimi et al. (2025)	Parents' educational background and limited awareness of the importance of education influence educational access among asnaf communities.
Documentation and Social Status Factors	Jasni, Jamaluddin, et al. (2025)	Low quality of life increases the risk of homelessness among former prisoners and contributes to social marginalisation.
	Sulaiman (2021)	The absence of legal identification documents restricts undocumented children from accessing formal education.
Psychosocial and Family Factors	Loganathan et al. (2023)	Non-citizenship status and social discrimination limit educational opportunities among marginalised communities.
	Nasharuddin & Asalal (2025)	Anxiety and depression negatively affect the psychosocial well-being of homeless communities.
	Rose et al. (2025)	Economic pressure and family conflict within asnaf communities affect family stability and children's educational continuity.
	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022a)	Family neglect and social exclusion contribute to the increasing homelessness issues among youth and abandoned children.
Infrastructure and Institutional Support Factors	Iskandar & Harifuddin (2026)	Family influence and school support affect educational participation among children from marginalised urban communities.
	Mohammad et al. (2024)	Inadequate and uncondusive learning spaces negatively affect the educational process of homeless children.
	Samsudin & Ismail (2022)	Alternative education initiatives assist refugee communities in continuing basic education outside the formal education system.
	Jasni, Sulaiman, et al. (2025)	Social workers face resource limitations and social stigma in assisting homeless communities.
	Abiddin (2024)	NGOs play an important role in expanding educational access and welfare services for marginalised communities.

*Role of Support Institutions in Strengthening Educational Accessibility Among Vulnerable Communities*

The thematic analysis revealed that support institutions play an important role in improving educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. The selected studies consistently highlighted the contributions of zakat institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social workers, schools, alternative education initiatives, and community support systems in reducing educational exclusion and strengthening educational participation among vulnerable communities.

Zakat assistance, welfare support programmes, and educational intervention initiatives were identified as important mechanisms in supporting educational continuity among low-income and vulnerable populations. NGOs, alternative learning centres, refugee education initiatives, and community-based educational programmes also contribute significantly to expanding learning opportunities for communities experiencing barriers to formal education.

Social workers, schools, and community networks further strengthen educational participation through social intervention, emotional support, welfare assistance, and inclusive educational environments. These institutional contributions collectively improve educational engagement, social inclusion, and educational sustainability among marginalised communities.

Table 6

*Role of Support Institutions in Strengthening Educational Accessibility Among Vulnerable Communities*

<b>Role of Institutions</b>	<b>Publications</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
Zakat Institutions and Welfare Assistance	Ismail & Ismail (2022)	Educational zakat assistance helps strengthen the social mobility of asnaf families.
	Johari et al. (2025)	The recognition of homeless individuals as asnaf expands access to welfare assistance and social support.
	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, Kamaluddin, et al. (2022)	Government institutions and NGOs provide social rehabilitation assistance and community support for homeless individuals.
NGOs and Alternative Education	Samsudin & Ismail (2022)	Alternative education initiatives assist refugee communities in continuing learning outside the formal education system.
	Abiddin (2024)	NGOs play an important role in educational development and welfare support among marginalised communities.
	Loganathan et al. (2023)	Community organisations help expand educational opportunities for non-citizen children.
Social Workers and Community Support	Jasni, Hassan, Ibrahim, & Kamaluddin (2022b)	Social workers assist in delivering welfare support and social interventions to homeless communities.
	Mohammad et al. (2024)	Learning spaces and community support initiatives contribute positively to the educational process of homeless children.
Schools and Educational Leadership	Iskandar & Harifuddin (2026)	School support influences educational participation among children from marginalised urban communities.
	Zolkifely & Hisham (2025)	Student involvement in leadership roles enhances self-confidence and educational engagement among marginalised students.

## Discussion

This section discusses the findings derived from the systematic literature review concerning educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. The discussion is organised into several major themes, namely: (i) structural poverty and educational exclusion, (ii) documentation issues and social inequality, (iii) psychosocial factors and educational disengagement, (iv) the role of support institutions in inclusive education, and (v) social and policy implications related to educational accessibility among vulnerable communities. The discussion integrates previous findings with the perspective of Social Exclusion Theory to provide a broader understanding of educational marginalisation within the Malaysian context.



Figure 2: Conceptual Relationship Model of Educational Exclusion Among Marginalised Communities

Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the major factors contributing to educational exclusion among marginalised communities. Based on the synthesis of the reviewed studies, poverty, social discrimination, and psychosocial pressures are interconnected structural factors that contribute to educational exclusion and increase the risk of social marginalisation among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia.

### *Structural Poverty and Educational Exclusion*

The findings demonstrate that structural poverty remains a dominant factor contributing to educational exclusion among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. Financial hardship, unstable living conditions, unemployment, and limited socioeconomic resources restrict access to school necessities, transportation, digital learning resources, and supportive educational environments. In addition, low parental educational background and limited awareness regarding the importance of education further intensify educational disengagement among vulnerable communities.

From the perspective of Social Exclusion Theory, structural poverty contributes to systematic exclusion from educational opportunities through unequal access to economic and social resources. Prolonged socioeconomic instability reinforces educational vulnerability and social marginalisation, increasing long-term risks associated with unemployment, educational disengagement, and intergenerational poverty among homeless and asnaf communities. These findings suggest that improving educational accessibility among vulnerable communities requires broader socioeconomic intervention strategies involving welfare assistance, educational financial support, poverty reduction programmes, and community empowerment initiatives to ensure sustainable educational participation.

### *Documentation Issues and Social Inequality*

The findings indicate that documentation issues and social inequality constitute major barriers affecting educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. Vulnerable children, particularly undocumented and non-citizen children, continue to experience substantial difficulties in accessing formal education due to the absence of legal identification documents such as birth certificates and citizenship records. Social discrimination and unequal educational treatment further restrict educational participation and increase long-term educational vulnerability among marginalised communities.

From the perspective of Social Exclusion Theory, documentation barriers and social inequality function as structural mechanisms that systematically limit access to mainstream educational opportunities. Children without valid documentation often rely on informal learning centres or alternative education programmes that may not provide equivalent educational opportunities compared to formal educational systems. In addition, social stigma, socioeconomic disadvantage, and unequal resource distribution reinforce educational exclusion and contribute to persistent cycles of poverty and marginalisation.

These findings suggest that strengthening inclusive educational policies, reducing social discrimination, and improving institutional support mechanisms are essential to ensuring equitable educational opportunities for vulnerable communities. More responsive educational systems and stronger cross-sector collaboration are necessary to minimise structural barriers and promote sustainable educational inclusion among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia.

### *Psychosocial Factors and Educational Disengagement*

The findings indicate that psychosocial pressures and family-related issues significantly influence educational disengagement among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. Emotional instability, anxiety, depression, family conflict, neglect, and weak social support systems negatively affect children's educational participation and overall well-being. These psychosocial challenges disrupt learning continuity and contribute to long-term educational exclusion among vulnerable populations.

From the perspective of Social Exclusion Theory, psychosocial difficulties may emerge as consequences of prolonged poverty, homelessness, social discrimination, and unstable living conditions. Vulnerable children experiencing emotional distress, family instability, and limited social support often demonstrate lower educational motivation, weaker educational engagement, and greater risks of educational disengagement. These challenges are further intensified by limited psychosocial intervention programmes and insufficient emotional support systems within vulnerable communities.

These findings suggest that improving educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities requires interventions that extend beyond financial assistance and educational facilities. Greater emphasis should also be placed on psychosocial well-being, family empowerment, mental health support, and community-based intervention programmes to strengthen sustainable educational engagement and social inclusion among vulnerable populations.

*The Role of Support Institutions in Inclusive Education*

The findings demonstrate that support institutions play a crucial role in strengthening educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. Zakat institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social workers, schools, and community-based initiatives contribute significantly to reducing educational exclusion by providing educational assistance, welfare support, psychosocial intervention, and community empowerment programmes for vulnerable populations.

Educational zakat assistance and welfare support strengthen educational continuity among low-income families, while NGOs and alternative education initiatives expand learning opportunities for communities facing barriers to formal education. Community learning centres, refugee education programmes, and social intervention services provide important support mechanisms that improve educational participation and social well-being among marginalised communities. Social workers and supportive school environments further contribute to educational engagement through emotional support, educational guidance, and community-based intervention programmes.

These findings suggest that strengthening educational accessibility among vulnerable communities requires integrated collaboration involving educational institutions, welfare agencies, zakat organisations, NGOs, schools, and community networks. Sustainable institutional cooperation is essential to ensure more inclusive, equitable, and socially responsive educational opportunities for homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia.

*Social and Policy Implications of Educational Accessibility Among Vulnerable Communities*

The findings of this review highlight that educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities should be understood as a multidimensional issue influenced by poverty, social inequality, psychosocial vulnerability, and institutional limitations. Limited educational opportunities among vulnerable populations contribute to long-term social exclusion, reduced social mobility, and persistent intergenerational disadvantage. Therefore, educational accessibility requires broader intervention approaches that address both educational and social dimensions of marginalisation.

The findings further suggest that educational accessibility should be strengthened through more inclusive educational policies and integrated social intervention strategies involving educational institutions, welfare agencies, zakat organisations, NGOs, and community support systems. Greater institutional collaboration may contribute to more systematic educational assistance mechanisms, including educational financial support, psychosocial intervention, documentation assistance, and alternative educational initiatives for vulnerable communities.

Overall, strengthening educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities requires continuous institutional commitment and socially responsive policy implementation to ensure more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable educational opportunities for vulnerable populations in Malaysia.

### **Conclusion**

This systematic literature review examined educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia based on the PRISMA framework. Overall, the findings revealed that educational exclusion among vulnerable communities is influenced by multiple interconnected factors, including structural poverty, documentation issues, social discrimination, psychosocial pressures, and weaknesses in institutional support systems. The review also highlighted the important roles played by zakat institutions, NGOs, social workers, schools, and alternative education initiatives in strengthening educational accessibility and social support for marginalised communities. These findings demonstrate that educational exclusion should not be viewed solely as an educational issue, but rather as a broader social and structural inequality problem requiring more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable intervention approaches.

In addition, this study emphasises the importance of strengthening inclusive educational policies, psychosocial support systems, and collaborative institutional interventions to ensure equitable educational opportunities for vulnerable populations in Malaysia. Although this review was limited to studies published between 2020 and 2026 within the Malaysian context, the findings provide valuable insights into the challenges and support mechanisms associated with educational accessibility among homeless and asnaf communities. Future studies are recommended to incorporate more empirical and longitudinal approaches to further explore the lived experiences, educational participation, and social well-being of marginalised communities in different contexts.

### **Contribution**

This study contributes to the social sciences literature by synthesising evidence on educational accessibility barriers among homeless and asnaf communities in Malaysia. Theoretically, it extends Social Exclusion Theory by highlighting how economic, social, and institutional factors collectively shape educational marginalisation. Practically, the findings provide insights for policymakers, educational institutions, and support agencies in developing more inclusive educational interventions. Although focused on Malaysia, the findings offer broader relevance for understanding educational exclusion among vulnerable populations in other developing and multicultural contexts.

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