

# Analysis on the Concept of Social Well-Being of Low-Income Malays and Ibn Khaldun's View on Well-Being Society: Post 14th Malaysia General Election

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## Abstract

The discovery of social well-being concept of a community will help to nourish the growth of a nation. This is because, effective policy will be made accordingly to the actual needs of a community and this will ensure a harmonize society because they gain mutual respect through setting the boundaries of how others should behave when dealing with them. Thus, this article aims to discover social well-being concept of the low-income among Malays in Malaysia after 14th general election.

To date, no article has been done on this topic particularly in the timeline of post Malaysia 14<sup>th</sup> general election, the time when a major shift power that happened first time after 60 years. The transition of power has changed the norm of the society. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the interviews transcripts of six informants among low-income Malays and two experts using thematic analysis to find out the concept of social well-being of the low-income Malays after GE-14. Ibn Khaldun thoughts on well-being society will be included in this paper as well. Taking qualitative approach by using in-depth interview, thematic analysis and triangulation, this paper expects to gain a valid information regarding on this topic. Further analysis of the articles through qualitative analysis ensued in five core themes on social well-being elements of the low-income group among Malays after GE-14, which are 5 key themes, (a) sufficient expenses to fulfill basic needs, (b) protection of Islam, (c) undisputed special rights of the Malays, (d) harmonious living between races and (e) access to a quality education. These findings can contribute to steadfast the field of social well-being study, especially in a multi-ethnic democratic nation.

**Keywords:** Social Well-Being, Low-Income, Malaysia 14th General Election, Malays, In-Depth Interview, Quality of Life, Islam, Special Privileges, Economy, Education

**Introduction**

Social well-being has no ending definition as it has dynamic definition as many considerations have to be taking in defining the concept of social well-being including certain situation, place setting, culture and many different life backgrounds. This paper, focus specifically on the social well-being will define the concept of social-wellbeing in the perspective of the Malays particularly among the below 40 income (B40) or as known as low-income category group. Social well-being generally known as a situation where a community is served with basic needs that will ease their life and identifying social well-being of a group will be a main guideline of how the Malays want to be treated and helped. Setting these guidelines can ensure that a society can get mutually respectful as they have set the boundaries of how others should behave when dealing with them.

The scope chosen is after the 14<sup>th</sup> Malaysia's general election because the shift power that was happened first time in 60 years since the ruling of Barisan Nasional has given some impact on the society and as the Malays has the majority population in Malaysia. Hamid and Ahmad (1992) describe changes in well -being in three parts. First, the change of social well-being in the changing patterns of interaction in society. Second, changes in economic well -being which are relative changes from the ability to meet physical needs in parallel with the core infrastructure. Third, cultural change is more in favor of changes in ideal and cognitive orientation in conjunction with the perspective of thought, value system and expression. Cultural change requires a radical change of perspective of thought because it is parallel to the underlying aspects of life.

This paper intends to study the effect of social well-being among the Malays. Meanwhile, the main focus group is B40, because low-income group has lesser power in decision making in a community, thus through identifying their meaning of social well-being will help the authority to make a suitable policy that meets their actual needs rather than projecting policies that are far beyond this group's desire.

Therefore, through this precise study on the concept of social well-being of the Malays among B40, will expected to save the cost and time of a nation to formulate policies for this particular group.

**Problem Statement**

Group B40, or low-income group categorized in Malaysia's income group, becomes a particular focus in this study because, among the three largest ethnic groups in Malaysia, the B40 in 2019 comprises Malays with a total of about 2.45 million. Meanwhile, the Chinese and Indian ethnic classified to the B40 group was around 1.0 million and 338 thousand, respectively (Economic Planning Unit, 2020). This indicates a significant total difference among these three ethnics.

The B40 or low-income group is chosen because it often becomes the primary focus of national development policy, however, the number of B40 among Malays are still increasing year by year. Furthermore, the Malays hold the largest population in Malaysia, and hence the community social welfare and well-being of the Malays from the perspective of B40 or low-income should be given an attention.

The scope chosen is after the 14<sup>th</sup> Malaysia's general election because the shift power that was happened first time in 60 years since the ruling of Barisan Nasional has given some impact on the society and as the Malays has the majority population in Malaysia. Hamid and Ahmad (1992) describe changes in well -being under three conditions which are social well-

being in the changing patterns of interaction in society, changes in economic well-being and cultural change

Therefore, the shift of power and three principles of changing of societies' well-being stated by Hamid and Ahmad (1992) has correlation with the post 14<sup>th</sup> Malaysia general election. Thus, a study on social well-being concept of low-income Malay after 14<sup>th</sup> GE is needed to perform because the time scope fulfil those three principles of changes of well-being in a society.

## **Literature Review**

### **Well-being**

The concept of well-being is not a foreign term in the social sciences. It has been discussed since the 1960s. However, the concept of well-being is still vague because the definition of well-being is different according to the dimensions of each person's point of view and situation (Midgley, 1995,1997). Well-being requires several needs to be met and immersed with the support of personal relationships, empowerment from community members, a protected financial system, satisfying employment, good health, and a conducive environment (Dodge et al, 2012).

A study from Loveridge et.al (2020) who used the local population of Tanzania as a sample through the dissemination of questionnaires found that well-being is based on four main thrusts namely material, health, security and freedom. These four elements are a benchmark for the well-being of the people of Tanzania when they can be protected and maintained.

Looking at one of the earliest studies in well-being research, Bradburn (1969) entitled *The Structure of Psychological Well-Being*, he used a qualitative and quantitative research approach by selecting respondents from five defined demographic areas in addition to using psychiatric cases to study responses human psychology of their daily lives. The results of his study found that a person would be in a prosperous psychological situation if he got more channels of positive influence than negative and human beings with many negative influences would face a low state of well-being (Bradburn, 1969).

However, the results of Bradburn's research have weaknesses because it does not define the basic structure of well-being in terms of psychology and other studies entitled *Measuring quality of life: Economic, social, and subjective indicators* by Diener and Suh (1997), described subjective well-being consists of three components. interrelated i.e. life satisfaction, pleasure, and dissatisfaction in life. Pleasant and unpleasant moods and emotions will affect their cognitive life satisfaction.

However, research to give meaning to well-being does not only include psychological knowledge. Ryff (1989) proved in his study entitled *Beyond Ponce de Leon and Life Satisfaction: New Directions in the Quest of Successful Aging* that well-being encompasses a much larger aspect than psychological factors alone. According to his study conducted in a mixed qualitative and quantitative study, there are six well-being criteria that include self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental care, life purpose, and personal growth. These dimensions are also defined and are relevant to the study of maturation (Ryff, 1989).

In the studies cited in this literature highlight, the definition of well-being is heavily emphasized on the elements of positive feelings, health, safety and freedom. Thus, in essence, well-being in favor of the majority of individuals refers to the elements of positive feelings, health, security and freedom.

### **Social well-being**

According to Friedlander (1961) in general, social well-being has two meanings. First of all, social well-being is considered to be a system of organized activities in a variety of social services designed to help individuals and groups achieve a more satisfactory quality of life (Friedlander, 1961). Second, social well-being is seen as a state of well-being, covering physical, mental and social aspects (United Nations, 1960).

Based on these two meanings, Skidmore (1982) defines social well-being as an effort to change or improve a state of well-being especially physically, mentally and socially. The residual model used to achieve the social well-being of a society can be used as a social control tool to maintain rules and laws (Titmus, 1974). However, this approach cannot explain the whole social phenomenon, but shows that social well-being can cause stigma.

According to Weinberg (1970), social well-being also refers to government-funded and undertaken activities or social programs for the poor or disadvantaged (Weinberg, 1970). Social well-being needs to be viewed from a social and economic perspective that encompasses with income distribution, private property, services, and the causes of poverty. These aspects need to be looked at for the study of well-being for the poor. Providing basic facilities is also an important aspect in discussing the social well-being of the community. The basic facilities include water and electricity supply, transportation services, health and others.

### **Study on Malay**

According to the Federal Constitution of Malaysia, a Malay is defined in Article 160 (2) as a person who is Muslim, normally speaks in Malay, practices Malay customs, is Muslim and was born before Merdeka Day in the Federation or in Singapore or whose parents were born in Federation before Merdeka day (Tambak et.al, 2020).

On the other hand, even if he is a Malay of Malay descent, for constitutional purposes he is still Malay if he is not a Muslim or has left Islam (Idrus et.al, 2015).

Social availability is easily accessible to the urban Malay population through the available transportation infrastructure services, confidence in the level of security, as well as the social participation in the living population (Samsurijan, 2019).

### **Study on Malay Post Malaysia 14<sup>th</sup> GE**

Sensitive issues related to the Malays after GE-14 are more complex because they involve religious, language, and economic issues. Most of them involve ultra-pluralist blocs that raise issues related to Malay privileges, Islam, the Malay language and monarchical institutions (Ramli et al. 2019)

After the Pakatan Harapan government began to rule the country, there are several sensitive issues have arisen in the plural society in Malaysia (Abdul Jamil, 2014).

### **Study on B40 in Malaysia**

The household income class can be divided into three groups, namely households with the lowest 40 percent income, of the total income of Malaysians (B40), households earning 41 percent to 80 percent of the total income of Malaysians (M40), and Households earning the highest 20 percent of the total income of Malaysians (T20) (Chamhuri, 2019)

The dividing line based on income was used to determine the three income groups where the B40 group is households earning RM4,360 and below. Meanwhile, households in the M40 and T20 groups have an income of RM4,361-RM9,619 and RM9, 620 and above respectively (Household Expenditure Survey Report, 2016).

### **Characteristics of the B40 group or low-income group in Malaysia.**

Dependence on one income is a major factor characteristic of the B40 household group. In 2014, about 64.7 per cent of B40 households were dependent on one source of income and left them vulnerable to shocks and stress that could potentially affect their lives (Ismail, 2019).

The majority of B40 household heads engage in low-paying jobs including in services and sales, while some of them are skilled workers based on agriculture, forestry and fisheries (Khazanah Research Institute, 2016).

The B40 household expenditure pattern shows that 62.6 per cent of monthly consumption expenditure is allocated to food, housing and transportation (Malaysia, 2015).

Meanwhile, the low level of educational attainment has affected the ability of B40 households to obtain high-paying employment, resulting in 89.9 per cent of B40 household heads working in low-skilled and semi-skilled occupations (Malaysia 2015).

The high level of indebtedness among the B40s also affected their financial position as the tendency in making personal loans to cover daily expenses resulted in the ratio of B40 household debt to GDP being 89.1 per cent in 2016 (BNM, 2016).

### **Methodology**

This study is done using a qualitative approach by performing semi structured interview and library research. Generally, primary and secondary data are used wholly in this paper.

### **Recruitment of Participants**

In this study, the participants were recruited using criterion sampling. It was based on predetermined criteria from the quantitative phase which were (1) participant who are Malay, (2) household income categorized in middle-income group or B40 group, (3) age from 26 and above. These criteria help in answering the research question of this paper. To ensure the maximum variation of participants, they were selected from different gender and different zone area of staying that available in peninsular Malaysia.

Participants were informed during the quantitative phase regarding the possibility of a second data collection which was the qualitative phase. The researcher would call participants who met the criteria for an interview. The participants were contacted via a telephone call to get their verbal consent for the in-depth interview. The purpose and confidentiality of the interview were explained to the participants. Only participants who consented verbally were invited to the interviews. The date was set according to the participant's availability and preferability. The school teachers were only informed of the number of students eligible for the interview and the date of the interview. However, the name and identity of the participants were kept confidential.

### **Semi Structured Interview**

A semi-structured interview is an interview conducted with a specific protocol and formal questions are given to the informant. However, the researcher is given the freedom to ask questions based on the informant's answers. In this study, the researcher selected three people as informants and all three of them were selected according their expertise in the field of sociology. While 4 more informants are from among the Malays with low-income were interviewed well. These four informants represented four zones in Malaysia which are North of Malaysia, East of Malaysia, South of Malaysia and Central Zone of Malaysia.

The reason why semi-structured interview is used was because the informants were able to answer the question by relating their experience and knowledge according to their senses. As the result, researcher will not only be able to have a closer experience with the informants but will be able to read body language shown by the informants. Therefore, this will lead to a thorough understanding of an issue in relation to the research's topic. Using semi structured interviews will allow this study to empower people to articulate their own views on their own social well-being definition.

### **In Depth Interview**

An in-depth interview is an open-ended, discovery-oriented method to obtain detailed information about a topic from informants. The objective of in-depth interview is to go deep into a respondent's point of view, experiences, feelings, and perspectives. In-depth interviews can uncover valuable insights, and enable this research to find out "the real story" from the people in the know.

### **Interview Protocol**

Interview protocol is an instrument used of inquiry. The process of making an interview protocol was started with the drafting questions according to the objectives of the research. Then, three experts were chosen among the qualified university academicians to verify the interview's question; whether the questions are fit for the research topic. Suitable interview's questions would be able to answer the research questions of the study well. Those three experts were lecturers from Universiti Tun Hussien Onn, Universiti Utara Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

### **Transcription**

The taped interviews were transcribed verbatim in Microsoft Office Word 2016 by the researcher. It was maintained in the original language of the interview, i.e. Malay. Thematic analysis was used to assist the detailed coding and further analysis in a structured form.

### **Library Research**

Research on previous studies was conducted in the library of Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, University of Malaya and University Kebangsaan Malaysia to find for the theory and philosophy of social well-being that applies in Malaysia and abroad. A deeper understanding about social well-being theory is gained by the researcher and researcher is able to identify which instrument or approach of social well-being is suitable to be applied to answer the research question of this study.

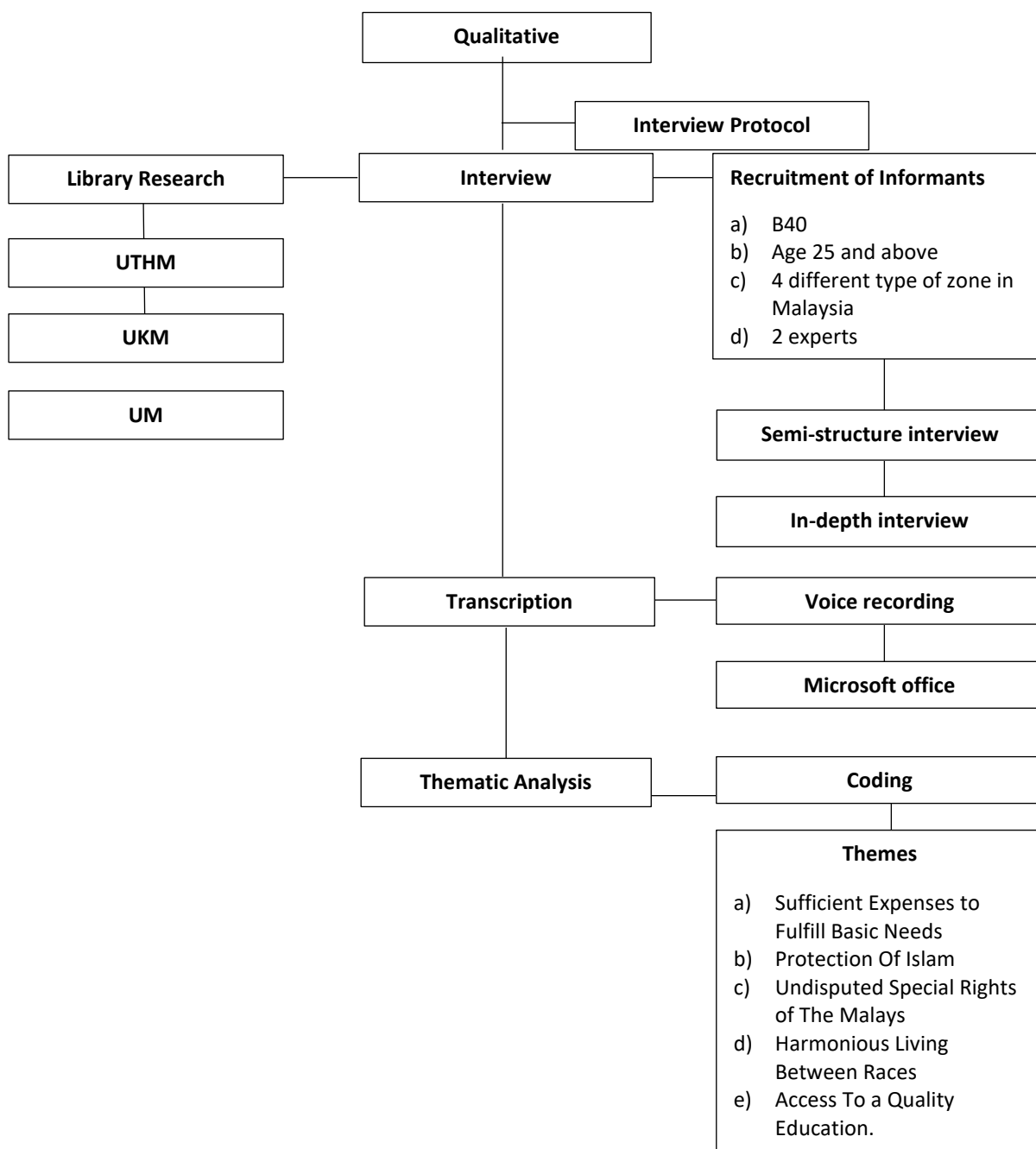


Diagram 1: Flow of the conducted methodology

**Findings & Discussion**

Analysis of the responses to the question about the concept of social well-being of low-income Malays after Malaysia 14<sup>th</sup> general election revealed 5 key themes, (a) sufficient expenses to fulfill basic needs, (b) protection of Islam as religion of federation, (c) undisputed special rights of the Malays, (d) harmonious living between races and (e) access to a quality education.

Based on the five key themes of the social well-being concept of the Malays low income after Malaysia’s 14<sup>th</sup> GE, there are several justifications and reasons why they intend to define their social well-being based on the 7 key themes in the timeline of 2018-2020. The findings of the study will be associated with the elements of well-being society according to the view of Ibn

Khaldun. In Ibn Khaldun's perspective, two aspects should be look in in forming a develop state and harmonious society is through power and usability.

As a government who owns the power and usability in a state, it becomes one of their responsibilities to perform "ma'asy" (the power to do things to meet people's needs) and "kasab" (the usefulness of items to meet the needs of many people, while keeping personal interests aside) (Saputra,2021).

### Sufficient Expenses to Fulfill Basic Needs

#### Food

The first definition of social well-being of the low-income Malays after Malaysia's GE-14 is having a sufficient expenses to fulfill basic needs. The lower-income household spend more on food and housing than the middle and high-income group in Malaysia (Department of Statistics Malaysia,2019).

Low income in Malaysia is known as below 40 (B40), middle income in the category of middle 40 (M40) and high income as top 20 (T20). As reported by Department of Statistics Malaysia (2019), the B40 group allocated 25.6 per cent of its expenditure on housing compared to only 22.8 per cent and 22.2 per cent respectively by M40 and T20. As for expenditure on food also showed the composition for the B40 group was higher by 24.2 per cent compared to 18.0 per cent by M40 and only 12.6 per cent by T20.

Expert of sociology in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia mentioned in the interview that basic needs of low income group in Malaysia can be referred to the Maslow's biological needs where food and shelters comes before anything.

*"social well-being for the B40 group is first when they can get the... access to three basic needs which are housing, food and clothing right... I think it is important... and if we look at Maslow's hierarchy, the biological needs of human, indicated that food and housing are very important, right... so, after they settle the biological needs, then only they could step up to gain another needs or desires, right"* (Associates Professor Dr. Nazrin Muslim).

Low-income group has indicated that food will be their main source of basic need because one cannot survive in life when in hunger. Therefore, food must come as first before any needs.

*"able to own basic needs for survival such as food and drink, shelter, and security. Basic needs are things that need to be taken care of because without these basic needs, a person's life will be threatened...."* (Male,25)

Thus, in the time of post Malaysian GE-14, government under Pakatan Harapan has not specifically supply aid for the food security of the low-income Malay because low-income group is not fall under the category of poor who completely could not afford to buy foods. However, as according to Malay low-income, they are really concern about their food security if their income cannot keep up with the inflation or any changes to the hike up of food prices.

*"As we know, B40 group is a low-income group, so we will feel fine...if we want to define social well-being for ourselves from the perspective of low-income as Malay, our daily needs need to be met. Like the needs in terms of shelter and food...as long*



*as the daily needs are there, that will be enough for us and our social well-being will be guaranteed.” (Female,26)*

In Ibn Khaldun’s view, government should be able to provide basic needs for the people, but the price should not be set by the government because the inflation occurs because of the natural factors and human activities of ihtikar (hoard). (Muslim, 2017).

According to Ibn Khaldun, one of the way that can be done to sustain the food sources of the people is through agriculture (Hossain & Mustari,2013). This is because the main output of agriculture are food and grain and has been used since before the introduction of sedentary life as it meets the most basic need of human beings which is food (Khaldun,1993).

Therefore, in the era of 21<sup>st</sup> century, to sustain the food security, government could encourage more production of food through farming and agriculture using technology and innovation to increase the production of food. Through innovation, sciences and technology, food such as green vegetables, fruits, grains, rice and poultry can escalate and can fulfill the demand of the people with lower price because it is accessible and have low production cost. “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 2016).

Example technologies on agriculture and farming are including improved agronomic practices, using synthetic and organic fertilizers, fruit preservation technologies, tissue culture and provide low cost and nutritious food for poultry animals as replacement of imported wheat (UNCTAD,2017).

## **House**

Shelter is the main elements after food that is included in the social well-being of the Malays. This group choose house as their social well-being elements not because many of them are homeless but many of them still could not afford to own a house as their property (Yatim,2020). Therefore, many of them are still renting a house or stay in family’s house.

*“Through the monthly income we can meet our basic needs in terms of material as food, drink, clothing, without any barriers...the ability to own a house is one thing.. If they stay at home, maybe.... it is a family’s house. Probably his father’s or mother’s house...Some of them could not afford to own a house yet...”(Male,50)*

Under the administration of Pakatan Harapan, there are a lot of house subsidies programme made specifically for the low-income group (B40). The schemes to reduce the burden of the low-income Malay are like Housing Credit Guarantee Scheme managed by SJKP Bhd and My First Home Scheme managed Cagamas Bhd (DRN, 2018)

Besides that, Ministry of Housing and Local Government also planned to improve existing housing financing schemes to provide inclusive and sustainable solutions for low-income groups in accessing affordable housing. In addition, under the Housing Policy 2018, government planned to set the allocation of housing financing assistance according to income group B40 through financial assistance or credit guarantee.

However, due to rising living cost and inflation on goods, many of low-income group still could not afford to buy their own house despite the provided schemes especially those who lived in the city (Jalil, 2018).

*“ It is difficult for B40 to pay the house rent....I suggest that the government should really help, the B40 people” (Male,46)*

Providing a house for every citizens is hardly to achieve when a state have a population more than 32 billion. However, city planning can be made thoroughly by Department of Town and Country Planning to ensure that every land is used strategically to support the shelters for the population of Malaysia. Ibn Khaldun, in his work of Muqaddimah has emphasized vital principals in city planning that includes geographical and the choice of picking the right location to ensure the safety of the city (Khaldun,2000). Characteristics of good choice of housing also includes presence of basic provisions like housing, fresh air and water supply, the social institutions to support and sustain the human activities such as religious, administrative, securities and health institutions to ensure a better quality of life (Khaldun, 2000).

It is obvious that Ibn Khaldun emphasizes housing as a fundamental necessity of city establishment; consequently, one of the pivotal responsibility of city planner is to give great quality lodging to its residents. For sure, this is especially in accordance with the idea we referenced above about adapting the city, where housing is the essential right of every individuals. Ibn Khaldun additionally pointing out his concern about making the city protected by locating the city inside a protective wall.

As when a city become more expanded, they are likewise turning out to be more risky. As people become further developed, the idea of well-being and security would not be restricted within the limited definition of facing the crimes and enemies, but also includes environment, health as well as mental well-being (Khaldun, 2018)

From Ibn Khaldun’s perspective on the essential of house in a city planning, it is clear that city planner have to provide the residents a good quality of shelter protected from danger and harms. In Malaysia, city planner can be referred as Ministry of Housing and Local Government and Federal Department of Town and Country Planning that are regulated under the administration of government. Therefore, these government agencies should provide a successful and efficient housing policy to ensure the social well-being of low-income group in Malaysia is shielded.

### **Protection of Islam as Religion of Federation**

Malay and Islam a correlated to each other. Definition of Malay is someone who adhere to the religion of Islam. Therefore, from the perspective of Malay of low-income, their social well-being will be guaranteed if Islam would be protected as the religion of the federation.

*“Because the Malays and Islam cannot be separated. Sometimes we will be more Malay when we are more Muslim. So, if we do not adhere to religion, automatically our identity as Malays will fall, or will be less Malay...” (Male,38).*

Apart from Islam as the religion of the Federation, Islam is also used as a guide to determine whether someone is Malay or not.

*“In my opinion, the first thing that can threaten the well-being of the B40 Malays is when their religion is disturbed. The issue of religion is a very sensitive issue and Islam has become synonymous with the Malay community. When the affairs of*

*Fardu 'Ayn or Fardu Kifayah are disturbed by others, it is clearly the biggest threatens in their social well-being...." (Male, 25)*

If we look at the definition of the Malay in the Federal Constitution, we must abide by, how the Constitution acknowledge that Islam and Malay belong to each other. Nation. Article 160 of the Federal Constitution, defines a Malay as a person who speaks Malay, practice Malay customs and embrace Islam.

*"Malays are associated with Islam, right? The Malay definition is Islam, right? One of them is Islam, right? So if Islam's issues is raised in the media, it is disrespecting the Malays "(PM Dr Nazri)*

Therefore, that explains in what way spiritual believe system of the Malays were created. Besides that, the siyasah syar'iyah Islamic politics underlined the necessities of managing the development of a state should be upheld by the dominant race of the population. This alludes to a piece of hadith of the Prophet SAW which signifies "the leader is from among (the people) of Quraish". In the Malaysian context, the predominant ethnic is Malay (Khalil, 2018).

Therefore, this would explain why Malays become worry about the appointment of the Attorney General after GE-14, whom not among the Islam and Malay. This issue left as a polemic issue in social media and Malays do feel threaten by this. However, they do realise that as far as the Federal Constitution of Malaysia still not amended, it would not heavily impacted on them. Nevertheless, they react negatively on the appointed of Tommy Thomas on 2018 as he is the first non-Malay and non-Muslim to hold that position since the formation of Malaysia in 1963.

Due to the sense of insecurity that the country had now come under the 'political control' of non-Muslims, it then led to Mahathir's resignation as prime minister on 2020. Thus, resulting to the appointment of Muhyiddin Yassin as the eighth Prime Minister of Malaysia (Osman & Gomez, 2020).

The worrisome of the Malays can be explain through the concept of constitutional convention where an informal tradition that is followed by a state. The appointment of non-muslim as the leader would not interfere with the Islamic regulations in Malaysia and it is not something that would disregard the content of Federal Constitution of Malaysia. Nevertheless, due to the traditional custom that have been longing since the formation of Malaysia, the appointment of non-muslim leaders is seen as odd and breaking the constitutional convention and the largest population of the state became triggered about it. Thus, this will lead to a turmoil in a state.

Ibn Khaldun viewed customs as "determine human nature and character" and "man is a child of the custom". People interiorize the conditions to which they have become acclimated until these conditions become character qualities and habits. In alluding to "conditions", Ibn Khaldun focused on socio-cultural elements of people. He demanded the "viewpoint" of the group, will create mentality towards their worldview. Culture and custom, thusly, shapes the individual based on the "conditions" (Khaldun, 2018).

### **Undisputed Special Rights of The Malays**

Apart from that, low-income Malay also emphasizes that maintaining the special rights of the Malay in Article 153 of the Federal Constitution Malaysia is important to them. Special rights of the Malays are including Malay language as the first language, Islam as the religion of

federation, protecting the monarchical institutions and providing establish quotas for bumiputeras in public service positions, federal scholarships and federal trade or business licences (Federal constitution)

*“other races must accept what the Malays get in the constitution, about the position of Islam, about what the special rights of Malay, Malay language and about the monarchy”*(PM Dr Nazri)

From the Article 153 of the Federal Constitution Malaysia, it is seen that monarchical institution is not just a symbolic of the Malayness but held a lot of responsibilities to sustain the position of Malay in Malaysia. Therefore, Malay will feel unsafe if any of the special rights are questioned by anyone as the special rights are valid since the rectification of “Social Contract” expounded by Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad in 1986 that defined citizenship issues and rights for the non-natives, while granting special rights to the natives.

*“It is the privilege of the Malays, can not be questioned or else it would damage the social contact”* (Male,38)

The Malay monarchy its correlation with Islam is clearly an extension and a series of history that begins from the history of the Melaka Sultan that spread the Islam religion in Malaya. Therefore, it is very appropriate for Islam to be dignified in the Federal Constitution as the religion of the Federation (Malaysia) as the Constitution also dignifies the Malay monarchical institutions in it.

The concept of “Ketuanan Melayu” (Malay supremacy) is not because of the preservation of economic or political power of the Malay but it is because special rights of the Malay consists of the main principle of the Malay that they need to protect. Those principles are Malay language, Islam and monarchical institutions.

The Malays are not greedy in political administrations as we could see that during the general election in 1955, the Malays could have won the election because of the 25 seats contested, 51 were seats where the majority were Malays and Malays could just compete among the Malays’ seat at that time without involving the Chinese and Indians.

However, Indians and Chinese were given the seats during the election to compete with the Malays party. From this, we could see how the Malays are very tolerant and very respectful of other ethnicities. Apart from that, the Malays agreed to maintain the vernacular school of Chinese and Tamil National school, also the same goes for the use of name, culture, religion respectively among the other minority races. For example, if we look at Indonesia, the Chinese need to change their name to the Indonesian name and that will obstruct their culture identity.

Therefore, that is why the Malays reacted skeptically when Pakatan Harapan imposed to ratify the ICERD (International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) if they won the 14th general election (Saat,2018).

*“The rights of the Malays have been tried to be challenged. Although they didn't start yet to do anything, but they have started to be challenge it. Something related to ratification, king right? Haa so that thing disturbs the sensitivity of the Malays”*. (Male,38)

By accepting the norm of ICERD, everybody in Malaysia are equal regardless their race and religion. Thus, this will resulting in the abolishment of Social Contract and the supreme law of the country will be amended.

*“For me personally, Malay deserves to get the special rights, all of them are worthwhile, because..., our rights as Malays have been from then until now, which are really need to be taken care of, so that there are, for example, the privileges of the Malays like ah kampung near my area there is a Kampung Melayu Reserve where some parts are reserved for Malays only” (Female, 26)*

### **Harmonious Living Between Races**

Despite the special rights that need to be maintained, Malay low-income group seek for eternal harmonious living between races. This is because this group can improve their economic through the peace and harmony working environment. In addition, harmonious living environment will ensure their mental health in a good condition which is free from the chaos between races.

*“This social well -being is when we are prosperous in, which to me, I see, is social in race. Malays with Chinese, Chinese with Indians and Malays. We live in peace with each other. That's what I understand” (Female,36)*

Malay low-income naturally traumatized with the incident of 13<sup>th</sup> May that was happened due to the riot between races. The bloody incidents that took place in 1969 has inhibited economic development of Malaysia.

*“Malay, sometimes he... his social well -being, he wants to live in peace, there are job opportunities, no interference, full of respect for each other” (Pm Dr Nazri)*

Ibn Khaldun also emphasizes the elements of harmony living as the third stage of a development of a ruling government out of the five stages. Ibn Khaldun (2000) had classified five phases of the improvement of a decision government. First is the period of development. At this stage, is where gathering fortitude assists individuals with picking leader and giving him power to lead the. Second is the period of consolidation by which the leader attempts to enroll people to fortify his administration.

Third is where the state enjoys sovereignty and people live in amicability. Fourth is the phase of happiness where individuals appreciate quiet and prosperous life. Fifth is a phase of rot which happened when the leaders began to include in oppression, greed to fulfil his desire and joy. This is a period when a nation heading towards destruction. After the rot of the government, another civilization will arise thus the stages will be over and over experienced by the new government. This is referred to as cyclic theory as recommended by Ibn Khaldun in Muqaddimah (Abdullah,2018).

Thus, this explains why Malay low-income hope for a harmonious living between races as the cycle of a new Malaysia's government was at stage two during 2018. Whereby the new government still adjusting in occupying the cabinet of the member of parliament. Therefore, the Malays seek for the harmonious living among races in the midst of government were busy in updating their new administration. Because, the social changes in the shift of power has impacted the unity among races.

*“3 pages Jawi writing in the text book has been questioned after GE-14, this will threaten unity among Chinese, Malay and Indian community as before this, such issue has never arisen. In fact, Jawi writings has nothing to do with the main Islamic preaching agenda, it is just a tool of Arabic non-verbal communication” (Male,38)*

### **Access To A Quality Education**

Lastly, the Malay low-income has mentioned about the need to access to a quality education. Malays has their own quota to enter the higher institutions. However, for the low-income family, to afford their child to the school or higher institutions requires sum of money allocation.

*“Education can solve the problem... with biblical education by changing their lives... with education we are more open, our minds are more open, we will accept the diversity that exists, “(PM Dr Nazri)*

When their income only fits for the basic needs such as food and shelter, the education will be the last thing that they will consider. Without a thorough education policy implementation on the low-income, their income status will be in stagnant in the future because education secured job in expertise field.

*“Education is very important, because a nation will have no progress without education. We need exposure and so on” (Male,50)*

In addition, the timeline of post GE-14 relies with the pandemic era in early 2020. So, the equipment of learning does not requires book and stationaries only but requires technology equipment to perform the online learning. As low-income already struggle with basic need, to provide their child with those equipments is hardly to achieve.

*“So the B40 group, if given assistance such as phone rebates, that can help them to provide their children a better education through online learning. So, that is one of the help that should be given to guarantee the B40 group” (Female,26)*

Besides that, in education, the situation after GE-14 has affected the low-income group as the borrower of PTPTN loan who made a late payment will be blocked from the bank. PTPTN is a loan given by the government to students who pursue their studies at a higher level. That new regulation became a "hot issue" after the GE-14 because it is ironic to the manifesto of Pakatan Harapan whereby they promised to postpone the loan payment to those who are incapable of doing so. They were intended to reduce the student loan burden at first (Aun,2018). However, different regulation was made where the government would call for a blacklist bank to anyone who makes the late payment of the loan (Astro Awani,2019).

This has brought a worrisome to the B40, low-income group that consists of Malay majority as they already struggle to complete their basic needs such as food, clothes, houses, and other bills. This is because the inability to pay off the debt already shown how impotent their income is.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Malay low-income has express five conditions of their social well-being after GE-14. The conditions that make they feel safe to live in this state is seen as useful for the national policy making because to reduce the numbers of low-income will help to boost the economic performance of the country and will makes Malaysia as a harmonious multiracial state.

Ibn Khaldun on the other hand was undoubtedly a prominent Muslim scholar in the study of Islamic history and civilization, famous for his unique magnum opus, *al-Muqaddimah*.

In his work of *Al-Muqaddimah* has covered information pertaining to the study of human society, which comprises of information on good governance as well as characteristics of good leaders. Through his work, all human being will be able to emulate lots of lessons from previous nations' experiences. Ibn Khaldun's explanations of the elements of good governance and characteristics of good leaders are very significant and relevant to be taken into consideration and applied in forming a well-being society.

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