

KOLOKIUM SISWAZAH KITA

PEMBENTANGAN DERAFA AKHIR
DOKTOR FALSAFAH (PENGAJIAN ETNIK)

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*The Impact of Family Socioeconomic
Status on the
Involvement of Malaysian Indian Youths
in Gangsterism*



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BILIK MESYUARAT KITA, ARAS 4,
KOLEJ KERIS MAS, UKM

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Tajuk: The Impact of Family Socioeconomic Status on the Involvement of Malaysian Indian Youths in Gangsterism

This research critically investigates the nexus between familial socioeconomic status (SES) and the proliferation of gangsterism among Malaysian Indian youths, a demographic disproportionately impacted by systemic marginalisation. While existing literature often treats youth crime as an isolated behavioural issue, this thesis argues that gangsterism is a symptomatic response to a ‘toxic’ triad of multidimensional poverty, institutional fragility, and environmental deprivation. Adopting a constructivist qualitative exploratory design, the study utilised purposive sampling to conduct narrative interviews with incarcerated male youths aged 18–30 at Kajang Prison. Data were rigorously processed using ATLAS.ti25 to ensure thematic depth and transparency. The analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 reveals that the transition into gangsterism is rarely a choice but a structured outcome of the ‘interstitial’ playgroups first identified by Thrasher, now exacerbated by modern Malaysian urban poverty. Findings demonstrate that low parental education and occupational prestige do not merely limit income; they degrade the ‘social living area,’ leading to the normalisation of deviance within low-cost housing (PPR) ecosystems. The study formulates a novel Social Impact Framework (SIF), which critically links micro-level familial stressors such as unmet physiological and safety needs, to macro-level structural inequalities through mediating factors of peer-reinforcement and school disengagement. Theoretically, this research challenges deterministic biological crime theories by advancing a macro–meso–micro perspective grounded in social constructionism. Methodologically, it provides rare, high-fidelity qualitative insights into the lived experiences of a marginalised community, moving beyond the ‘indeterministic’ limitations of previous quantitative studies. For policy, the study advocates for a paradigm shift from punitive enforcement to the Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA) approach, aligned with UN Resolution 72/233. It concludes that without addressing the structural ‘toxic living conditions’ and strengthening family institutions, the intergenerational cycle of Indian youth gangsterism will persist despite superficial government interventions.