УДК 338.3

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ПРОБЛЕМА ОГРАНИЧЕННЫХ РЕСУРСОВ И НЕОГРАНИЧЕННЫХ ПОТРЕБНОСТЕЙ

Аннотация: дефицит ресурсов является одной из наиболее значимых проблем в экономике, а также одним из факторов, ведущих к развитию самой экономики. Развивающиеся страны являются наиболее пострадавшими странами, поскольку они испытывают нехватку природных ресурсов и имеют высокие темпы роста населения. Малайзия также столкнулась с дефицитом факторов производства из-за увеличения численности населения.

Ключевые слова: ограниченные ресурсы, Малайзия.

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PROBLEMS OF LIMITED RESOURCES AND UNLIMITED NEEDS

Abstract: resource scarcity is one of the most significant issues in economics and also one of the factors leading to the development of economics itself. Developing countries are the most affected countries as they have a lack of natural resources and have a high population growth rate. Malaysia also faced the same issue as they faced a scarce factor of production due to an increase in population.

Key words: limited resources, Malaysia

The idea of scarcity is important to economics as scarcity is the main root that leads to economic problems in the country. This idea is implemented by both Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo, the classical economist, in which they believe the world is facing limited resources to fulfill unlimited needs. Scarcity problems will lead people to compete with each other to accomplish their goal. This scenario is clearly portrayed once Malaysia faced chicken and egg shortage in these past two years due to an increase in the cost of production of chicken and poor weather conditions. Both chicken and egg are some of the basic foods in Malaysia as the government allocates ceiling price controls for these products to avoid food security among Malaysians. However, an increase in the ceiling price for these products gives a detrimental effect to Malaysians as they need to spend more for their basic needs. Besides, shortage in these two products cause the economic decision makers, households and firms to compete with each other to maximize their utility in terms of satisfaction and profit. In other words, scarcity is the situation when there is an excess demand for resources due to unlimited demands and scarce supply for resources. There are some possible indicators on why resources are categorized as limited and important in the economic development of a country [1,2,3,4].

In economics, resources can be defined as the input or the factor of production needed in the production process to produce output. The factors include land, labor, capital and entrepreneurship. All factors of production are limited as it is difficult and needs numerous efforts in terms of investment and research to obtain and gather all the factors of production to produce output. In this case, land can be categorized as the scarcest factor of production. Land is a comprehensive phrase that encompasses all natural resources found on land, including oil, gold, wood, water and vegetation. Land is categorized as limited due to some reasons. Classical economists believe that any factor of production that comes under land has no supply price as it is the free gift from nature. Land can be exploited for production without giving any monetary compensation to the ultimate owner as there is no human effort needed to produce land. Besides, land is also a rigidly fixed element. This is because the amount of land available will always stay constant and no amount of human effort can change it. This indicates that an excess in demand will not influence the availability of land. To emphasize, this trait indicates that land supply is perfectly inelastic. However, from the perspective of a single firm, any free gift of nature is abundant. As a result, it can be concluded that the supply of land is perfectly inelastic from the standpoint of an economy, but relatively elastic from a single firm's perspective. Since land is the gift from nature, we can only improve or deteriorate the features of land to a certain extent. The amount of land, and particularly the land itself, is indestructible and permanent. In addition, land is immobile and one cannot shift land from their places of origin. Land has multiple uses that can be applied to various purposes. Each land has its own characteristics and its applicability for various applications is not the same. For example, we may utilize barren land to build a factory but not for farming and agriculture. This will lead to scarcity as our country has few suitable locations to perform agriculture activities. Since Malaysia still depends on primary products, Malaysia has to import some primary products to meet Malaysian's unlimited needs [5,6,7].

In the case of Malaysia, we can see that the scarcity problem does not only come from resource limitation but also comes from the effect of natural disaster and poor weather conditions in 2022. Malaysia in 2022 shows a tremendous flood tragedy that gives a significant impact to Malaysia's economy. According to Hazran & Norsida in 2017, the agricultural sector is the most affected sector every time a flood occurs. This is because the farmers will have challenges and losses due to disrupted agricultural activity, poor road accessibility, food security issues and property losses. This shows that natural disasters such as floods contribute to scarcity problems in Malaysia as it has a detrimental effect to the primary sector in Malaysia. As floods lead to property losses such as livestock farms, the poultry industry will be worse off as the supply of these raw materials is very limited to be allocated to everyone. This problem will lead to another economic problem which is food security. Food security will be a problem during floods since the impacted areas will be damaged and people having challenges to have access to food. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food security can be defined as the assurance for all people to have both physical and economical access to the basic foods at all times. However, it is beyond our control once a flood occurs. Scarcity of resources in this case will lead to food security issues while lowering the standard of living among people as they have to compete with each other just to get the basic foods. As a result, this also will lead to poverty in which people will have a bigger challenge to get non-basic food as the basic food itself is limited. Besides, from manufacturing sector perspectives, there will be a scarcity in raw material from manufacturing products itself as the factory for these products is also damaged and the government needs to allocate some allocation for this industry to restart their operation [8].

As mentioned, scarcity happens due to unlimited needs from the population. According to the Department of Statistic Malaysia (DOSM) in 2022, Malaysia's population is expected to be 32.7 million in 2022, up from 32.6 million in 2021, with a 0.2% annual population growth rate. The decrease in population growth rate is attributable to a decrease in the number of non-citizens from 2.6 million in 2021 to 2.4 million in 2022. This is in line with the government's restrictions on international travel during the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Citizen population climbed from 30 million in 2021 to 30.2 million in 2022, with the growth rate reducing from 0.8% to 0.7% during the same year [9].

Malaysia estimated an increased population in 2022 and only a few states recorded a little decrease in their growth rate. The interdependence of population growth and natural resources affects both the disruption of the climate and farmers' ability to adapt to it, particularly in developing countries with quick-changing demographics and economies that depend heavily on natural resources. Population growth will increase consumption levels among people and it will decrease the amount of limited natural resources available to each individual in which this situation is called demand-induced scarcity. An Essay on the Principle of Population, a work published by Malthus in 1798, claims that the earth's resources could not support an ever-increasing population. According to Malthus, population growth poses a threat to economic growth. Malthus stated that when population growth is unrestrained, it expands geometrically while sustenance increases arithmetically. This shows that an increase in population growth will lead to scarcity as the higher the population, the more needs to be satisfied and the world has not enough natural resources to meet all needs at the same time [9,10].

In conclusion, scarcity is one of the fundamental ideas in economics as it is the root of economic problems in the country. The concept of scarcity itself exists in the factor of production in the economy in which individuals will always be facing the same economic problem due to scarcity. As natural resources are limited, it is impossible to allocate such a limited resource to fulfill all the unlimited needs among people. In the case of Malaysia, Malaysia is doing great in import activities especially in primary products as Malaysia itself has a lack of natural resources to be allocated to its people. However, the scarcity problem in Malaysia worsened in 2022 as Malaysia experienced a flash flood which had a detrimental effect to Malaysia's economy in terms of their primary and manufacturing products itself [10,11,12].This scarcity problem continues to occur when there is an increase in population growth in which there will be an increase in unlimited needs among Malaysians. All of the above reasons that lead to scarcity makes Malaysia suffer from food security issues in few industries including poultry industry. Even though there are numerous initiatives taken by the government to increase the supply from the poultry industry, it is still vague and not guaranteed as natural resources and climate change is beyond our control. The best way to maximize the utility among people is to control fertility and population growth rate among Malaysians that will benefit everyone better.

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