

# [P ramlee – college essay](https://assignbuster.com/p-ramlee-college-essay/)

P. Ramlee (b. 22 March 1929, Penang- d. 29 May 1973) was the quintessential Malay entertainer par excellence- actor, director, composer and singer. Despite being unschooled in music and the performing arts, Ramlee attained the heights of a legend, with an impressive track record of having acted in 65 films and sung 390 songs. Closely linked to the golden era of Malay movies, P. Ramlee is an icon in the Malay entertainment scene in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.

Early Life P. Ramlee was born Teuku Zakaria bin Teuku Nyak Pute on 22 March 1929 in his grandmother’s house at 40A Counter Hall in Penang, Malaysia. His father, Teuku Nyak Puteh, was a sailor from Lhokseumawe in Aceh, Indonesia. His Acehnese ancestry later led Ramlee to enjoy considerable fame in Indonesia. Ramlee also had a stepbrother, borne of his mother, Che Mah Hussein’s previous marriage.

Ramlee studied in several schools, namely Kampung Jawa Malay School, Francis Light English School, the Japanese Navy School Kaigun Gakko during World War II, and Penang Free School. He was an active sportsman, excelling particularly in badminton, sepak takraw and football.

Career Ramlee did not receive formal training in the performing arts. Yet, he had an extremely impressive career, having acted in 65 films and directed 34 feature films.

In 1945, Ramlee entered a singing contest organised by Penang Radio for North Malaya and emerged third. He was the runner-up in the same contest held in 1946, and the winner in 1947. Ramlee’s big break came when Tamil film director, B. S. Rajhans, spotted him on 1 June 1948 at a cultural festival where he sang his own composition, Azizah. Rajhans then invited Ramlee to be a back-up singer for the Malay Films Productions (a film studio set up by the Shaw Brothers at Jalan Ampas, Singapore, in 1947). Impressed with Ramlee, Rajhans cast him in a 1949 film, Nasib (Fate).

In 1955, Ramlee directed his first film, Penarek Becha (Trishaw Man). Ramlee acted in all the films he directed except Panca Delima, a 1957 production. The comedic films that Ramlee acted in from 1957 are still popular among contemporary Malay film watchers. The first of these was Bujang Lapok (Dowdy Bachelors), which co-starred S. Shamsuddin and Aziz Sattar. His final film was Laksamana Do Re Mi (Do Re Mi 3), which was released in 1972.

In April 1964, he moved to Kuala Lumpur to join Merdeka Film Productions. Of the 34 films he directed, 18 were shot in Kuala Lumpur.

Besides directing and acting, Ramlee also composed, wrote and sang 390 songs. Noted for his musical versatility, Ramlee explored a repertoire of genres, ranging from jazz to joget (a popular Malay folk dance). The last song he composed and sang was Ayer Mata Di Kuala Lumpur in 1973.

Ramlee also acted in two television series, Intan (1971) and Rantau Selamat (1972), which were written by Abdullah Hussain. In addition, he directed four stageplays, namely Jiwa Putera Melayu (1956), Sultan Mahmood Mangkat Di Julang (1959), Damaz (1962) and Sam Pek Ang Tai (1972). Ramlee also produced, directed and wrote two radio dramas, Jiwa Putera Melayu (1955) and Rantau Selamat (1972).

Living Legacy Ramlee died of a heart attack on 29 May 1973 at the age of 44 years. He was buried at the Muslim cemetery of Jalan Ampang in Kuala Lumpur. Ramlee’s influence on Malay popular culture is undeniable. His films continue to be enjoyed on television, and his films and music have been adopted by succeeding generations. Many expressions in popular Malay culture either originate or were popularised by Ramlee, with lines from his films still being quoted today.

Ramlee is well honoured for his contributions to the Malaysian entertainment industry. In Kuala Limpur, Jalan Parry was renamed Jalan P. Ramlee in 1982 and the P. Ramlee Memorial was set up in Setapak in 1986. In the early 1990s, Ramlee was awarded with the honorific title of Tan Sri posthumously.

Today, fans continue to flock to Ramlee’s birthplace, known as P. Ramlee House, where his memorabilia are on display. Once known as Taman Furlong, the residential area has been renamed Taman P. Ramlee.

Family Ramlee married three times. His first wife was Junaidah Daeng Harris, whom he wed in 1950. The couple had two children before they divorced in 1954. He then married Noorizan Mohd Noor in 1955 and they were divorced in 1961. That year, Ramlee married singer Salmah Ismail, more popularly known as Saloma. He had seven children in total- three of whom were adopted and one a stepson borne of Saloma.