The Development of the Malaysian Cultural Elements Framework

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ABSTRACT

Multiracial and multiethnic people make Malaysia what it is today: a diverse nation. The cultural traditions of Malaysia passed down from generation to generation, are heavily influenced by the country's origin story. Nevertheless, there aren't many authoritative sources or in-depth analyses that examine certain aspects of Malaysian culture. As a result, in-depth research into Malaysian cultural elements is required. This research aims to identify cultural aspects in general, while the second objective will focus on identifying the cultural elements of Malaysian culture. The method for identifying Malaysian culture is through an integrative literature review, in which all literature sources explaining culture as general and Malaysian cultural characteristics and elements are analyzed. The outcomes of this research indicate that the elements of Malaysian culture fall into material things such as architecture, archaeological artifacts, clothing, art, food, and pastimes. In contrast, non-material culture consists of norms, symbols, knowledge, ceremonies, festivals, language, social institutions, and social structure. Future scholars will refer to the research results from this study as a reference, particularly in the definition of Malaysian culture from diverse study disciplines. To have a more thorough and in-depth knowledge of Malaysian culture, it is recommended that future studies on Malaysian culture expand the factors that focus primarily on the development of Malaysian culture.
Keywords: Malaysian, Cultural, Elements, Framework

1. INTRODUCTION

The cultural history of Malaysia has begun hundreds of years ago. It is believed that Malaysia is a crossroads for various main cultural traditions originating in archipelagic Southeast Asia, including China, South Asia, the Middle East, and the West (People of Malaysia, n.d.). The diversity of cultures in Malaysia occurs due to the mix of external cultures during the formation and development of Malaysia as a nation. According to People of Malaysia (n.d.), Malay culture, Orang Asli cultures of Peninsular Malaysia, and numerous East Malaysian cultures are indigenous to the region. Native Malay culture on the Malay Peninsula and across Southeast Asia was profoundly impacted by pre-Islamic Indian and early Islamic influences in the first 1500 years of the Common Era and the period of Indian interaction with the Malay Peninsula, roughly beginning in the second or third century and lasting until the late fourteenth century, had a significant impact on the region's religious practices (particularly Hinduism and Buddhism), including the literature, and visual arts (People of Malaysia, n.d.). Since the nineteenth century, especially, Western cultural influences have impacted several facets of Malay culture, most notably in the fields of technology, law, social structure, and economy (People of Malaysia, n.d.). Malaysian culture is also believed to have flourished with the arrival of the Chinese and Indians in Malaya at some point in time.

The new culture that began to grow in Tanah Melayu was the national culture. When contact and cultural integration dominate, national culture emerges from a blending of civilizations (Saat, 2009). The events of 13 May 1969 compelled Malaysian authorities to make concerted measures to safeguard ethnic peace, and following the events of May 13, the government introduced Malaysia to national culture in order to increase awareness and togetherness among Malaysians. To establish people's unity, the government implemented the National Cultural Policy in August 1971, which is based on the culture of the country's indigenous people, and Islam became a significant part of the construction of the national culture; hence other cultures' suitable and desirable components are also acknowledged as elements of national culture (Saat, 2009). It is targeted at entire community unity since it is not just a symbol of Malaysian society's togetherness but must be understood, appreciated, and practiced by all Malaysians (Saat, 2009). Based on the statement expressed by Saat (2009), it turns out that the national cultural policy has played an important role in strengthening the country's harmony through art and culture. The national cultural policy not only affects the unity of the country of Malaysia but also influences the development of the Malaysian arts and culture arena.

Based on this notion, the goal of this research is to develop a Malaysian cultural framework through the study of cultural elements in a broad area. The grounds for conducting this research in the first place include a limited of sources that critically assess Malaysian cultural elements. This is due to the fact that there are only a few accessible publications focusing on Malaysian culture from the perspective of empirical research. Based on this concept, it is unquestionable that the aforementioned difficulties significantly reinforced and strengthened the research's problem description.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Culture

There are many descriptions of the definition of culture expressed by philosophers depending on their understanding and experience, and expertise. It indirectly intensifies the discussion of 'what is culture?' from time to time. Just like Raymond Williams, an expert in culture, has explained that the term 'culture' is among the two or three terms in the English language that is the most difficult to understand (Batina, 2009). Naturally, various studies try to define what "culture" is in the true sense of the word. However, the definition of culture is up to the perspective of an individual's understanding.

Culture is the generic term used to describe society and its way of life. It is defined as a set of values and standards, or a group of deeply embedded behaviors, that we share with people from all different cultures and help us feel like we belong (Lebron, 2013). Understanding social system evolution is critical because culture influences both the internal and external behavior of social systems, as well as their norms and values (Lebron, 2013). The statement from Lebron clearly explained that culture is the reflection of a way of life which sometimes should be learned from others.

The important fact about culture is that a great majority of human lives are shaped by culture, which is broadly defined as everything that people learn from others and that persists in producing norms and traditions. People have been able to occupy and explore nearly every area of the world thanks to growing cultural advancements in technology and social institutions (Whiten et al., 2011).

In a nutshell, culture is all about a sharing system that consists of information, belief, practices, attitudes, and artifacts in a group of people, and each cultural component are connected to have a significant impact on our behavior (Gill, 2013). According to Thompson, Hickey, Thompson, et al (2016), culture has been divided into two main categories which is the Non-material Culture and Material Culture (refer to Figure 1). All cultures convey their ideas, values, and understandings via objects, architecture, and art, therefore material and nonmaterial cultures are closely intertwined (Thompson et al., 2016). Belongings and artifacts are considered part of the material culture, including

other physical objects such as tokens for public transportation, cars, shops, and buildings, while ideas, attitudes, and beliefs of a society are what make up its nonmaterial culture (Kaur & Kaur, 2016).

According to the given statement, culture is not inherently difficult to comprehend. It depends on an individual's perspective in translating the cultural concepts that an individual or society has practiced.

2.2 Culture Elements: An Overview

As we see in figure 1, Thompson et al (2016) state that religion, values, morals, language, and norms are among the elements of non-material culture. However, there are also some researchers who have different opinions on identifying cultural elements and still relate to the material and non-material categories of culture.

Table 1: Table of Cultural Elements Identification from previous literature

Author	Culture Elements Identification
(Drew, 2022)	Norms, Language, Festivals, Rituals And Ceremonies, Holidays, Pastimes, Food, Architecture, Religions, Values, Taboos, Sports, Clothing And Outfits, Music, Social Hierarchy, Symbols, Dance, and Art.
(Kaur & Kaur, 2016)	Immaterial cultures, such as values, norms, language, rituals, and symbols, and material cultures, such as objects, art, and institutions.
(Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.)	Social Organization, Custom, Religion, Language, Government, Economy, and Art.
(Lebron, 2013)	Language, Economics, Religion, Policies, Social institution, Class, Values, Status, Attitudes, Manners, Customs, Material Objects, and Education, are supported by Hofstede (1991), Trompenaars (1993), Czinkota, Ron Kanen (1993) and Kanungo (2006).
(The Elements of Culture, n.d.)	Idea, Symbol, Artefacts/Physical Item.
(Eriksen, 2004)	EB Taylor (1981) includes the element of knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and additional experiences or behaviors that man has acquired as a society member in characterizing culture.
(Tharp, n.d.)	Rituals, Myths, Languages, Values, Beliefs.
(What Is Culture: Basic Elements of Culture and Features, n.d.)	Language, Norms, Beliefs, Symbols, Values, and Cognitive Elements.
(What Are the Basic Elements of Culture?, n.d.)	Language, Social Structure, Customs And Traditions, and Arts.

Referring to Table 1, various cultural elements have been defined according to the understanding of each researcher. However, when examined, these opinions still manage to portray a general understanding of culture. Some researchers refer to the art element as one of the elements of understanding "what culture is," and these statements are also strong evidence that art and culture play an important role in the development of a culture.

2.3 Malaysian Culture Elements

Before this study explains in more depth the relationship between Malaysian art and culture, this study will first explain the characteristics of Malaysian culture. As described in the introductory section, Malaysia is a country known for its cultural diversity. Its cultural uniqueness is one of the tourist attractions and has made Malaysia known as a country rich in cultures of various races and ethnicities. According to Deraman (1975), Malaysia has a plural society consisting of various ethnic groups, and

every ethnic group in Malaysia has its own language, religion, beliefs, values, customs, and other cultural heritage (Deraman, 1975). Deraman (1975) also added that racial and cultural diversity is one of the main characteristics of Malaysian society (Deraman, 1975). The three main races that have been established in Malaysia for a long time are the Malays, Chinese, and Indians as well as the Kadazan-Dusun, Iban, and Melanau races (Zulkefli, 2019). Cultural practice in Malaysia is based on the concept of learning, shared, universal, inherited, variable, emblematic, and insight into nature (Zulkefli, 2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research method used for this study is the integrative literature review method, where literature related to the definition of culture, types of culture, cultural characteristics, and cultural elements as a whole, as well as Malaysian cultural characters and elements, is collected to formulate a cultural understanding, focusing on Malaysian culture. Later, the cultural elements that were collected were categorized according to the theme and used as the research framework for this research. Then, these categorized elements were analyzed, where the results of the analysis process formed a new structure for identifying cultural elements and their suitability in describing Malaysian culture that can be used as a reference for future researchers.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

When reviewing the Table of Cultural Elements Identification (Table 1) from previous literature and correlating it to the explanation of the Malaysian cultural elements in general, there are several elements which repetitively being mentioned. This shows that most researchers have the same opinion on defining culture but have other perspectives on translating culture. Therefore, the need to understand each keyword of the cultural element issued is very important.

4.1 Operational Definition of Culture Elements

As per mentioned above, since there are various opinions in explaining cultural elements, the definition of each cultural element tended to be explained in detail.

Table 2: Table of Cultural Elements and the description

Culture Elements	Description
Norms	Drew, (2022) defines "norms" as "normal," which refers to a habit that is natural to a culture for an individual or community or to the cultural norm of a group in society. Kaur & Kaur, (2016) agree that norms are rules for how societies interact, differ, and act in general, including customs and traditions for them to follow.
Language	According to Drew (2022), a similar language and a method of communicating bind most civilizations together. What Is Culture: Basic Elements of Culture and Features,(n.d.) even stated that every culture has its own language, which is taught to the next generation by the community of that culture, and the next generation also has to understand the language since it is a way or tool that people use to share what they think and keep their ideas alive.
Festivals	Drew (2022) explained how festivals are a way for every culture to celebrate their exclusivity and express who they are. Festivals are often a chance to show off a culture's food, music, and clothes.
Rituals	Rituals, (n.d.) defined ritual as an act that replicates a cultural concept or value in a pattern, repeatedly and symbolically. Rituals frequently strengthen social cohesion because their primary goal is to align an individual's beliefs within society. Similar to Drew (2022), who added that cultural rituals and ceremonies are comparable to festivals, although they frequently have a more serious and commemorative component.

Ceremonies	Ceremonies are (a collection of) formal, typically defined, and conventional actions carried out on significant social or religious occasions (Ceremony, n.d.).
Holidays	A holiday has been defined as a day that is customarily recognized for a festival, religious event, or national celebration, and these days often hold special meaning for certain people, for the government, or for a particular religion (Holidays, n.d.). "Holy Day" is where the term "holiday" comes from. Everywhere in the world, holidays are recognized and celebrated. But every nation and culture has its own unique festivals, frequently based on its past (Holidays, n.d.). Drew (2022) explained that in certain societies, significant holidays are celebrated by a collective decision to take the day off from work.
Pastimes	(Drew, 2022) stated that every culture has its own distinctive pastimes that often include sports, but they may also involve things like going on hikes and watching particular television series.
Food	Food is frequently utilized by people to maintain their cultural identity. People from various cultural backgrounds consume various meals. Families' dietary preferences and dislikes are influenced by the places they call home and by where their ancestors came from (Sibal, 2018).
Architecture	When touring the world, some will notice that different countries have been influenced by various styles of architecture, and from there, how culture influences architectural decisions in this location can be observed (Drew, 2022).
Religions	According to Abdulla (2018), religion is a basic way people experience and comprehend the world if culture describes how people perceive and comprehend the world. Religion is also viewed as a substantial foundation that informs cultural expression, and the purpose and manifestation of cultural expression demonstrate the link between culture and religion(Abdulla, 2018). (Drew, 2022) added that religion and culture are distinct ideas, yet they also have a lot in common, and over many centuries, cultures have been frequently constructed on top of religions (Drew, 2022).
Taboos	Something that is regarded as unacceptable inside a cultural group is referred to as a cultural taboo. While this intersects with religious taboos, social norms rule certain civilizations more than religious standards. Western society, for example, has a diverse range of faiths but a uniform set of cultural taboos (Drew, 2022).
Sports	According to Drew (2022), sports bring us together as a civilization, and it can also assist us in crossing cultures and getting to know people.
Clothing	The way people dress varies greatly according to their place of origin since each culture has its own clothing trends; hence, a person's or a group of people's views, customs, values, morality, economy, art, and technology may all be shown in their clothing (How Can Clothes Represent Culture?, n.d.). Given that the fashion industry is basically about culture and that elements like patterns, fabrics, and clothing contribute to representing culture in numerous ways, fashion is also the best method to express who we are through the clothes and accessories we choose to wear (How Can Clothes Represent Culture?, n.d.). Drew (2022) added that the clothing we choose might be considered regular in our culture but odd or even "dressed up" in another.
Outfits	An outfit is "the act of fitting out or equipping (as for a voyage or expedition) or a set of tools or equipment, especially for the practice of a trade (Outfit, n.d.-a). Or it can be understood as an outfit as "a clothing ensemble often for a special occasion or activity," and so on (Outfit, n.d.-b).
Music	Music is a sequence of sounds created by human performers, electronic devices, or a mix of both elements, with the goal of pleasing an audience (Music, n.d.). Some societies eventually develop a predominance of a musical style that is distinctly their own (Drew, 2022).
Social Hierarchy	A hierarchy is a method for classifying individuals according to their significance or position, such as in a firm or in society and the term "social" refers to a person's relationship to or understanding of society's structure (Social Hierarchy, n.d.).Since a hierarchy is necessary to enable a culture to choose who will be the decision-makers

	and be treated differently in social circumstances, many cultures have their unique ways of structuring society into hierarchies (Drew, 2022).
Symbols	Symbols are things that represent something or any subject and often elicit different responses and feelings; hence, some symbols are genuine forms of nonverbal communication, while others are literally tangible items (The Elements of Culture, n.d.). (Drew, 2022) also gives examples such as flags and elements such as national birds or flowers in stating traditional symbols.
Dance	Martin (2020) stated that a community might perform a particular kind of dance known as "cultural dance." and it may be used and understood in certain ways. He added that these might include rituals, special occasions like weddings and births, ways to honor ancestors, or even just for fun, and the dance is exclusive to a certain group of people and their customs.
Art	Arts in culture are the tangible manifestations of one's aesthetic sensibilities, feelings, and beliefs (Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.). Arts have always been the best way for people to show their feelings and ideas, including many different things, such as writing, crafts, architecture, music, dance, theatre, etc. It also added that arts are the most important part of human culture because they show what we have done in the past, and it's also a good way to keep culture alive for the sake of future generations (What Are the Basic Elements of Culture?, n.d.).
Customs	Custom is an element to define right and wrong and generates social pressure to accept those definitions; societies rely on customs, which include their traditions, values, and social norms (Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.). Every part of our conduct is influenced and governed by customs and traditions, and these customs might be formal or informal and differ from each region. It also stated how customs form and take on the characteristics of our beliefs and habits, and as time goes on, they also often change, develop, and vanish, but one thing always holds true: these traditions and rituals are crucial to our social behavior and evolutionary process (What Are the Basic Elements of Culture?, n.d.).
Attitudes	Detlef (2017) explained that an attitude is how a person shows what they believe and value through their words and actions. He also added that values often affect how people feel and that values can be affected by culture and personal tastes; hence, our values can sometimes be at odds with those of other people and the organization. Values and attitudes certainly have a strong relationship with each other (Detlef, 2017). In addition, values and beliefs have an impact on cross-cultural success because they show an openness to new ideas and viewpoints. The stronger our convictions and ideals, the more likely we are to react emotionally when they collide with cultural differences (What Is Cultural Competence & How Is It Measured?, n.d.)
Values	Value has been identified as another major aspect of culture which entails judgments of what is good or bad, desirable or unwanted, and the ideals of a culture determine its norms (The Elements of Culture, n.d.). In simple words, Intangible characteristics or beliefs that are acknowledged and supported by society also are referred to be values (Kaur & Kaur, 2016). In addition, when anything or a substance gains relevance in our everyday lives, it gains value. The value of various things is occasionally conveyed and taught to children by their parents. Some values are explained by society; as a result, the values of a specific society collect and passed down from generation to generation (What Is Culture: Basic Elements of Culture and Features, n.d.).
Beliefs	Greif (1994) stated that cultural beliefs are the concepts and thoughts shared by many people that control interaction—between these individuals as well as between them, their gods, and other communities and these elements are neither scientifically found nor analytically proven. In simple definitions, belief is a state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing (Belief, n.d.).
Social Organization	A social organization is an organization where people are divided in society through a social organization, where there is a leader who is more powerful than the average individual in most societies (Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.). It

	also added that social organization also depends on factors like sex, age, career, or even reputation, and there may be several organizational levels in various societies. In general, an essential component of culture is a social organization, which establishes how society views the interactions among its constituents (Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.).
Government	In general, a government may be defined as a political organization that acts as the foundation for the administration and control of a country or community, as well as the institutions constructed by society in order to preserve order (Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.).
Economy	In simple words, the economy has been defined as the guidelines for purchasing, reselling, trading, and determining a thing's worth (Types, Elements & Subsets of Culture, n.d.). In detail, it is also a system of interconnected production, consumption, and trade activities, and it ultimately decides how resources are distributed among all of the consumers and to meet the requirements of persons living in and participating in the economy, commodities, and services are produced, consumed, and distributed (Kenton, 2022).
Policies	A policy is an official decision made by a group of people, a commercial organization, the government, or a political party on a certain course of action (Policy, n.d.).
Social institution	Nickerson (2022) has stated that an established habit, custom, behavior, or system of roles and connections that is seen as a normative structure or arrangement within a community is referred to as a social institution. He also added that social institutions are the societal structures that have an impact on how society is organized and runs, and institution like family, the media, education, and the government are a few of them (Nickerson, 2022).
Class	A class has been identified as a collection of individuals or objects that are thought to constitute a group due to shared features, qualities, or characteristics; or kind (Class, n.d.). However, if referring to the cultural context, more than just the material circumstances of people's lives are reflected in social class. In addition, the cultural practices and behaviors that denote social class are shaped by objective resources (such as wealth), and these signals help upper-class and lower-class people develop cultural identities that are based on individual assessments of their relative social status (Kraus et al., 2011).
Status	Social status or status refers to a person's place in the social hierarchy based on honor or prestige. The rights, responsibilities, and lifestyle that come with that position are known as their social standing. Status may be ascribed from birth based on criteria like gender, age, race, and family ties, or it can be earned via things like schooling, employment, marriage, or other life events (Social Status, n.d.)
Manners	Manner has been defined as a trait or customary manner of action that is custom and social behavior or norms of conduct as shown by the widely practiced customs (Manner, n.d.). Culture-specific manners may evolve throughout time, and some are based on religious or moral principles, such as the biblical commands to honor one's parents and treat others with kindness and respect, which are shared by many faiths (Swarbrick, 2012). On the other hand, modern etiquette, politeness, and manners are important in every culture and community because they respect and enlighten the human condition (Mcdowall, 2013).
Material Objects	According to Gibson (1979), material objects are described as convenient, moveable portions of lifeless surrounding that are always referred to as cultural artifacts, either through production or by adopting natural objects (Habermas, 2001).
Education	Unlike numerous non-formal and informal ways of socialization, education is a discipline concerned with techniques of teaching and learning in schools or school-like contexts; hence, education may be seen as the transfer of a society's ideals and collected knowledge (Education, n.d.). In relation to culture, culture is passed down through education, which is accomplished by passing on preservation practices from one generation to the next (Mathews & S, 2020). Education is also always evolving in

	response to cultural growth since education is a tool of cultural transmission and a reflection of cultural ideals (Rachmadtullah, 2018).
Idea	The idea has been defined as any thought existing in mind as a consequence of mental comprehension, consciousness, or action. a thinking, concept, or idea: a first impression: an opinion, point of view, or belief: a strategy; a determination (Idea, n.d.)
Knowledge	Knowledge has been identified as information that is developed via learning, several cognitive processes, including perception, meaning construction, reasoning, and memorization, are involved (Travica, 2013).
Morals	Rather than laws, moral refers to the principles of right or wrong conduct, fairness, or honesty, that each individual believes in (Moral, n.d.). In addition, morality is also a set of ideas about what is right and good versus what is wrong or harmful, and morals differ drastically throughout time, space, and society (Culture and Morality, n.d.)
Myths	Myth is defined as symbolic of storytelling that cannot be certain of its origin. Myths often relate to tradition and are even supposed to be real events and sometimes related to religious beliefs. However, myths differ in being distinguished from symbolic behaviors such as cults or rituals and symbolic places or objects such as temples or symbolic icons (Myth, n.d.). On the other hand, cultural myth is a tale that has been passed down orally and has a deeper significance, and most of these urban legends have an impact on how people conduct their lives and even how they relate to one another. It then added that, notably, myths play a part in one's life as well as in society at large (The Cultural Myths Of America, 2017).
Cognitive Element	The cultural component known as the "cognitive element" deals with handling challenging situations or natural disasters. The cognitive components of culture are those that teach a person how to deal with a certain circumstance, whether it be social or in the natural environment. As an example, in order for their son or daughter to live in peace under certain circumstances, parents teach their children these virtues (What Is Culture: Basic Elements of Culture and Features, n.d.).
Social Structure	A system of interactions between and among individuals and groups is referred to as a social organization or structure in a broad sense. These relationships or groups are created to boost society's effectiveness. Examples include fraternities and sororities, labor organizations, corporations, governments, and close family members (What Are the Basic Elements of Culture? n.d.).
Artifacts	The artifacts, or tangible items or material objects that make up a society's material culture are one of the components of culture. The majority of artifacts in the simplest cultures consist of a few basic tools, the huts that people live in, and their clothes. (The Elements of Culture, n.d.).

The table above is the definition of each cultural element that has been mentioned by the previous researcher (refer to table 1). The definition of each of these elements is important in gaining an understanding of "culture" in general. If we look closely, referring to the definition of a given element, there are several meanings of cultural elements that are similar. This suggests that several cultural elements belong to the same group. As a result, the first step in categorizing terms has been completed.

When viewed as a comparison between the explanation of the literature review of Malaysian culture and culture in general, there are several elements described as being in the same category or having the same intent. For example, status belongs to the same category as a class and social hierarchy, and the cultural elements of customs have a description that is almost identical to morals and tradition.

Based on this notion, this research has listed all of the previously mentioned elements and classified them as synonyms of the word for the purpose of group classification of each term (refer to Appendix 1). Analysis of this synonym of cultural elements found that there are seven categories of cultural elements that are in the same class, which are:

- Festival and Holidays
- Religion, Ceremonies, Rite, Custom, and Myths
- Pastime and Sports
- Values, Attitudes, Beliefs, Moral, Taboos, Religion, Custom, Policies, Manners, Ideas, Myths
- Education, Knowledge, And Cognitive Elements
- Clothing and Outfit
- Social Hierarchy, Social Structure, Class, Status, and Social Organisation
- Material Objects and Artifacts
- Government and Economy
- Art, Dance, and Music

The categorization of these elements shows that there is a term used in the study of past literature describing the culture, but that it is not exhaustive and is used from different perspectives. When there is an overlap in the classification of cultural elements, it causes confusion for other researchers to identify the authenticity of a cultural element according to the topic discussed. The categorization of these elements is necessary in order to create a study framework for comprehending the general understanding of culture.

5. A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK: MALAYSIAN CULTURE ELEMENTS FOR VISUAL ART
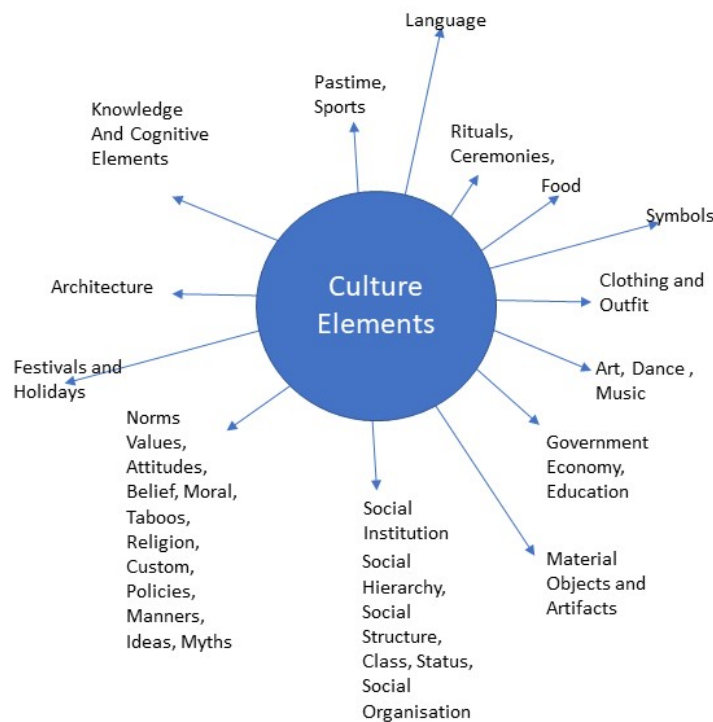

Figure 1 The Framework of Cultural Elements.

The following is a proposal for the Framework form that has been developed with a thorough study of cultural components, as shown in Figure 1. Each categorized term has a significant impact on how a group expresses its cultural traits. Despite the fact that the categorized elements have different meanings, each element's keywords are linked to the others. However, in characterizing Malaysian culture, all elements that have been categorized also play an important role in reflecting Malaysian culture; hence, one keyword is required for each group of elements that have been classified to be easily used as a reference to future cultural researchers.

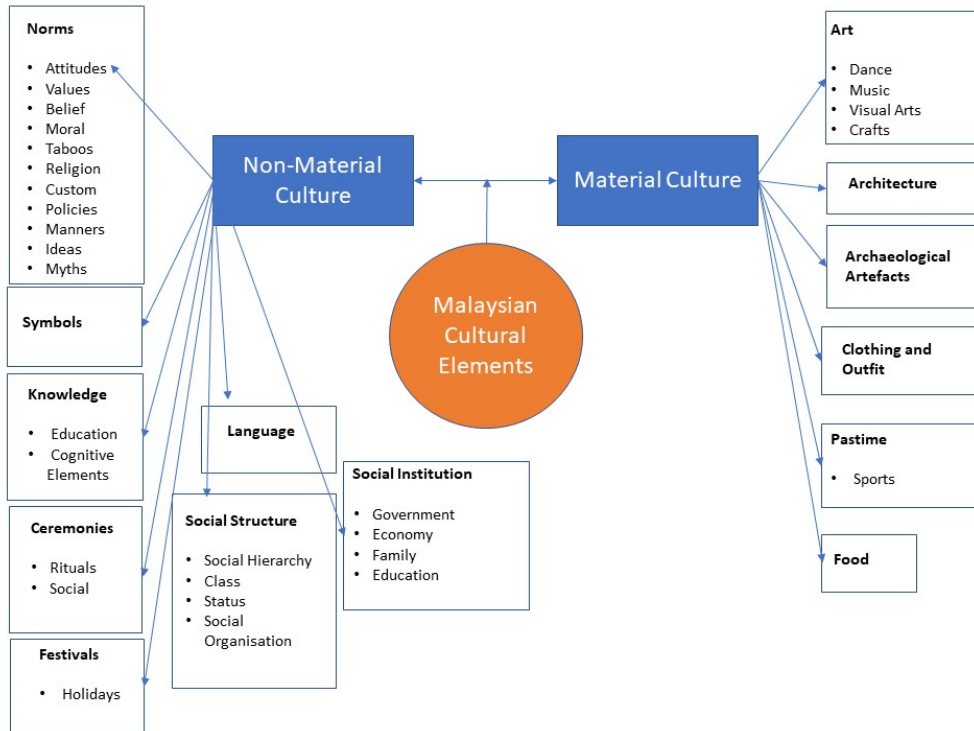# 6. MALAYSIAN CULTURE: THE DISCUSSION AND STUDY IMPLICATIONS

Figure 2 The Framework of Malaysian Cultural Elements

This study has recommended the Malaysian Cultural Element Framework, which may be used and expanded in recognizing Malaysian cultural identity and traits based on the cultural classification as shown in Figure 1. The foundation for this framework's construction is founded on the notion that the aspects listed therein will have a significant impact on how Malaysian culture develops.

Referring to Figure 2, Malaysian culture is divided into two categories, namely non-material culture and material culture. As stated in 2.2, according to Thompson et al. (2016), all cultures convey their ideas, values, and understandings via objects, architecture, and art; therefore, material and nonmaterial cultures are inseparably linked. In a more profound understanding, Thompson added that material culture refers to the intangible things that people make and to which they give significance. Examples of material culture include artifacts, architecture, and works of art. Non-material culture, on the other hand, refers to the 'mental blueprints' that serve as rules for group behavior and may include the collective assumptions, languages, beliefs, values, conventions, and attitudes of a group (Thompson et al., 2016).

6.1   Malaysian Non-Material Culture)

The term "non-material culture" refers to the intangible concepts that individuals have about their own culture. These concepts might include things like beliefs, values, rules, conventions, morality, language, organizations, and institutions. For example, the immaterial cultural notion of religion comprises a collection of thoughts and beliefs about God, worship, morality, and ethics. In addition, these beliefs, therefore, determine how a society reacts to the many events, themes, and concerns that pertain to its religious traditions (Material and Non-Material Culture, n.d.).

Therefore, the next section will briefly describe the elements of Malaysian culture that are characterized by non-material and their influence on the development of Malaysian culture.

6.1.1 Norms

As discussed at the beginning of this writing, the norm is briefly defined as the way of life of a community. In the description of Malaysian culture, as stated in Figure 2, norms include several small elements that help shape the norms of Malaysian society. These little elements are attitudes, values, beliefs, morality, taboos, religion, customs, policies, manners, ideas, and myths. If observed, all these sub-elements are interconnected and influence each other in forming a cultured society. Furthermore, Malaysia is known as a 'multi-cultural' country in the eyes of the world. In addition, the traditional celebrations of Malaysia's very diversified population are a large part of the country's vibrant cultural life. As a result, Malaysia is home to a large and diverse population (Security of Malaysia, n.d.).

Due to this cultural diversity, Malaysia celebrates various festivals and ceremonies, practices of different cultures and beliefs, implementing numerous ideas and policies, as well as adapting the diversity of attitudes and morality, in the daily lives of its people.

6.1.2 Symbols

As explained in Table 2, Drew (2022) described symbols as things that stand in for someone or anything, and they often trigger varied reactions and sentiments. As a result, some symbols are actual nonverbal communication tools, while others are, in fact, material objects. However, in the proposed Malaysian culture framework, a symbol has been placed under non-material types of culture instead of material culture due to symbol puts more weight on the non-tangible sense. Indeed, meaning and understanding characterize symbols more than symbols that are visualized physically.

The explanation of the symbol in the context of Malaysia is found to be very extensive. Generally, the symbol symbolizes the country of Malaysia referred to several types. According to Kamal (2019), Malaysia's national symbol is the Malayan Tiger, which symbolizes strength and courage; hence this symbol became an icon of the police in Malaysia, used as an element representing banks such as Maybank, also used as the main logo of Proton, as well as the Malaysian football association. Apart from that, Malaysia's national symbol is the Hibiscus. According to Kamal (2019), the stability of politics and the economy is symbolized by the hibiscus color. The five petals represent the five principles which is the "Rukun Negara" ideals, and the variety of their sizes, colors, and shapes represents the multicultural culture of the nation.

In addition, while attempting to describe the symbols that are significant to the culture of Malaysia, traditional symbols also play an essential role. This is due to the fact that traditional symbols are often representations that have been passed down from one generation to the next right up until now. Kamal (2019) explained that 'Wau Bulan' or better known as 'Moon Kite' is one of the traditional symbols in Malaysia. Moon Kite reflects the uniqueness of Malaysian culture through its structure and design concepts. As a result, Malaysia as a whole has an excessive number of symbols expressing the religion, race, ethnicity, or way of life of a community. This is due to the fact that Malaysia is a nation that is comprised of several cultural identities.

6.1.3 Knowledge

Refers to Figure 2, knowledge includes education and cognitive elements where this element indicates the knowledge learned and the knowledge inherited. In general, the development of knowledge culture in Malaysia is similar to the development of knowledge in other countries. In Mokhtaruddin (2020) writing, he mentioned Prof. Dr. Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, the founder-director of the Center for Advanced Studies on Islam, Science and Civilisation (CASIS), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, explained that there are 7 indicators of knowledge culture for society, namely:

- Participation of members of the community in various educational initiatives,
- Knowledge drives both the decision-making process and the actions taken by humans.
- Knowledge is highly significant at all levels of the individual and society assessment systems.
- Individuals and prominent institutions in society will prioritize, help, make available, and recognize any party engaged in the quest and transmission of knowledge.
- The illiterate, foolish, and anti-knowledge will not be recognized by society.
- Knowledge-based societies will reject and despise ideas, assertions, and behaviors that are not grounded on knowledge and facts.
- Knowledge is not only the desire to learn, expand, and comprehend a specific area of study but also the ability to represent the nature of information in several areas (multi-disciplinary) and across disciplines (inter-disciplinary) to unite oneself and the community.

Based on these indicators, knowledge is found to be an important element in the construction of a society's culture. Without knowledge, especially knowledge of Malaysian culture, the true features of Malaysian culture would not be understood and appreciated by the Malaysian community.

In Malaysia, apart from educational institutions such as schools and universities, cultural institutions also play an important role in the dissemination of cultural knowledge. Some of the cultural institutions mentioned include; the National Museum in Kuala Lumpur, which was constructed in a Malay architectural style in 1963, and is home to an extensive archaeology and anthropological collection that traces the social, cultural, artistic, and economic history of Malaysia (Security of Malaysia, n.d.). Another cultural institution, the oldest museum in Peninsular Malaysia, Perak Museum in Taiping, has exhibits on the natural history and material culture of the area. On the other hand, the colonial and immigration histories of Penang Island are highlighted through the Penang Museum and Art Gallery. Another example is the Sabah Museum in Kota Kinabalu and the Sarawak Museum in Kuching, both of which were founded in the late 19th century, respectively, documenting the distinct prehistory and history of these states and their inhabitants in East Malaysia (Security of Malaysia, n.d.).

Apart from the museum as a place of cultural dissemination, there are also several other institutions that celebrate knowledge and culture, in particular through visual arts, crafts, and artifacts. For example, the Islamic Arts Museum in Kuala Lumpur recounts the beginnings of Islamic art and culture in Malaysia all the way up to the modern day, beginning in the seventh century and going all the way up to the present day (Security of Malaysia, n.d.) Britannica website also added that a large number of art galleries and theatres dedicated to the performing arts could be found across Malaysia. The other institution is the National Art Gallery which is home to both permanent displays of contemporary artworks produced by Malaysian artists as well as temporary displays of art from all around the globe. Besides The National Art Gallery, there is the grand national theatre in Kuala Lumpur known as the Istana Budaya (which translates to "Palace of Cultures and Arts"); performances of plays, dances, and musical productions are regularly put on by performers from both Malaysia and other countries around the world (Security of Malaysia, n.d.).

According to the information provided by Britannica about Malaysia's cultural institutions, Malaysia is one of the nations that actively promotes culture and recognizes the value of culture in the growth of the Malaysian state. The evolution of Malaysian history and culture is greatly influenced by these cultural organizations. Through this organization, the culture of science is passed on from generation to generation in addition to being studied.

6.1.4 Ceremonies

As per explained in Table 2, in general, ceremonies are often incorporated into special events and also performed to celebrate an important occasion. Birth, baptism, naming, graduation, marriage, anniversary, retirement, and death are all examples of personal ceremonies which has been conducted globally (The Importance of Ceremony, 2021). Malaysia also participates in birthday, wedding, and graduation celebrations. What's fascinating is that in Malaysia, the ceremony often reflects racial and cultural influences. For instance, in Malaysia, weddings are performed in accordance with the customs of several races, including Malay, Chinese, Indian, and others. While the Chinese wedding includes a tea ceremony, the Malays celebrate weddings with the tradition called 'Akad Nikah' and 'Bersanding'. This is compelling proof that the ceremony is one of the fundamental components in describing Malaysian culture.

6.1.5 Festivals

As is well known and mentioned at the beginning of this writing, Malaysia is a country rich in culture due to the characteristics of this country which has various races. Among Malaysia's uniqueness are the festivals celebrated throughout the year. The celebrations celebrated by Malaysians include Chinese New Year for Buddhists, Hari Raya Aidilfitri and Hari Raya Aidiladha for Muslims, Deepavali celebration for Hindus, and Christmas for those who profess Christian teachings. In addition, all these festivals are celebrated with the concept of 'Open House', where Malaysians practice visiting during the festive day as part of the culture (Malaysian Culture, n.d.).

6.1.6 Language

Malaysia's national language is Malay, and the use of three different languages is a result of Malaysia's multi-ethnic society, with Malays accounting for approximately 50% of the population, Chinese accounting for nearly 24%, and Indians accounting for slightly more than 7%. (Malaysian Language Overview: Exploring the 137 Languages of Malaysia, 2021). The United Nations has commended Malaysia as an example of achievement in preserving a healthy balance between diverse ethnic groups, and language undoubtedly plays a role.

6.1.7 Social Structure

In the Malaysian community, social hierarchy or social structure is common. The understanding of the social structure is very widespread and can be viewed from several angles. In order to adapt behavior in response to environmental factors in a society, it is crucial to comprehend social hierarchy (Evason, 2016). From the perspective of family organization, in Malaysia, where older individuals often have more wisdom owing to more extensive experience, age is crucial in establishing respect and worth in society. In social systems, the degree of English proficiency and the depth of education often affect a person's position within a particular organization and social standing within the community. From the perspective of status, the wealth factor is also said to have a significant role in determining the social structure in Malaysia (Evason, 2016).

Overall, the social structure in Malaysian culture is important, as it is also related to the traditional practices practiced by every race in Malaysia. For example, referring to family institutions, as Evason, (2016) has mentioned, Malaysia practices a family system that respects older and more experienced people. For example, as practiced by the Malays, the culture of respect for the elderly includes the custom of shaking hands and bowing a little while walking in front of the elderly. As for the Chinese, they will prostrate and give money (Angpao) to the older ones. Indians, on the other hand, will bow and touch the feet of older ones as a sign of respect. The body language shown by each of these races is

enough to prove that the social structure within the family institution is important in this practice that is practiced and continues from generation to generation.

In the social system, the hierarchy in the educational system determines the position and role of each individual in the development of Malaysia from all angles. The social structure in the organization or field of education determines the way an individual thinks and acts in a given situation. Understanding the social structure in terms of status and position in the community is also important in Malaysian culture. The difference in status in the social hierarchy in Malaysia reflects the economic development in Malaysia and how Malaysia is developing as a whole.

6.1.8 Social Institution

According to Nickerson (2022), the term "social institution" describes a group's customs, rituals, or systems of roles and relationships that are widely accepted as the standard for that group. In addition, social institutions are the societal structures that impact how society is organized and run, such as family, the media, education, the economy, and the government.

In terms of family social institutions, Nickerson (2022) added that one of the most significant social structures is the family. It is regarded as a "key component" of society since it serves as the main vehicle for socialization. The family is a social entity that performs many different, intricate tasks. By instilling values, beliefs, and norms in its members, the family socializes them (Nickerson, 2022).

Evason (2016) explains that in Malaysian households, the father is often the patriarch and the elders, however, are in charge of handling crucial family issues. It is part of Malaysian culture that before making any significant choices, the family's elders are consulted, and they also expect the highest deference. The traditional function of a woman often entails taking care of the home's domestic affairs and children. Power disparities mostly still exist since it is still believed that a woman's primary responsibilities are to be a wife and mother. However, depending on one's familial history, women's situations often differ greatly. For instance, a lot of families have the resources to pay maids or nannies to take care of the kids and the housework, enabling moms to work full-time. Younger people's ideas about how men and women should act are changing greatly. However, even women who pursue jobs might expect to sometimes rely on their spouse or father for financial support. Furthermore, legal codification favors men in matters of inheritance, guardianship, and family history (Evason, 2016).

In general, the social structures that build up a family are dependent on the family culture, which may have been passed down from generation to generation or may have been absorbed through the culture of the community. It may change depending on the conditions and the procedures that are currently in place.

As is well known, education is an important element in developing a community, and it plays an important role in developing a country's culture. Therefore, in the understanding of social institutions, according to Nickerson (2022), education plays a significant role in the socialization of children and young people because it imparts to them the cultural norms, values, and beliefs that prevail in a given society. It's a means through which traditions may be passed down from one generation to the next. The knowledge and ability to participate effectively in society are also gained via formal education (Nickerson, 2022).

Based on the understanding of education social institutions, it is believed that the requirements and identity of a multicultural community have been reflected in the development of the Malaysian educational system. To address the demands of its citizens and the global community, there are at least eight major kinds of educational institutions (which include both government or publicly sponsored schools and private institutions) (A Glance At The Malaysian Education System, 2022). It is believed that 6 of the category are for the Pre-Tertiary level, which includes; Government and private sector kindergartens, Government schools or public-funded national schools, Government-aided schools or

national-type primary schools such as Chinese national-type primary schools, and Tamil national-type primary schools. Private-funded schools, Independent Chinese secondary schools, and Foreign system schools such as international schools and expatriate schools. While other two categories are the Higher Education Level which consists of Government-funded public universities, polytechnics, and community colleges, and the other one is Private higher educational institutions (A Glance At The Malaysian Education System, 2022).

The aforementioned educational institutions were among the key developments in the spread of education across Malaysia. The development of social institutions in the sphere of education demonstrates that Malaysia is one of the nations that is concerned with the development of the educational system and a culture that will endure. To strengthen Malaysia's educational social institutions and bring them in line with international advancements, several efforts are being conducted in the sphere of education.

In terms of social institutions in the government, Nickerson (2022) stated that the government is another important part of society with its own set of institutions. Its job is to keep things running smoothly, keep people safe, and look out for the common good. This is done by the government's many sub-institutions and agencies, like the police, the military, and the courts. By making sure the law is followed, these legal institutions keep society in order and keep crime from happening (Nickerson, 2022).

Generally, Malaysia is a federated constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, also known as the Paramount Ruler, is the head of state and the spiritual leader of Islam in Malaysia. The nine hereditary rulers (sultans) of Peninsular Malaysia choose this monarch for a five-year term from among their own number (Government, n.d.-a). Overall, in the Malaysian government, there are 70 senators in total; 26 are chosen by the state legislatures, and 44 are appointed by the king. The 222 representatives in the Hall of the People serve staggered five-year terms and are chosen at large. Parliament may be dissolved at any moment by the monarch, generally at the suggestion of the prime minister, and new elections must be held within three months. The Federal Government is in charged of several different areas, such as Foreign Affairs, Defense, Internal Security, Civil and Criminal Law, Citizenship, Economics, Healthcare, and Education, among many others. The federal government may act on any issue at the request of a state legislative assembly, and it can also pass laws to enhance the uniformity of the laws of two or more states (Government, n.d.-a).

In ensuring that Malaysia is growing rapidly and meeting the needs and welfare of Malaysians, several social institutions within the Malaysian government have been established, including the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, Ministry of Plantations and Commodities, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economic Affairs), Ministry of Local Government Development, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Works, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth and Sports, and several other ministries (List of Ministries is based on sources from (Senarai Terkini Menteri Kabinet Malaysia 2022-2027 Kerajaan Baharu, 2022)).

In the development of a government, economic progress is also considered one of the important elements that reflect a social institution. The creation and dissemination of products and services are the primary responsibilities of the social entity known as the economy. In addition to this, it is in charge of the trading of money and other resources (Nickerson, 2022). Through this statement, it turns out that the economy and the government have a strong and mutually supportive relationship with each other.

According to Mun (2007), since Malaysia gained its independence in 1957, the country's economy has undergone a significant structural change, moving from being heavily dependent on tin mining and rubber plantations to one that is industrial in nature. Most of Malaysia's industrialization initiatives, particularly the growth of heavy industries, were launched utilizing the big push strategy via HICOM, a government-funded organization. Mun (2007) also added that three crucial elements—the public

delivery system, foreign direct investments, and financial markets—have a significant impact on the development of the Malaysian economy. Foreign direct investments are also crucial since they may boost Malaysia's economy with financial and human resources.

In conclusion, the economic stability of Malaysia has an indirect impact on the total growth of the nation. As a result, the culture and way of life of Malaysia's society are influenced and shaped by this development. The social institution of the family, education, the economy, and the institutions of government are the primary pillars that contribute to the formation of the social structure of each community in a developed nation.

6.2 Malaysian Material Culture

Material culture is a phrase from the archaeological and ethnological fields, according to Jules David Prown (1982), and this phrase is often used to explore the artifacts which present in a community's art and culture (Sahari et al., 2020). Moreover, because of its applicability to studies relating to heritage and ethnic identity, material culture research methodologies have recently been employed and extended into other relevant subjects such as culture, antiquities, and the arts (Sahari et al., 2020).

Artifacts are associated with ideas, values, and characteristics of a community, hence studying them is crucial to material culture studies, as stated by Awang Pawi (2010). Awang Pawi also mentioned in his writing that Lissant Bolton (2001) and Jules David Prowan (1982) include not only works of art but also performances, ornaments, architectural, creative arts like furniture and displays, cuisines, and other tools like musical instruments(Awang Pawi, 2010).

Therefore, this writing will explain a little bit about the understanding of cultural material in the context of Malaysia and its environment.

6.2.1 Art

As explained in Table 2, art plays an important role in shaping a culture. From the Malaysian cultural context, according to James (2012), Malaysia has a rich cultural history, and its handicrafts and arts have gained regional fame through years of tradition (James, 2012).

The arts and crafts of Malaysia are as dynamic and varied as the country's multiethnic relationships *(*Famous Handicrafts and Arts of Malaysia*, n.d.)*. In addition, artists in Malaysia use anything from textiles to kites as a medium for self-expression. Some examples of Malaysia's well-known traditional arts include earthenware, ceramics, metal handcraft, wood handcraft, handwoven crafts, batik, traditional kites such as "Wau", weaving products, "Songket" cloth, and pottery *(*Famous Handicrafts and Arts of Malaysia*, n.d.)*. It is believed that these artisans created artworks that are skillfully incorporating Malaysia's rich cultural background into their work. Mansoor (2022) added that "Tekat" embroidery, Pua Kumbu Cloth, Pewter Objects, Keris, Beaded Crafts, and Sape instruments are also proof of the rich Malaysian culture where this art has been produced in the multi-racial community in Peninsular Malaysia, including races in Sabah and Sarawak.

As mentioned earlier, art performance has also been categorized as one of the cultural elements. Therefore, performance art in the Malaysian cultural context includes Mak Yong Dance (Kelantan), Kuda Kepang dance (Johor), Zapin dance (Johor), Lion Dance (Chinese), Bharata Natyam Dance (Indian), Magical dance (Iban, Sarawak), Sumazau dance (Sabah), Sewang dance (Orang Asli People), and Bhangra dance (Sinkh) (*8 Tarian Tradisional Di Malaysia Yang Perlu Pelajar Ketahui*, n.d.).

6.2.2 Food

The national cuisines of Malaysia have been passed down from generation to generation and have undergone several evolutions and assimilations, resulting in extremely distinctive and exquisite dishes made with varied tropical ingredients (Naili et al., 2018). Naili et al. (2018) also added that Hyman (1993) mentioned that Malaysian meals evolved from the absorption and transformation of a diverse ethnic mix and immigrants who arrived in Malaysia in the past, and this assimilation has generated a distinct and flavorful diet. Satay is said to have evolved from kebabs, which came from the Arabs. Then came the Indians, who added additional spices to Malaysian food, such as bread, rice pilaus, curry, and unusual vegetarian meals. Indonesians brought Chinese soy sauce, bean sprouts, and tempeh, while the Indians brought bread and curries (Naili et al., 2018).

Nasi Kandar, Nasi Lemak, Satay, Beef Rendang, Nasi Kerabu, Ikan Bakar, and goat soup are examples of Malay cuisine that may be found in Malaysia. Chinese dishes such Char Kway Teow, Wanton me, Hokkien Prawn me, Curry me, Hainanese Chicken Rice, Penang Assam Laksa (fish mackerel noodles), and Yong Tau Foo are examples. Banana Leaf Rice, Roti Canai (prata), Thosai, Naan, Chapati, Tandoori Chicken, and Mamak me Goreng are some of the Indian cuisine. Not to mention, Peranakan cuisine includes Kiam Chai Boey, Otak-Otak (fish paste), Fish Stomach (fish stomach), Enche Kabin (fried chicken with sour dip), Jiuhu Char (lettuce wrapped in turnips), and Acar (pickled vegetables) (salted vegetable soup). Other traditional foods from Borneo include Manok Pansoh (chicken, mushrooms, lemongrass, and tapioca leaf in bamboo shoots), Jaruk (wild boar or fish cooked with rice in bamboo shoots), Hinava (fermented dish of fish, ginger, shallots, and chilies cooked in lime juice), Sarawak Laksa, and Kolok mee (*Cuisines in Malaysia*, 2018).

Overall, traditional food is one of the ways to highlight the uniqueness of the culture found in Malaysia. Each traditional food has its own storytelling and history. Therefore, Malaysia, through the Department of National Heritage, is making an effort to record Malaysian traditions in order to preserve the uniqueness of Malaysian culture in the eyes of the world.

6.2.3 Architecture

Architecture is defined as the art or science of building, more specifically referring to the art or practice of designing and building structures, especially habitable ones, formation or construction resulting from or as if from a conscious act such as the architecture of the garden or a method or style of building. In addition, architecture can also refer to a method or style of construction *(Architecture, n.d.-a)*.

According to Wahid et al. (2021), architecture alumni and the newly formed Malaysian Institute of Architects have had a significant impact on the aesthetic direction of the country's built environment, which has been influenced by its natural beauty and supported by a wealth of resources. He added that because the Malaysian country is a hot, humid, tropical environment, as well as its supply of inexpensive lumber and other construction materials, architects and builders in Malaysia are free to explore a wide range of innovative architectural styles(Wahid et al., 2021). Wahid et al. (2021) also added Malaysian architecture has been classified into several categories which are Traditional Architecture, Colonial architecture, Modern Architecture, Regional Architecture, Post Modern Architecture, Nouveau or Pseudo-Nouveau Architecture, and Green Architecture (Wahid et al., 2021).

A study conducted by Wahid et al. (2021) shows how much architecture in Malaysia has grown rapidly. From the influence of tradition in its design and structure to modern influences in line with the current culture, many cultural changes and influences have been absorbed as Malaysia's identity in the development of architecture in Malaysia.

6.2.4 Archaeological Artefacts

In Malaysia, the Department of Museums, Malaysia is the body responsible for collecting and storing the collections of Archaeological Collection, Ethnological Collection, and Natural History Collection.

Referring to the official portal of the Department of Museum, Malaysia (Archaeological Collection of the Department of Museums, 1963-2007), the Archaeological Collection includes Ceramics, Food residue, Metal implements, Wooden implements, Votive tablets, Charcoal samples, Neolithic stone implements, Palaeolithic implements, Hoabinhian culture stone implements, Haematite, Burnt clay, Beads, Stone and sculpture *(*Collection of Museum Malaysia*, n.d.)*. The Ethnological Collection includes Decorations and textiles, Personal ornaments, Tools and industry, Fire related tools (materials to produce fire), Houses (components that are relocated, photos, models, and plans), Musical instruments, Weaponry and war implements, Religions and belief systems, Traps (hunting), Medicine and magic, Agriculture, Games and entertainment, Livestock (materials related to livestock), Masks, Shadow play puppets, Currencies, Stamps, and envelopes, and Transport *(*Collection of Museum Malaysia*, n.d.)*. Lastly, the Natural History Collection which referred to Birds, Mammals, Amphibians, Reptiles, Sea/freshwater creatures, Insects, Botany, Geology, Bones/Skeletons,and Bird eggs *(*Collection of Museum Malaysia*, n.d.)*.

6.2.5 Clothing and Outfit

When it comes to culture, clothes and how it is worn are important factors in defining a culture. The presentation of traditional clothing that embodies Malaysian culture is very common in Malaysia.

According to Tajuddin (2019), it is difficult to restrict the extent and issues involved in modernization, including social, economic, cultural, and other issues. Even clothing now serves as a social status indicator and serves as a means of protection, with hidden meanings and messages. The researcher added that if we examine the traditions and customs of various areas, we can also see that the usage of clothes is expanding, particularly clothing used for casual activities and clothing with covert messages on it for special occasions Tajuddin (2019) In addition, many factors, including culture, values passed down via families and community organizations, the environment, media, current fashion trends, and a person's personality, have an impact on how they choose to dress. They all discuss how they dress and how their tastes are formed(Tajuddin, 2019).

Based on the above statement, Malaysia has also undergone a change in the culture of wearing as time changes. However, on the whole, Malaysian culture still emphasizes the wearing of traditional dress according to the needs of either a particular ceremony or a celebration. As explained in this writing, Malaysia is rich in cultural and ethnic groups, which leads to differences in the way of life, beliefs, and ways of wearing each culture.

"Baju Kurung Pahang," for instance, is the traditional clothing of the Pahang woman communities. Men, however, dress in "Baju Melayu Cekak Musang" with black trousers and "Sampin." Cloth (*Traditional Clothes among Malaysians*, 2021). Other states have their own traditional clothing as well, like Negeri Sembilan, Kelantan, Terengganu, and others.

If according to the race in Malaysia, the clothes that are always styled by the Malays are "Baju Kurung" for women and "Baju Melayu" for men. As for the Chinese, they often style "Cheongsam" for women and "Tang Suit" for men. For Indians in Malaysia, women will wear a long-wrapped cloth named "Sari", and men will style Kurta or Dhoti. The Peranakans in Malaysia often wear long shirts that are adapted from "Baju Kurung" and match them with "Sarong" cloth. The specialty Kadazans

traditional cloth is the headgear called "Siga", and Kadazan women will wear embroidered cloth called Papar. The cloth will then be matched with the headgear called "Siung" (*Traditional Clothes of Malaysia - Vibrancy and Diversity at Its Best*, n.d.).

Looking at the diversity of traditional shirts found in Malaysia is proof that Malaysia is indeed rich in its cultural beauty. Every inch of the stylized dress reflects the uniqueness of ethnicity and race found in Malaysia.

6.2.6 Pastime

There's not much to say about a pastime or better known as a hobby. This is because hobbies are the way an individual spends their time. However, hobbies and cultures are not alien, as hobbies are also capable of forming a culture. For example, the culture of watching football, fishing, and hanging out is a culture that is often highlighted by the community in a positive form or otherwise. Formerly, traditional games are often used as one of the hobbies of the Malaysian community.

According to Kun & Mat Nayan (n.d.), cultural diversity in Malaysia has resulted in a long history of artistic and intellectual achievement. Children's traditional games like Congkak (a fill-the-wooden-board game), Batu Seremban (a stone-throwing game), Sepak Takraw (a ball-kicking game played with a rattan ball), Gasing (a spinning top game), and Wau (a kite-flying game) are all part of this storied heritage. However, the emergence of digital technology and the consequences of globalization have led to a decline in the popularity of traditional children's games formerly common in our society (Kun & Mat Nayan, n.d.).

However, this change is not considered a negative change as there is a lot of effort in re-establishing these traditional games.

7. STUDY LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study's limitations were restricted to a few scant investigations of the literature. Because the study's methodology involves an integrated literature review, a larger and more diverse source is required. This is due to the fact that subjects and concerns pertaining to culture have a very broad range of study, necessitating the utilization of a variety of literary sources. Online studies, articles, journals, and books are the sources of literature that have been utilized as data since there are not enough resources for empirical research on Malaysian culture. Thus, any source that has described the components of the culture or that focuses on the study of Malaysian culture has been included in this research. The presence of publications that conduct research on Malaysian culture and support the statement of the problem made in this study also will be used and analyzed.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has created a framework that thoroughly defines the components that Malaysian culture must have. The knowledge of Malaysian culture may be explained by a number of other factors in addition to those listed by Deraman, (2001), such as language, religion, beliefs, values, customs, and other aspects of cultural heritage.

Malaysian culture should be observed from all angles, from traditional culture to current cultural knowledge, rather than only focusing on a few components of it. The significance of Malaysia's cultural elements and character promotes comprehension of the history of Malaysia's foundation as a multiracial country as well as increases knowledge of Malaysian culture. The majority of earlier literary works

describe Malaysia's diversity and multiracial uniqueness, but few go into depth on the specific cultural factors that contributed to Malaysia's development of uniqueness. Therefore, this work makes an effort to analyze Malaysia's cultural components from all aspects, allowing Malaysia to be considered for both its ethnic variety and its cultural components as well. Malaysia has a variety of cultures overall, which leads to a variety of cultural beliefs. In the future, research that emphasizes Malaysian culture as the major topic, these cultural aspects that have been developed will serve as a reference to future cultural studies.

9. AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

All of the researchers that participated in this research made contributions at various points during the investigation. The process of data collecting, the establishment of the research framework, the structuring of the study methodologies, and the discussion in the formulation of the conclusions of the study are all areas in which each member makes a contribution.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Conflict of Interest

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APPENDIX

Table of Culture Elements Synonym

Culture Elements	Synonym	Source
Norms	Benchmark, criterion, measure, model, pattern, rule, barometer, gauge, mean, median, medium, par, scale, touchstone, type, yardstick	(*Norms*, n.d.)
Language	Accent, dialect, expression, jargon, prose, sound, conversation, diction, dictionary, discourse, doublespeak, vernacular, vocalization, speech, style, terminology, vocabulary, voice, word, gibberish, idiom, interchange, lexicon, palaver, parlance, verbalization, wording, argot, articulation, brogue, cant, communication, patois, phraseology, signal, slang, talk, tongue, utterance, lingua franca	(*Language*, n.d.)
Festivals	Anniversary, commemoration, competition, fair, feast, gala, **holiday**, carnival Entertainment, festivities, fete, fiesta, jubilee, merrymaking, treat, field day	(*Festivals*, n.d.)
Ceremonies	Commemoration, function, observance, parade, **rite**, service, show, ceremonial, custom, formality, liturgy, ordinance, sacrament, solemnity, tradition	(*Ceremony*, n.d.)
Holidays	Anniversary, break, celebration, feast, **festival**, red-letter day, saint's day, festivity, gala, layoff, recess, vacation, fete, fiesta, jubilee, leave, liberty, day of rest, few days off, gone fishi ng, holy day, long weekend	(*Holidays*, n.d.)
Pastimes	Amusement, diversion, fun, hobby, recreation, distraction, entertainment, game, play, relaxation, **sport**, fun and games	(*Pastimes*, n.d.)
Food	Bread, cooking, cuisine, drink, fare, feed, eatable, eats, fodder, goodies, grit, groceries, refreshment, slop, store, subsistence, support, sustenance, foodstuff, meal, meat, snack, aliment, bite, grub, handout, keep, larder, menu, mess, table, tuck, viand, victual, entrée, board, cheer, chow, comestible, cookery, diet, nourishment, nutriment, nutrition, pabulum, provision, ration, fast food, home cooking, moveable feast, take out, vittles'	(*Food*, n.d.)
Architecture	Building, construction, engineering, planning, architectonics	(*Architecture*, n.d.-b)
Religions	Church, creed, cult, denomination, doctrine, morality, orthodoxy, pietism, piety, spiritual-mindedness, **myth**, mythology, prayer, **ritual**, sect, preference, religiosity, rites, veneration, higher power, spirituality, superstition, theology, communion, devotion, observance, sacrifice, sanctification, standards	(*Religions*, n.d.; *Values*, n.d.)
Values	**Attitude, beliefs,** character, **code,** conduct, **conscience,** ethics, **ideals,** integrity, **morals,** mores, **scruples,** standards, sense of duty, sense of honor	(*Values*, n.d.)
Taboos	Banned, outlawed, prohibited, tabu, unthinkable, unacceptable, disapproved, forbidden, proscribed, reserved, restricted, unmentionable, beyond the pale, frowned on, illegal, off-limits, out of bounds, ruled out	(*Taboos*, n.d.)
Sports	Business, play, sport, adventure, amusement, athletics, distraction, romp, scheme, diversion, enterprise, festivity, frolic, fun, jest, joke, lark, undertaking, line, merriment, merrymaking, occupation, **pastime**, plan, proceeding, pursuit, recreation	(*Sports*, n.d.)
Clothing	Accoutrement, apparel, array, caparison, civvies, clothes, habiliment, habit, hand-me-downs, livery, sack, sportswear, tatters, vestment, vesture, vines, wardrobe, wear, costume, covering, drag, drapery, dress, duds, ensemble, mufti, **outfit**, overclothes, panoply, things, threads, tog, full feather, getup, glad rags, equipment, feathers, finery, frippery, frock, garb, garments, gear, rags, raiment, regalia, rigging, trappings, trousseau, underclothes, tailleur, toggery, tout ensemble	(*Clothing*, n.d.)
Outfits	Apparel, attire, closet, dresser, trunk, buffet, bureau, togs, trousseau, chest, chiffonier, **clothing**, commode, costumes, cupboard, drapes, weeds, dry goods, duds, ensembles, garments, locker, rags, suits, threads, toggery, vestments	(*Outfit*, n.d.-b)
Music	Melody, opera, piece, rap, rock, singing, soul, tune, hard rock, heavy metal, instrumental, acoustic, air, bebop, bop, chamber, classical, folk, fusion, popular,	(*Music*, n.d.)

	rock and roll, a cappella, harmony, hymn, jazz, measure, modern, plainsong, ragtime, refrain, song, strain, swing	
Social Hierarchy	food chain, hierarchy, power structure, **social structure**, chain of command, class structure, due order, echelons, grouping, line of dominance, order, placing, position, ranking, scale, social ladder, social pyramid, social, stratification, corporate ladder, dominance	(*Social Hierarchy*, n.d.)
Symbols	ABCs, characters, elements, fundamentals, hieroglyphs, ideograph, morphemes, phonemes, pictograph, rune, signs, syllabary, graphic, representation	(*Symbols*, n.d.)
Dance	Disco, samba, tango, waltz, Charleston, boogie, conga, swing, tap, twist, two-step, foxtrot, frolic, hop, hustle, jig, jitter, jitterbug, bunny hop, cut a rug, foot it, get down, jive, jump, leap, one-step, promenade, rhumba, spin, step, rock n' roll, trip the light, fantastic, boogie down	(*Dance*, n.d.)
Art	Craft, profession, adroitness, aptitude, artistry, virtuosity, craftsmanship, dexterity, expertise, facility, mastery, method, trade, imagination, ingenuity, inventiveness, knack, know-how, knowledge	(*Art*, n.d.)
Attitudes	Approach, **belief**, bias, character, demeanor, mindset, mood, headset, inclination, leaning, predilection, frame of mind, like it is, mental state, where one is at, notion, opinion, perspective, philosophy, point of view, position, posture, prejudice, reaction, proclivity, routine, set, slant, mindtrip, say so, sensibility, sentiment, stance, stand, temperament, view, air, angle, bent, disposition, standing, standpoint, temper, twist	(*Attitudes*, n.d.)
Beliefs	Ideology, mentality, mindset, spirit, attitude, code, culture, habits, mind, principles, psyche, psychology, traits, **values**	(*Belief*, n.d.)
Government	Authority, law, ministry, politics, power, regime, rule, patronage, polity, predominance, presidency, supervision, supremacy, sway, state, union, Washington, bureaucracy, command, governance, guidance, influence, jurisdiction, sovereignty, statecraft, superintendence, superiority, Uncle Sam, control, direction, domination, dominion, empire, execution, executive, regency, regimentation, regulation, restraint, political practice, powers that be, the feds	(*Government*, n.d.-b)
Economy	Recession, abridgement, austerity, care, carefulness, caution, curtailment, regulation, restraint, retrenchment, rollback, shrinkage, cutback, decrease, deduction, direction, discretion, husbandry, layoff, supervision, thrift, thriftiness, parcity, meanness, miserliness, moratorium, parsimony, providence, prudence, reduction, scrimping, skimping, sparingness, stinginess	(*Economy*, n.d.)
Policies	Ethic, integrity, morality, behavior, **beliefs**, conduct, **customs**, dogmas, ethics, Habits, ideals, manners, mores, scruples	(*Policies*, n.d.)
Class	Chic, dashing, fine, sharp, classy, fly, fashionable, foxy.	(*Class*, n.d.)
Status	Condition, dignity, place, position, prestige, prominence, quality, merit, mode, rating, situation, stature, cachet, calibre, capacity, standing, state, station, worth, character, consequence, degree, distinction, eminence, footing, grade, renown, stage	(*Status*, n.d.)
Manners	Amenities, bearing, behavior, breeding, carriage, ceremony, civilities, comportment, conduct, courtesy, culture, demeanor, deportment, dignity, elegance, etiquette, formalities, mien, mores, p's and q's, social graces, decorum, polish, politeness, politesse, propriety, protocol, refinement, sophistication, taste, urbanity, good breeding, good form	(*Manners*, n.d.)
Education	Culture, discipline, improvement, information, learning, literacy, scholarship, enlightenment, erudition, finish, guidance, tuition, tutelage, book learning, schooling, science, study, teaching, training, apprenticeship, background, brainwashing, inculcation, indoctrination, learnedness, nurture, pedagogy, propagandism, breeding, catechism, civilization, coaching, cultivation, direction, drilling, edification, preparation, proselytism, reading, rearing, refinement, tutoring	(*Education*, n.d.)

Idea	**Belief,** concept, conclusion, design, feeling, form, intention, interpretation, aim, approximation, brainstorm, clue, conception, conviction, purpose, reason, significance, meaning, notion, objective, opinion, perception, plan, scheme, doctrine, end, essence, estimate, fancy, flash, guess, viewpoint, believed, abstraction, suspicion, sense, solution, suggestion, theory, thought, understanding, view, hint, hypothesis, import, impression, inkling, intimation, judgment, object, pattern, teaching	(*Idea*, n.d.)
Knowledge	Ability, awareness, **education**, expertise, familiarity, grasp, insight, acquaintance, apprehension, attainments, cognition, comprehension, consciousness, dirt, inside story, intelligence, judgment, know-how, learning, observation, philosophy, discernment, doctrine, dogma, dope, enlightenment, erudition, schooling, scoop, substance, tuition, power, proficiency, recognition, science, theory, wisdom, accomplishments, facts, goods, instruction, light, lore, picture, principles, scholarship	(*Knowledge*, n.d.)
Morals	Ethic, integrity, morality, behavior, beliefs, **customs**, dogmas, ethics, habits, ideals, manners, mores, policies, scruples, conduct	(*Morals*, n.d.)
Myths	**Belief,** legend, lore, tradition, conviction, stories, folk tales, mythicism, mythos	(*Myths*, n.d.)
Ritual	Act, **custom**, formality, habit, liturgy, observance, practice, stereotype, Sacrament, ceremonial, communion, convention, form, ordinance, prescription, routine, protocol, service, solemnity, usage, red tape, procedure, **rite**	(Rituals, n.d.-b)
Social Structure	food chain, hierarchy, power structure, chain of command, **class** structure, corporate ladder, dominance, due order, echelons, grouping, line of dominance, order, placing, position, ranking, scale, **social hierarchy**, social ladder, social pyramid, social stratification	(*Social Structure*, n.d.)
Artifacts	Antiquity, heirloom, relic, ruin, vestige, objet d'art, monument, rarity, bygone	(*Artifacts*, n.d.)
Customs	Method, policy, practice, rite, rule, style, system, attitude, canon, **ceremony**, character, folkways, inheritance, matter of course, second nature, unwritten law, unwritten rule, performance, praxis, precedent, precept, routine, taste, type, usage, use, vogue, way, customariness, manner, mode, mold, mores, observance, observation, pattern, established way, convention, conventionalism, design, dictates, etiquette, fashion, form, formality	(*Custom*, n.d.)
Social Organization	Social organisation, social structure, social system, structure	(*Social Organization*, n.d.)
Social institution	Public institutions, civil institutions, cultural institutions, general institutions, organized institutions, community institutions, institutions in society, institutions of society, social agencies, social authorities, social bodies, social care facilities, social care homes, social enterprise, social enterprises, social entities, social establishments, social facilities, social institution, social organisations, social organizations, social partners	(Social Institutions, n.d)
Material Objects	Important objects, physical objects, real objects, animal objects, corporeal objects, measurable objects, mundane objects, objective objects, relevant objects, scientific objects, significant objects, tangible objects, visible objects, concrete objects, existent objects, human objects, material body, material items, material possessions, material things, physical features, physical stuff	(*Material Object*, n.d.)
Cognitive Element	Appercipient, cognizable, cognoscible, comprehensible, corporeal, discernible, intelligible, knowing, observant, palpable, patent, perceptible, percipient, perspicacious, recognizable, sensible, sensitive, tangible, translucent, trenchant	(*Cognitive*, n.d.)

Surat kami : 700-KPK (PRP.UP.1/20/1)
Tarikh : 20 Januari 2023

Prof. Madya Dr. Nur Hisham Ibrahim
Rektor
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Cawangan Perak

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Sekian, terima kasih.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Saya yang menjalankan amanah,

Setuju.

27.1.2023

PROF. MADYA DR. NUR HISHAM IBRAHIM
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