

**IMPACTS OF INTERRACIAL WEDDINGS ON  
THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS FROM MALAY  
PERSPECTIVE**

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ON THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS FROM  
MALAY PERSPECTIVE**

**by**

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# **KESAN PERKAHWINAN CAMPUR TERHADAP TRADISI BUDAYA DARIPADA PERSPEKTIF ORANG MELAYU**

## **ABSTRAK**

Malaysia ialah salah satu negara hebat di Asia Tenggara yang berkembang pesat dengan pelancongan, hospitaliti dan pengurusan acara menjadi industri utama utamanya, terutamanya sektor pelancongan kebudayaan. Baru-baru ini, Malaysia telah menjadi salah satu destinasi pelancongan yang hebat, dan ini ternyata memberi impak yang besar terhadap penerimaan perkahwinan antara kaum dan pertumbuhannya di Malaysia. Kajian ini membincangkan kesan ke atas tradisi budaya dan pelancongan budaya yang mungkin berlaku daripada perkahwinan antara kaum antara orang Melayu dan India Muslim dari perspektif orang Melayu. Kajian ini memaparkan ritual dan amalan kedua-dua budaya dan menandakan perkara yang boleh menyebabkan kesan pelancongan budaya dan tradisi untuk perkahwinan antara kaum. Penyelidikan ini mengandungi maklumat tentang kedua-dua budaya, perbezaan, dan persamaan pelbagai ritual dan amalan antara pasangan. Selain itu, konflik perkahwinan antara kaum meletakkan pelbagai emosi, perjuangan yang dikelilingi oleh nilai dan norma untuk bersatu dalam perkahwinan, di mana pasangan yang ramai nampaknya mempunyai kekurangan kefahaman yang mereka perlukan untuk bekerjasama dan mengatasi perbezaan antara kaum, mereka akan bertemu dalam perkahwinan antara kaum mereka, terutamanya bagi kedua-dua kaum meraikan dan menghormati tradisi dan warisan budaya mereka. Oleh itu, ini akan memberi peluang kepada pasangan untuk menunjukkan ritual dan amalan yang radikal dan mungkin menyinggung budaya lain, serta cara menyelesaikan masalah ini untuk kepuasan kedua-dua pasangan. Asal-usul tradisi dan ritual

ditunjukkan melalui ulasan literatur, di samping konsep gabungan kedua-dua budaya. Output akhir merangkumi maklumat dan pendapat tentang semua perubahan dan perbezaan yang wujud dalam upacara Perkahwinan Melayu dan India Muslim serta kesannya terhadap aspek budaya dan pelancongan budaya, justeru, untuk mengelakkan sebarang kekeliruan/ salah faham budaya beberapa butiran kecil telah diambil kira. Memperluas literatur terdahulu dalam bidang ini, penyelidikan mengenal pasti bahawa kaedah keutamaan ialah pendekatan kualitatif kepada soalan yang ditanya dalam temu bual dalam talian dengan zum aplikasi sehingga ketepuan dicapai. Ini telah diedarkan kepada sampel 16 responden Melayu. Penemuan adalah satu: analisis dan perbincangan tentang potensi impak ke atas tradisi budaya perkahwinan antara kaum, didapati dan dipersetujui dipetik daripada temu bual orang Melayu tentang perkahwinan antara kaum, dan terdapat beberapa perkembangan, perubahan dan kesan. budaya dan tradisi kepada orang Melayu pada umumnya di samping beberapa konflik, oleh itu, kertas kerja mendapati bahawa jenis perkahwinan dan perkahwinan ini membawa kepada pembangunan dan pertumbuhan pelancongan budaya, dan kedua, implikasi yang diambil daripada teori penerimaan dalam perkahwinan antara kaum, di sini ia menunjukkan terdapat peningkatan dalam kadar dan penerimaan perkahwinan antara kaum bagi orang Melayu tetapi bukan kadar penerimaan yang tinggi terhadap upacara dan amalan lain selain daripada orang Melayu. Penyelidikan ini cuba mengisi jurang pengetahuan dan maklumat tentang kajian perkahwinan antara kaum, dan kerangka teori yang membantu dalam meletakkan kesusasteraan yang kukuh sebagai asas kepada penemuan kajian dengan literatur yang luas merangkumi pandangan umum tentang perkahwinan antara kaum dalam budaya

Melayu. Dalam penyelidikan ini, tradisi dan adat resam kerja perkahwinan antara kaum, kepuasan perkahwinan yang tinggi, dan teori penerimaan dijelaskan dengan lebih baik.

# **IMPACTS OF INTERRACIAL WEDDINGS ON THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS FROM MALAY PERSPECTIVE**

## **ABSTRACT**

Malaysia is one of South East Asia's great countries that is thriving fast with tourism, hospitality, and event management being of its major key industries, especially the cultural tourism sector. Recently, Malaysia has turned out as one of the great destinations for tourism, and this turned out to have an enormous impact on interracial weddings acceptance and its growth in Malaysia. This study debates the impacts on the cultural traditions and cultural tourism that may occur from an interracial wedding between the Malays and the Indian Muslims from the perspective of the Malays. This study displays the rituals and practices of both cultures and marks what can cause impact/s cultural tourism and traditions for an interracial wedding. The research contains information about both cultures, the differences, and the similarities of diverse rituals and practices between the couples. Moreover, interracial wedding conflicts place various emotions, struggles surrounded by values and norms to fuse in a wedding, where plentiful couples appear to have a lack of comprehension they need to work with and overcome the interracial differences, they will run across in their interracial wedding, especially for both races celebrate and respect their cultural traditions and heritage. Hence, this will give the couples a chance to point out what rituals and practices are radical and might be held offensive to the other culture, plus how to solve these problems to the satisfaction of both couples. The origins of traditions and rituals are pointed out through literature reviews, in addition to the concept of fusion of the two cultures. The final output includes information and opinions on all changes and

differences that exist in the Malay and Indian Muslim Wedding ceremonies and their impact on cultural aspects and cultural tourism, thus, to prevent any cultural confusion/ misunderstanding several small details have been taken into account. Extending previous literature in this area, the research identifies that a priority method is a qualitative approach to the questions asked in online interviews by the application zoom until saturation has been achieved. This was distributed to a sample of 16 Malays respondents. The Findings are one: an analysis and discussion of the potential impact/s on the cultural traditions of interracial weddings, were found and agreed upon extracted from the interviews of the Malays about an interracial wedding, and there are some developments, changes, and impacts culturally and traditionally to the Malays at large alongside some conflicts, thus, the paper discovered that these kinds of interracial weddings lead to cultural tourism development and growth, and secondly, the implications that are drawn from acceptance theory in an interracial wedding, here it shows that there is a growing in the rate and acceptance of interracial weddings for the Malays but not a high rate of acceptance for other rituals and practices other than the Malays. This research attempts to fill the gap of knowledge and information about interracial weddings research, and theoretical frameworks which aid in laying strong literature as a foundation for the findings of the study with wide literature spanning from the public view of interracial weddings within the Malay culture. In this research, the key rituals and practices of working interracial weddings, high marital satisfaction, and acceptance theory are better explained.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

This study discusses the cultural rituals and practices of interracial wedding planning between the Malays and the Indian Muslims from the Malays perspectives, also provides a summary of their impacts on cultural tourism and traditions. By looking at Malaysia's multiculturalism and couples who are or will be in a marital relationship, this research theorizes the three ceremonial phases (before, actual day, and post) of wedding rituals and practices for each of the cultures and represents what influences can cause towards cultural tourism for an interracial wedding.

Over the years, the concepts and uses of hospitality have grown considerably (Huang et al., 2019). Engagement with a larger theoretical and academic background has fueled these advancements. Philosophy, sociology, anthropology, political science, history, cultural and literary studies, and geography have all contributed to our understanding of hospitality and appreciation of its broader significance. As a result, hospitality ideas and practices have been utilized in art studies, education, diplomacy, and international relations. The importance of hospitality is to encourage and attract repeat visitors or consumers (Peters et al., 2019). Nižić et al. (2017) stated that people in the tourist sector consider not just the facilities or rates supplied, but also the services are given. If they are pleased with their past experience with the service, they could return in addition to recommending it to others. The corporation will profit from this circumstance. It was not necessary for the corporation to work



hard to market its services (Doniņa, 2015). They just have to be concerned with the services supplied to the consumer and must meet the expectations of the customer. This is more beneficial than simply having the nicest facilities but offering the poorest services. To be successful, the tourism-related business must stress hospitality (Doniņa, 2015).

Relating to Huang et al. (2019) and Peters et al. (2019), hospitality businesses that deliver a pleasant experience to their consumers will benefit from a higher level of customer satisfaction than their competitors who provide a less pleasant experience. Plus, Hospitality Encourages Positive Customer Reviews (Doniņa, 2015). Thus, some industries and businesses such as cultural tourism depend on hospitality to perform their operations and generate revenue, hospitality varies from typical industries and businesses in that they rely on strong, positive communication with their customers and target audience to succeed, therefore it is taken as a significant and main sector under the cultural tourism concept (Peters et al., 2019).

Food and beverages, hotels, places of interest/ destinations, and transportation are all considered components of the tourism industry (Doniņa, 2015). Plus, they are all tied to hospitality under a certain form, each of the components is linked to the others (Huang et al., 2019). Therefore, to guarantee that the person, customer, or client is pleased with the tourism products and services, there is a must to ensure that the consumers are content with each of the components. So, the need of hospitality is required in the food and beverages so that consumers feel properly taken care of during their lunch, supper, or other meal. In addition, hospitality is required in transportation providers, so that consumers or passengers feel more comfortable during their travel. Other aspects of tourism need hospitality as well. As a result, it

demonstrates how vital hospitality is to the tourism industry (Huang et al., 2019).

Weddings/Interracial weddings are occasions when two people exchange vows or choose to legally commit to each other as husbands and wives for the purpose of starting a family, being together, or simply sharing their lives (Iye et al., 2022). Some interracial weddings involve straightforward procedures while others involve complicated steps of the permit application process, date selection rituals, cleansing ceremonies, and other cultural preparations and procedures. The choice to adhere or not to adhere to all these rituals is of course up to the individual (Aldridge, 1987; Breger & Hill, 2021). However, in many observations made of couples getting ready to marry, many, especially those who are getting married for the first time, want to have their dream wedding, which tends to include complex rituals depending on their circumstances. Respective cultures and not only for the pleasure and novelty of it. In some cases, couples want to go through all these rituals due to the belief attached to the rituals (Breger & Hill, 2021). Most couples, especially those from the Asian background, would like to face whatever comes their way for their wedding, as it is believed that such rituals would lead to a happy and harmonious start when the couples share their life together. However, the conception of a wedding in the Malays and the Indian Muslims context may vary based on ethnicity, religion, and regional venues.

The diversity of cultures presents in interracial weddings such as these motivates guests and invitees from other races to open up and learn more about the heritage of the opposite race and inspire in themselves a curiosity and openness to everything new or strange to them, which contributes to supporting tourism towards these countries through intense visits to learn more about these cultures (Aldridge, 1987;

Breger & Hill, 2021).

The research contains information about both cultures, the differences, challenges, and the similarities of diverse rituals and practices between the couples. This chapter highlights the introduction of the study. It will have a few divisions which cover the background, the statement of the problem, the research objectives, the research questions, definitions of key terms, the scope of the research, significance of the research, and the outline, which will give a brief addition of the literature review and the methodology chapters.

## **1.2 Study Background**

Marriage is practiced with in majority of the world's cultures, and the wedding itself is regarded as a significant ceremonial event. It is a culturally significant rite of passage that redefines social and personal identity and marks a person's transition from one life stage to another (Aldridge, 1987; Breger & Hill, 2021). This crucial ceremonial occasion, long governed by cultural values and traditions, allows couples to announce their new identity and gather family and friends together through a prescribed collection of objects, roles, and scripts (Iye et al., 2022). Historically, such ceremonial components (rituals and practices) were imposed by local communities. So, whose cultural values and conventions are being employed? How are the couple's and their extended families' diverse personal and cultural values accepted in this interracial wedding, and how will this impact cultural tourism?

### **1.2.1 The value of Culture**

Culture is an integral part of humanity, and each ethnic group embraces its own culture while its members are linked by socio-cultural ties with each other by

similarities in the language they speak, the beliefs they follow, the festivals they celebrate, the lifestyles they practice, the principles they uphold, etc. (Turiel, 2002; Liu, 2018). It is also inevitable that those who belong to the same cultural descent can also agree on most social mores (Turiel, 2002; Liu 2018) because the practice of each individual further reinforces the tradition. Cultural similarity provides its members with a sense of attachment and oneness on a personal, community, family and social level, which is important for any community as it provides a sense of belonging vital for survival. Among the many rituals and cultural practices that underline the importance of culture, wedding is one of them (Turiel, 2002; Lou 2018).

### **1.2.2 Cultural differences role in cultural tourism**

For numerous reasons, the evaluation of cultural differences is very relevant in the tourism industry. For starters, the tourism and hospitality industries have become increasingly worldwide during the last decade (Krebs, 2018). The problem of cultural diversity and its relation to cultural tourism has received a lot of attention. There has been a surge of interest in the cultural components of tourism in recent years. Culture, in all of its manifestations and dimensions, has a profound impact on tourism planning and development, management, and marketing (Krebs, 2018). Unfortunately, research on the influence on culture tourism focuses mostly on tangible forms of culture such as the arts, music, architecture, or crafts (Reisinger and Turner, 2012). Furthermore, Reisinger and Turner (2012) stated that the deeper implications of cultural rituals and practices on culture tourism have been overlooked by researchers. Values, norms, and customs are examples of cultural rituals and practices that have a considerable impact on tourists' behavior, vacation expectations, experiences, satisfaction, and, as a result, recurrent visitation.

### **1.2.3 Hospitality and event management role in cultural tourism**

According to Getz (2008) and Doniņa (2015), before the 1990s, there were few, if any, academic programs in event management. Since then, the event literature has risen, followed by a global push to establish certificate and degree programs. Furthermore, requests and desires for hospitality and event management industries are on the rise, which is conducted and resulted from many planned, controlled, or spontaneous events of all sorts. Such as, urban culture, tourism which converts the cultural assets into tourist attractions (Hassan, 2014; Liu, 2020). Thus, the use of cultural assets for tourism has produced numerous academic discussions, including at weddings. Business (2018) has published that statistics showed that the part of Hospitality has been growing and developing by 7 percent yearly since July (2018). It was notably in the 1980s the beginning to recognize the significance of events in terms of having a beneficial influence (Mair & Witford, 2013). Posteriorly, McDonnell et al (2011), stated that throughout the first decade of the 21 century, there has been global attention and involvement in events as a conclusive aspect of the enhancement of culture, arts, urban development, societal education, and accepted as a major motivation for travel and tourism ((Doniņa, 2015; Getz, 2008). Plus, a simple glance at the leading event-related professional associations indicate that they are well-established, but also diverse by event type (Getz, 2008), and a published article by Kathy (2019), there is a solid schedule of Events for 2019 for all occasions. According to Bouchon, et al (2017), event management is related to tourism. Due to events being such a significant motivation for tourism, the growth rise of this industry can only be defined as astounding (Doniņa, 2015; Getz, 2008). Thus, 'event management is a rapidly expanding professional sector in which tourists pose a potential marketplace for planned events' (Getz,

2008). These rates show the growth of the Hospitality and Event management industries. Looking upon that weddings are the most sought for the hospitality and events industries. Family meetings and acquaintances are taken as a part of tourism. As well as, weddings and family gatherings (Nasir et al., 2020). In addition, weddings are the most sought for the hospitality and events industries.

#### **1.2.4 Multiculturalism in Malaysia**

The Malaysian population consists of people of different races, religions, and races. The largest group of Malaysians consists of three main races, namely the Malays, Chinese, and Indians. According to Chuah et al. (2011), in comparison to the numerically bigger Malays, as well as non-Muslim Chinese and Hindu Indians. In addition, Indian Muslims follow Malay traditions and the faith of Islam (Yinn & Karubi, 2018; Chuah et al., 2011). The Population Census and housing 2021 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021) reported that Malaysia's population comprised 64% Bumiputras, 6.2% Indians, and 1.2% others. Islam was the most widely reported religion (60.4%), followed by Buddhism (19.2%), Christianity (9.1%), Hinduism (6.3%), and Confucianism/Taoism/other traditional Chinese religions (2.6%). Also, Islam was the most widely professed religion in Malaysia with a proportion of 61.3 %. As a multi-racial nation, other religions embraced were Buddhism (19.8%), Christianity (9.2%), and Hinduism (6.3%). Plus, according to Jo-pei et al. (2008), the most frequently weddings recorded are Indian-Malay and Malay-Chinese. Therefore, this research chose to take the Indian Muslims rather than any other race.

Upon previous research, there are some terms of interracial wedded couples/relationships for mixed cultures to be called, fusion-terms such as Pan-Asian

(Pacific- Asian / Asian Americans), Eurasian (European Asians), Kristang (Portuguese-Malaysians) or even local terminology such as Mamak (Indian-Malay), Greek (Greek-Indian), Baba Nyonya (Chinese-Malay) and so on (Yinn & Karubi, 2018). These have been developed specifically to differentiate interracial weddings and their descendants. Malaysia's case of the notion of interracial weddings is very widespread.

Thus, Jo-Pei et al. (2008) proclaimed that researchers who study the family, have found that such interracial surroundings encourage people to explore beyond their own cultural groups for interracial weddings, which is confirmed by studies showing that the interracial wedding is becoming more common in Malaysia's multi-ethnic culture.

### **1.2.5 Interracial weddings**

#### ***1.2.5(a) Introduction on interracial weddings and its meaning***

Weddings, according to Parry (2020) and Baxter and Braithwaite (2006), are rituals and practices because they are planned communication events directed by cultural norms that pay respect to something regarded as sacred and that generate and repeat the couple's and family's identity. Therefore, weddings are patterned and driven by cultural norms that impact the race's expectations for the ritual (Al-Zubaidi, 2017; Braithwaite et al., 2009). In addition, many people regard weddings to be the most significant rite of passage in a person's life, one that results in a transformation in the individual's existence concerning his or her family and society (Koren 2006).

Moreover, interracial weddings are one of the most planned ceremonies in a world of amazingly diverse cultures. Every culture has its own set of traditions, rituals and

practices (Parry, 2020; Hu and Holmberg, 2014). Therefore, an interracial wedding can be challenging, there are a few thoughts on taking wedding planning as simple and easy. Lots of rituals and practices are important and mandatory in every religion. Such as, the venues, the engagement, jewelry, dowry, costumes, and other rituals and practices that contain meanings in it for the couple, their culture, and the event itself (Jain, 2014; Hu & Holmberg, 2014). In Islam, there are some rituals that are similar in every culture like, Dowry, Akad Nikah, but other rituals and practices go back to the culture and the traditions, these rituals and practices exist in the main celebration or ceremony like in the wedding of Malay (Bersanding) there is a Mak andam “who is an expert hired for the bride only, Mak andam is going to be with the bride the whole day; to serve as the bride’s beautician and consultant for the day” (Koh & Ho, 2014; Ephron, 2014). All are explained in the literature review below. Although planning a major event can be exciting and fun, it can also be time-consuming and very stressful. With today’s hectic lifestyle, families, and time constraints, it is important to have someone dedicated and knowledgeable who understands the requirements and follows through with all the details (Jain, 2014).

#### ***1.2.5(b) Interracial wedding growth***

Previous research by Tang and Ling (2019) and Rico et al., (2018) showed that out of 18,509 interracial wedding in 2018, 48.3% were Muslims, this was an increase from the 8% recorded in 2017, and an observed raised rate from (7.4- 10.2%) in America since 2000-2016. Lanzieri (2012) stated that couples in mixed relationships rate has been evaluated in 30 European countries. About 1 out of 12 weddings were an interracial wedding in all of Europe. In addition to a published article by CnnaArabia (2017), the percentage of Maghreb countries combined with interracial wedding in France reaches 37%, these statistics demonstrate that the percentage of



people getting into an interracial wedding is growing widely.

Plus, Nagaraj (2009) and Yinn and Karubi (2018) stated that statistics showed that there is a reasonable percentage of multiethnic in Malaysia. Sawe (2019) declared that Malaysia is a multicultural Southeast Asian nation with several diverse ethnic groups residing in the region, such as Malays, Chinese and Indians, etc. This multicultural background renders Malaysia a very rich community with different faiths, culture and traditions. Malaysia's concept of interracial weddings is not an issue, nor was not unusual, thus seems it had a noticeable influence on the racial frame of society, these statistics enhance that in Malaysia the concept of interracial wedding does not cause any issues nor are a social dilemma.

In addition, Peninsular Malaysia has less rates for interracial weddings compared to the multiethnic diverse East Malaysia, which indicates that there are a lot of similarities in East Malaysia between ethnic groups and not a lot of diversities, and the migration percentage and ethnicity have a significant influence on the possibility of interracial wedding (Nagaraj, 2009). According to Edmonds (1968) and Asni (2019), during the Malacca Sultanate (1400-1511), Islam arrived in the Malay Peninsular, and there is no doubt that there were interracial weddings, marriages and cohabitants with the Malays. Plus, according to previous research, the history of interracial marriages in Malaysia can be traced back to the Malaccan Empire in the 15th century. It is recorded in the Malay Annals, which document the history of the Malay Peninsula (now known as Peninsular Malaysia), that the first Chinese-Malay Bumiputra interracial wedding reported in Malaya was between Princess Hang Li-Poh of China and King Mansor Syah (1458-1477) of Malacca (Krauss et al., 2008;

Tan, 1993; Asni, 2019).

#### ***1.2.5(c) Interracial wedding and cultural tourism***

People in the tourism and hospitality industry, such as hoteliers, restaurateurs, weddings planners, shop assistants, customs officials, tour guides, and many others who provide services to tourists, have a significant impact on tourists and guests' opinions of the location they visit. Thus, cultural differences, which determine the quality of interpersonal contact between visitors and hosts, can considerably contribute to cultural tourism and tourist vacation experiences and pleasure in interracial weddings. (Reisinger and Turner, 2012). Plus, as a result of the growth of interracial weddings mentioned in the previous paragraphs and statistics, growth also will happen to cultural tourism (Omar & Arif, 2020), and tourism is possible for all sorts of coordinated events even the smallest wedding (Getz, 2008).

According to Richards (2018) and Jafari (1987), the activity of all group members in the tourism process contributes to the formation of a distinct 'cultural tourism,' which differs from their routine and everyday culture. Tourists exhibit different acts when they are away from home because they are in a different context of mind. In interracial weddings, hosts act differently because they provide guests and the other race's families with hospitality services when both cultures come into contact, however, Reisinger and Turner (2012) stated both groups retain a trace of their own culture. As a result, cultural tourism should be studied concerning the development and impacts due to those foreigners and guests' reactions and reviews, which explains how they from various cultures behave because the traditional wedding ceremony is one of the attractions for cultural tourism visitations (Abbas and Hidayah, 2021).

In other words, this study will examine how will the differences for interracial couples, such as cultural tourism can be impacted by an interracial wedding.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The interracial wedding ceremony is the main part of marriage and society, and inherently takes a higher part than tradition plus, it enriches the traditions and their significance (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2002; Joseph & Alexander, 2018). Plus, due to the interracial wedding planning has several stages, this interracial wedding process becomes a draw for both cultural tourisms. Therefore, the familiar environment that has developed should be preserved so that the community is truly obedient in carrying out the process of community life and strengthens the position of customary rules in a legal manner so that future polemics are avoided (Abbas and Hidayah, 2021). The more diversity in weddings, the greater the possibility of adverse repercussions. Three of the negative social impacts discovered are "community social pressure, disorder, congestion, and environmental and cultural values and cultural tourism impacts." Furthermore, dissatisfaction, commercialization, and intercultural misunderstanding are all considered negative cultural impacts.

Nelson and Otnes (2005) pronounced that spotting out the differences and the conflicts in cultural rituals and practices which went through planning an interracial wedding is associated with cultural ambivalence and emotional struggle. Moreover, Karis and Killian (2011) and Otnes and Lowrey (2004) declared that plentiful couples appear to have a lack of comprehension, they need to work with and overcome the interracial differences they will run across in their interracial wedding, especially in order both races celebrate and respect their own cultural traditions and heritage. Hence, this will give the couples a chance to recognize the other culture's

aspects, plus, pointing out what rituals and practices are radical might be held offensive to the other culture.

Furthermore, in the case of an interracial couple, there is a potential for greater impact due to cultural differences. As stated by Nikulina (2018), the lack of adequate rituals and practices involved, may cause significant problems and even offend the family and guests, where the culture is an indispensable and a significant faction for many people. Looking to Nelson and Otnes (2005) research, they declared that interracial wedding's conflicts can place various emotions from struggles surrounded by values, norms, rituals, and practices of several cultures in order to mingle families' rituals into one ceremony. Nikulina (2018) proclaimed that another difficulty was not only to reconcile cultures, but to perfect the wedding event, so that the wedding fulfils the contentment and cultural values for both couples. Furthermore, any influences, for example, cultural tourism and traditions, patterns in rituals and practices, affect contemporary weddings. Donovan (2004) and Nelson and Otnes (2005) split the challenges that interracial couples face for two sections, one where normative obstacle that are basically the problems that most people encounter (adjustment to marriage, temperament and gender disparities, and parenting) and cultural obstacles (family rejection, language gaps, societal values, social opposition, rituals and practices, traditions and children's identity), matters such as, language, music, and dress. Nikulina (2018) stated that the first step consists of proceeding to ask the people questions, such as the location/venue of the event which in this case the wedding. Thus, the arises to the marketing of tourism, in addition, motivates wedding destinations and that the evolve of touristic flows (Dias et al., 2013; Nikulina, 2018).

Studies towards interracial weddings showed interracial wedding has good and

bad turnouts, some criteria surface differences and similarities when individuals from different cultures socialize and fuse which will either drive society and culture forward or back-forth (Dainton, 2015; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2002; Renalds, 2011; Embong, 2002; Tien, 2013; Jo-Pei, 2012), not just the variations of racism, natural language and culture, but also some cultural diversities linked with points, for example, the couple declares their beliefs that are based on their own ethnic or cultural heritage, the sentiment, the cultural values, the communication of dispute and the family, it can cause tension, and can also have impacts on children by labeling them by their ethnic identity (Stritof, 2020; Yinn & Karubi, 2018). Nevertheless, the origins of tension in interracial weddings derive not from the couples, but from external factors i.e. culture itself (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2002; Pue & Sulaiman, 2013). Interracial couples' wedding is also considered under one of those reasons.

Regarding to Stritof (2020), interracial couples may be difficult, passion would have no limits in this way. Interracial couples can experience tension between the two of them as the couple declares their beliefs that are based on their own ethnic or cultural heritage. According to Stritof (2020), couples are encouraged to speak frankly about the essential facets of their union and to come to grips with what is appropriate for all of them. Hence, the development of cultural tourism, for which wedding can improve the hospitality and tourism industries, Rogerson and Wolfaardt (2016) figured that cultural tourism is a rising trend in hospitality and related to the business of tourism, including event management. Plus, interracial wedding planning teams should be aware that when too many changes are made in one event to better satisfy cultural tourism, tourists, and participants, problems with the residents of that

community can arise (Mendonça, 2020).

In this study, the frame, meaning, and intent of the wedding ceremony were discussed to further understand what motives and the basic need for the various elements of the cultures and rituals and practices of an interracial wedding. A more detailed version of contradiction is perceived, in particular, interracial contradiction is characterized as the emergence of mixed emotions arising from all kinds of differences of different cultures. This will help to learn what rituals, practices, traditions, and customs of their future partner are and this event may cause a few issues, and to how to solve these problems with the satisfaction of both couples. Plus, detecting what rituals and practices both races have mutual will innervate the connection more besides knowing the symbolism that is used and meaningful in both cultures. Furthermore, facing those experiences together will help to deal with any cultural differences to improve the celebration of their interracial wedding ceremony, this study demonstrates what rituals and practices are in both cultures and what changes and differences are in the interracial wedding, and to figure out if cultural tourism can be impacted as well.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The research goals are to highlight the differences and the challenges of an interracial wedding and to fill more the lack of existing kind of literature, the objectives of the research are:

a.) to explore the potential impact/s of the interracial wedding of a Malay and Indian Muslim on the cultural tourism.

b.) to assess the Malays' acceptance on interracial weddings of a Malay and Indian Muslim.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

In this regard, this wedding aims to answer two research questions:

1. What are the potential impact/s of the interracial wedding of a Malay and Indian Muslim on the cultural tourism?
2. How the Malays' acceptance on interracial weddings of a Malay and Indian Muslim?

### **1.6 Scope of the Research**

This study will investigate the interracial wedding between a Malay and Indian Muslim couple, as well as study how it will impact cultural tourism and the potential impact on traditions from the Malays from their perspective in Penang Island, Malaysia. Identifying the participants' (gender, age "average ages are 18 years and up", thoughts and opinions for the participants' interracial wedding), the impacts on cultural tourism, and testing the level of acceptance for the participants are significant variables, that will be used. The study will specify the significant rituals and practices for both cultures such as the pre-wedding ceremonies like the engagement, the wedding contract, and the wedding ceremony and the post-wedding, then point out the level of acceptance of the Malays upon any different rituals and practices and how it will impact their cultural tourism, and what might cause an impact or an issue in this interracial wedding, some issues can be such as what to wear? upon which cultures' traditional wedding rituals and practices? which food and cuisines to select? is there going to be help from both parties' parents? "what

about the Latlat of Sirih? Mangni? the Mehndi?" These are a few cultural rituals and practices of both parties, for that there might be little issues. Participants are either already in an interracial marriage, engagement, or who are still single and have the notion to be in an interracial wedding /relationship/ marriage.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The significance of the current research will mark one of the references of its type to the interracial wedding in Malaysia since there has been relatively little research conducted on interracial weddings in Malaysia in general (Omar, 1993; Anderson, 2014). Nevertheless, some studies showed a high rate of acceptance by the Malays of these kinds of interracial weddings (Yinn and Karubi, 2018). Thus, creating a platform for new knowledge in this discipline. Moreover, interracial wedding research in Malaysia provides the researchers with the required knowledge and information, specifically as part of their analysis. Research as such in this sense refers to research into and a deeper understanding of interracial weddings and the problem of identity that interracial wedding triggers. By comparing the rituals and practices of the same event in this case "wedding ceremonies" for both races, then the Malays may have a greater grasp of how an interracial wedding impacts their cultural values of traditions and tourism. By examining the wedding planning of the cultural and traditional perspectives of an interracial wedding case for the Malays and Indian Muslims, proper motivation can make the planning of an interracial wedding more productive and creative. In addition, Ersöz and Saçli (2019) proclaimed that culturally, interracial weddings, rituals, and practices of both races, have an important place in transferring them from the past to the present, and in this transfer, wedding songs, games, etc. events play an important role. Since weddings are cultural phenomena and events at the same time, it makes it difficult to determine the



boundaries of cultural tourism which this research will investigate and try to develop more information. Plus, when the benefits of cultural tourism are examined, the most important benefits are contributing to the image of the destination and helping to strengthen intercultural friendships

### 1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Hospitality	Hospitality means extending a welcome to travelers or offering a home away from home, and the word is derived from the Latin word “hospes” meaning visitor or stranger. The hospitality and tourism industry are a vast sector that includes all the economic activities that directly or indirectly contribute to, or depend upon, travel and tourism (EHL Academy, 2021).
Cultural tourism	According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, cultural tourism is defined as movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other cultural events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art, and pilgrimages (DeSantis, 2020).
Interracial wedding	Interracial wedding is used to describe marriages that take place between people of different ethnic, racial, and/or cultural backgrounds (Teasley, 2003).
Rituals	A fixed set of actions and words, especially as part of a religious ceremony (Cambridge University Press, 2022).
Practices	Something that is usually or regularly done, often as a habit, tradition, or rituals and practices (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

### 1.9 Thesis Outline

-This research has five separate chapters, the first chapter is the introduction of the study, identification of the problem, the research objectives, the research questions,

scope of the study, the significance of the study after that there are the definitions of key terms.

-The second chapter displays the literature review, it contains twelve parts, including an introduction, a whole description of Malaysia's multiracialism, Cultural tourism, Tourism, hospitality, and events industries in Malaysia, Interracial wedding in general, Interracial wedding in Malaysia, the Malaysian traditional wedding food, the Malay and the Indian Muslims' rituals and practices in primary three phases: (1) pre-wedding, (2) the wedding day, and (3) post-wedding along with some opinions and discussion on behalf of the researcher, Fusion of two cultures and traditions, Theory employed, Variables assessed in this study, Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

-The third chapter presents the thesis methodology, which obtains the qualitative method phase, population size and sampling size, research sampling techniques, area of the study, independent variables, dependent variables, conceptual framework, data collection instruments developments, pilot study, data analysis procedure and technique.

-The fourth chapter gives the analysis of the study findings in terms of the required and existing information,

-The final chapter presents the key findings, gives information and suggestions for future studies. It shows the conclusions learned from the study, that includes summaries, research findings, limitations of the study, implications and recommendations for future researches.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

According to Rathje (2009), Ragman (2003), Podcast (2017) and Zimmermann (2017), culture is one that presents the unity and similarity of a society where they have a close view of the community as an object of a union, mostly culture is relevant with religion, the rituals and traditions of society are perhaps the most recognizable facets of the culture. Regarding to Schwartz (1999) and Schwartz (2006) and Minton et al. (2022), cultural values impact and focus attention on the form of the believes and behavior of society. Sometimes misunderstanding and dissatisfaction occur because someone from outside the community interprets them incorrectly, which is the minority for the society in which the traditions and rituals and practices of the majority prevail. Plus, Minton et al. (2022), Qin (2011) and Donovan (2004) implied that there are five basic elements in communication can be impacted by cultural differences which are: roles, time, place, scripts, and audience, that might be the main reason of misunderstandings and dissatisfaction. Culture includes everything in a person's lifestyle such as, food, what to wear, the language, how to define right from wrong, how to sit, how to host guests, how to behave around loved ones, unique rituals, and practices, religion, there are a million other items. For that, there is no simple way to describe society because what exists in front of a society is what to see and learn. According to Qin (2011), Donovan (2004), Schwartz (1999), Schwartz (2006), Rathje (2009), Ragman (2003), Podcast (2017) and Zimmermann (2017), in the path of wedding ceremonies, the challenge is for the Malays to identify or recognize valuable rituals and practices for their proper values plus the reaction or acceptance to new rituals and practices from another culture.

Minton et al. (2022) and Nelson and Otnes (2005) stated that these conflicts, like same-culture conflicts, frequently produce conflicting feelings and tension. However, interracial ambivalence may be heightened as a result of higher acculturation pressure and a greater proclivity for misunderstanding and misinterpretation. The previous study has found interracial variations in stress coping and acceptance of cognitive or emotional inconsistency, as well as the capacity to live with numerous, competing feelings and values (Triandis, 1995). Thus, culture has a strong influence on how people feel, accept, and overcome impacts (Minton et al., 2022).

## **2.2 Malaysia as a multiracial country**

Malaysia is a multiracial, multireligious and multicultural country (Sawe, 2019). It is strategically located between the shipping routes of China, Japan and India, and European nations. Since the past, it has been the meeting place of different religions including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and others. Almost all the well-known religions of the world are represented here (Sawe, 2019). Malays make up the largest ethnic population covering around 50% of the population, with all Malays following Islam, and there are an additional 10% of non-Malay Muslims in Malaysia. In 2003, the total population of Malaysia was 23.5 million, with Malays constituting 12.6 million; Indians 1.8 million; and others constituting 0.3 million.<sup>1</sup> The total Malaysian population in 2008 was 27.75 million, with the Malay population growing at a very rapid rate, and the Chinese and Indians at a slower rate (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021). Thus, the Malay population is about 13.87 million, the Chinese 7 million and the Indians 2.3 million in 2007 (Department of

Statistics Malaysia, 2021).

As for the year 2021, the population of Malaysia is estimated at 32,365,999 people, which is 0.42% of the total population of the world and it occupies the forty-fifth place in terms of population, while the population of India for the year 2021 was about 1,393,409,038 people, or 17.88% of the total number World population India ranks second in the world in terms of population after China, which has a population of about 1,444,216,107 people (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021).

### **2.3 Cultural tourism**

Tourism is a service industry where people from different nationalities meet. The quality of their interaction contributes to their holiday experiences and perceptions of the visited destination. Culture is recognized as a significant asset in tourism development and improvement both tangible (i.e. cultural attractions such as museums and heritage centers, natural assets such as beaches, sun, and mountains) and intangible (i.e. promoting gastronomy weddings, cultural events, and festivals, and selling "atmosphere") elements (Mousavi et al., 2016).

According to Mousavi et al. (2016), the variation of known definitions, as well as the deep connection between culture and tourism, highlight the difficulty in defining cultural tourism. For example, because culture is a component of every facet of life, it is possible to assume that everything is cultural, and thus all tourism is cultural tourism in some way. This broad and holistic approach, however, is not particularly useful in identifying those cultural values important in the tourism and vice versa, or in defining cultural tourism (Richards, 2018; Mousavi et al., 2016; Haigh, 2020).

## **2.4 Tourism, hospitality, and events industries in Malaysia**

Tourism, hospitality, and events industries in Malaysia have grown and become a phenomenon of interest and business, plus, the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) are now linked with tourism, leisure, and hospitality industries and rose into a wider concept along with similar denominators. Plus, the roles and impacts of planned events are researched properly in tourism, and such roles and impacts play an important part in destination competitiveness (Getz, 2008; (Bouchon et al., 2017). Similarly, public bodies promote and advertise events as a tactic for economic growth, event tourism marketing, and national identity creation (McDonnell et al., 2011). In addition, according to Fourie and Santana Gallego (2011), events are perceived as an important instrument for tourism development since they may enhance the number of tourists, create a favorable destination image, and promote regional development. MICE, tourism, and leisure and hospitality industries supported the economic development of Malaysia.

Therefore, Malaysia is now considered one of the most desired places to have a wedding in (Bouchon et al., 2017). Furthermore, relating to Hasbullah (2018) and Abd Hamid et al. (2016), feedbacks have shown that the value of Malay culture and the venues are the reasons on why Malaysia is being chosen as wedding destinations by a large average of acceptance. Hence, the home resources and locations are wedding tourism destination. As a result, wedding coordinators, hotel chains, and resorts learn that they can make the wedding destinations a big advantage. In addition to recognize the potential that this could have on Malaysia's economies and include the wedding industry of their destination in promoting Malaysia as wedding

destinations (Durinec, 2013). Moreover, hospitality present a unique opportunity to understand new cultural tourism experiences. It is important for the people to understand and appreciate different cultures to enhance the nature of their interactions with couples of different cultures, religions, races, creeds, colors, ages, genders and sexual orientations.

## **2.5 Interracial wedding in general**

Interracial wedding is an ever-changing and expanding area that is always a valued part for families, and the increased globalization, contemporary education, travel lust, and new development in weddings all contribute to the growth of cultural tourism (Suklabaidya, 2008; Tieng, 2019). There are a few places which the tourism sector is quite wide, and today's rapidly changing trend in wedding themes has always lured couples to conduct their weddings in new or exotic destinations, both domestically and overseas (Tieng, 2019; Suklabaidya, 2008). Plus, for Richards (2021) and Getz (2008), existing events may be perceived as sources to be utilized, which can be undesirable from a social and cultural viewpoint. Thus, there is a big need for tourism, hospitality, and events industries.

Interracial weddings take a lot of effort in the tourism, hospitality, and event management industry by covering a wide variety of functions; imagine an interracial wedding with different rituals and practices (Getz, 2008; Tieng, 2019; Suklabaidya, 2008). The norm of requiring people to marry within their own ethnic, religious, and social groupings has faded, and westernization has resulted in racial, religious, and cultural acceptance and variety in wedding (Richards, 2021; Triandis, 1995; Getz,