

Abstract

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One of the unique traits of Singapore is its multiracial society which encompasses mainly Chinese, Malay, Indian and other races. With the different cultural and historical background each ethnic group, they manifests their own culture traits. The Malay society represents the second majority in terms of the country's population, comprising of different roots of Malay lineage dating back to the days of migration from Indonesia and Malaysia. Being a race known for its refined culture and traditions, and yet sharing a common livelihood with other ethnic groups in Singapore, its cultural practices and traditions are sometimes not fully understood or even misconstrued; particularly the Malay wedding culture and traditions.

This study is focused on the actual culture practices and traditions being performed in a typical Malay wedding. The concentration includes the rituals, protocols and normalities in such a socio-cultural event which seemingly has undergone much transformation since the early days of the Malay settlement in Singapore. In addition, the research is concerned with unraveling the views of a practising Muslim (Syafi'i Mazhab) of such practices and traditions.

The main aim of this study is to have a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in a typical Malay wedding. The effort to learn and recognize the actual meanings, perceptions and aspirations from local Malays who are generally Muslims, also becomes one of the focal points in this research.

The method of research employed is that of a descriptive qualitative one, which also utilises the inductive approach of analysing field data. The main bulk of primary data is consolidated through field observation and personal contact with informants who are related directly or indirectly with the field of study. Literature and documentation pertaining to the subject matter are used as secondary data source.

In conclusion, the Malay wedding culture is said to be a complex combination of different cultures and traditions, whereby the attributes of these complexities comes from both internal and external factors. The former being reasons of different culture traits or various Malay lineage and the latter being reasons of foreign culture adaptation though means of diffusion, elaboration and evolution. The consensus from the practising Muslims is that whatever manner the society practice their culture or traditions, it should comply with Islamic principles and ethics.