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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/11944
DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/11944>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

CULTURAL AND IDENTITY SURVIVAL OF THE MALAY-MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN PERTH, AUSTRALIA

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 27 August 2020

Final Accepted: 30 September 2020

Published: October 2020

Key words:-

Australian Malay, Islamic
Characteristics, Religious Values,
Culture, Identity, Survival,
Islamic Civilization

Abstract

This article discusses the culture of the Malay minority which migrated to Perth, Australia from the Islamic aspect of identity. The purpose of this research is to identify the form and characteristics of Islamic and Malay cultural identity of this community, based on literature collection and field study through interviews and observation in Perth. Research finds that this Australian Malay minority has an identity and culture as well as Islamic characteristics almost similar to the parent Malay community in the Malay Archipelago. They are also proud of their identity and admit that they are Malays practising Islamic teachings even though living in a Westernised country of different religions and cultures. The three elements that preserve their Malay identity are adherence to Islamic religion, practising Malay culture and communication in the Malay language. There is no hindrance for them to practise Malay culture and observe Islamic teachings as Australia adopts a multicultural policy whereby citizens have the liberty to practice their respective cultures. The Islamic characteristics overtly displayed are rituals, particularly in aspects of *Ibadah* (worship) and observance of Islamic events and *Eid* celebrations. The style of physical appearance accentuated in the traditional design of apparel and home décor reflect Islamic and Malay cultural characteristics of the Archipelago.

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Introduction:-

By and large, the Malays are a community that speaks the Malay language and are settled in the Malay Archipelago encompassing Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore and the Philippines. Islamic religion is a facet of the Malay identity and is acknowledged in the definition of Malay in Article 160(2) of the Constitution of Malaysia, which states that a Malay person is a Muslim, practises Malay customs and speaks the Malay language. Although the Malays originate from the Archipelago, they are widely scattered in countries all over the world such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Southern Thailand, Myanmar, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Mecca, South Africa, Britain, Surinam,

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USA, Australia, Canada and Europe. Many of them are already citizens or permanent residents of those countries and have given birth to later generations who are not likely to return to live in the Archipelago.

The Malay migration from the Malay world to other places commenced from the 5th or 6th Centuries until the colonial times in the 16th Century (Wan Hashim 2010: 40). The British colonial era witnessed various forms of migration and colonization all over the world motivated by economic and socio-political factors. As a consequence of this migration, Malay minority groups or the Malay diaspora came into being in countries not categorized as the Malay world. The Malay presence in the Australian continent situated in the Pacific Ocean had begun since even the 18th Century as shown by the discovery of interaction between the Makassar Malays and the aborigines in northern Australia. However, the number and impact was not obvious until the 20th Century at the time of mass migration of Malays to mainland Australia, particularly to Perth, from the Cocos and Christmas Islands. Australia was indeed the choice of immigrants after the Second World War and this was encouraged by the country to increase its population. According to the report of the Australian Historical Population Statistics 2016, the number of immigrants to Australia contributed to increase of population by 55% (<https://www.abs.gov.au>). Immigrants who arrived were of diverse races and ethnicity, religious and cultural backgrounds from all over the world including Asia, MiddleEast and Europe. The Malay migration to Australia, which has a majority non-Muslim population, brought to some extent a new landscape to the country in spite of their small number, as compared to other immigrants who came as refugees, particularly from Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Turkey.

Methodology:-

This is a qualitative research which uses an ethnographic approach requiring the researcher to explore and describe the values, behaviour, beliefs, language and life system to describe the identity and culture of a community (Creswell 2013: 90). Thus, an intensive and protracted interaction with research participants or informants in the field is essential to gain insight into the story, living patterns and cultural themes (Liamputtong 2014: 246), besides having to immerse the self in their daily lives. This research focuses on the Malays who have become naturalized Australian citizens or Permanent Residents (PR) in Perth. Although some Malays are found in other locations in Western Australia, the researcher chooses to focus on the community who live in Perth city which is the capital for Western Australia because Perth is the place closely related to the history of the earliest mass migration to Australia. According to previous research, this city was the focal point of most Malays who migrated from Cocos and Christmas Islands in the 1970s compared to other towns in Western Australia (Wan Hashim & A. Halim 1999: 41). Their presence there for more than three decades would have seen various changes, at once reflecting identity patterns they might have maintained together with their original traditions and culture, or that show possible assimilation and altered identity and culture.

Field research was conducted in the vicinity of Perth city from February to August 2016. Data was obtained through interviews, complemented and supported by unobtrusive or inconspicuous methods to explore the activities and daily practices of the Malay community. The activities observed include that related to religious practices, language, appearance and festive celebrations as well as social events or gatherings. Semi-structured interviews with 30 informants or respondents were conducted and observation by attending social events or gatherings as well as *Eid al-Fitr* celebration by the Malays. Data obtained by unobtrusive or inconspicuous methods was through viewing the material culture shown by the community such as home furniture layout, home décor, and physical appearance and so on. Data from interviews were recorded with a digital recorder to facilitate the transcription process before analysis. Some of the events attended by the researcher throughout the field study were photographed and some recorded on video. The process of analysis involving the three sources of interviews, observation and inconspicuous methods were triangulated to ensure reliability and validity of research data.

Diaspora of Malay-Muslim:

Today's globalization era witnesses migrations occurring in many situations and this very much influences the identity and culture of humans. Immigrants, particularly Malay-Muslims who migrated to Australia, which is a non-Muslim majority country, try to adapt to the new environment, while at the same time try to preserve their identity, specifically, their traditional and religious values (Sheriffdeen 2011: 185-186). They experience mixed identity (Saeed & Akbarzadeh 2001: 5) because they are obliged to give their commitment to the country and society which differ in culture and religion. Thus this shapes a new identity, particularly for the young generation, which differs from the previous or older generation.

The Malay-Muslim identity as a minority group in the diaspora context has been discussed in past studies by B.A. Hussainmiya (1990), W.K. Che Man (1992: 59-70), M.M.M. Mahroof (1994: 143-155), Syed Muhd Khairudin Al-Junied (2006: 371-382), Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir (2007: 309-318), as well as Ismail Hussein and Awang Sariyan (2015: 3-624). These studies discussed the identity, issues and survival of the Muslim minority community and Islam in Singapore, Thailand and Sri Lanka. Minority Malays are constantly struggling to defend their identity and culture from extinction under political pressure in these countries. The Malay dilemma as a minority group in Singapore, South Thailand and the Philippines is frequently a discussed and debated issue. The question is whether the same is happening to the Malay-Muslim community in Australia.

Research on the origins of the Malay-Muslim community in Australia is obtained from a number of historical sources. Records by Gibson-Hill (1952: 13-110) are an important source which records the history of Malay arrival in Cocos Island, brought by Alexander Hare and John Clunies-Ross in the years 1826-1827. The majority of these Malays originate from Bali, Bima, Celebes, Madura, Sumbawa, East Coast of Sumatra, Pasir-Kutai, Malacca, Penang Island, Betawi, Ceribon, Banjarmasin, Pontianak, Tasik Malaya and Kota Waringan. Research concerning some aspects of Malays in Cocos Island was done by Pauline Bunce (1993) who, among other things, discussed their history and settlements, lifestyle, arts, economic activities and beliefs and religion, in addition to displaying the geography and ecology of the island. According to her, the Islamic religion heavily influences their customs and culture while they maintain speaking Cocos Island Malay language.

Cocos Island (Keeling Island), situated about 1,000 km from Java Island, Indonesia and 2,768 km from Perth, was later placed under Australian administration which ultimately led to Malay migration to mainland Australia when it became densely overpopulated. Besides Cocos Island, Christmas Island situated about 900 km from Cocos Island also became a Malay settlement when phosphate mines were opened by the British. Later it became an Australian province in the year 1958. Wan Hashim Wan Teh (1991: 11) in his study discussed the socio-economy and history of the Malay community in Cocos and Christmas Islands who migrated to Western Australia. A socio-cultural and linguistic study by Asmah Omar (2006; 2008) discussed the spoken Malay of Cocos and Christmas Islands. She also discussed other aspects related to culture, education and religion of the Malay community in Western Australia. According to Raja Masittah Raja Ariffin (2010: 298-321), Cocos Malay is still spoken today in Cocos and Christmas Islands as well as by those in mainland Australia, particularly in Perth. In addition, Jaffary Awang and Muda@Ismail Ab. Rahman (2010: 1-20) in their study briefly discussed some religious aspects still being observed by the Malay-Muslims in Katanning and Perth.

The total number or composition of Malays in Perth today cannot be accurately estimated. However according to one source, the whole community residing in Western Australia total about 10,000, among whom are those who migrated thirty years ago from Cocos and Christmas Islands (Zainun et al. 2015: Sect. 1). According to another source, the Malays in Perth and Fremantle total about 2000 people, excluding students (Asmah Omar 2006: 113). While Wan Hashim Wan Teh and A. Halim Ali (1999: 41) in a study conducted between 1989 to 1990, estimated about 3000 Malays live in Western Australia, as citizens and permanent residents (PR) after having migrated more than three or four decades ago in the 1970s and 1980s. Further they added that this Malay minority is still able to preserve their customs and culture and this is something to be proud of. Their migration since more than three decades ago raises the issues of whether they have undergone a significant transformation in their lives or otherwise, and whether the Islamic characteristics they brought with them are still similar to those practiced in the Archipelago? Thus, picking up from these past studies, this research aims:

1. To explore the true situation and conditions of the Malay community in Perth today.
2. To identify the pattern of the Malay-Muslim identity and culture in Perth.
3. To explore the Islamic characteristics of their identity and culture.

Islam and Identity of Malay Community in Perth:

The Malay society is synonymous with Islam and Islam has been their faith for centuries. After the advent of Islam to the Malay world, the Malay society became inseparable from Islam and Islam became the basic foundation for the Malay culture and identity. Culture is the whole system, ideas, actions and human efforts within the life framework of the society (Koentjaraningrat 1987: 180). The Islam is a revealed religion the practice of which is commanded by Allah. It encompasses general and specific acts of Ibadah. Acts of specific *Ibadah* such as *Solah* (prayer), *Sawm* (fasting), *Zakah* (charity tax) and *Haji* (pilgrimage) are the Pillars of Islam while other enjoined practices include reading al-Quran, *Zikr* (meditation in remembrance of Allah) and so on. Ibadah are acts and practices in whatever field of life intended to gain reward from Allah SWT such as working, eating, helping and mutual respect and so on.

Thus, religion and culture are inseparable because religion influences many aspects of human culture. In this research, some of these aspects are revealed in exploring the religious values and their relation to the Malay identity and culture in Perth.

1. Specific *Ibadah*:

Specific *Ibadah* discussed in this research are obligatory prayer, fasting, charity tax and pilgrimage. On average, results of interviews with informants say that they do their regular prayers and are more comfortable doing it at home. For those working, particularly men, they have no problems with praying in the workplace except that they are forced to find a suitable and a little bit hidden place to pray. Employers and colleagues understand about it. However, there are also informants who do not pray at the workplace because of certain personal reasons and postpone praying *Zuhr* and *'Asr* until they get home. Informants, who go out to sightsee and do not go home to pray, say that they pray at public places such as in a field, car park and so on without any disturbance. Passers-by only look and understand it is an Islamic ritual.

The Muslim community in Perth comprises of various schools of law (*Mazhab*) such as Shafie, Hanbali, Maliki and Hanafi due to different origins of immigrants. When the month of Ramadan for fasting comes, there are frequent differences of opinion (*Khilaf*) due to differences in *Mazhab* among Muslims in Perth. The different *Mazhabs* differ in the method of determining the first day of Ramadan for fasting. Some rely on *Hisab* (mathematical calculation) and others on *Rukyah* (sighting the moon) in the whole of Australia at certain places fixed by the *Ulama* (scholars) or Imams, under the supervision of the Australian Islamic Religious Committee. However, the majority of Malays belong to the Shafie *Mazhab* and are more comfortable following the method used in Malaysia and Singapore. The same situation arises to determine the day of *Eid al-Fitr* after fasting month. Thus, *Eid al-Fitr* is not celebrated simultaneously as the fasting month does not begin simultaneously for the different *Mazhabs*.

Besides the *Ibadah* of prayer and fasting, Muslims also pay a charity tax. The most frequently charity tax paid is *ZakahFitrah* paid in the fasting month of Ramadhan before *Eid al-Fitr Sunnah* prayer. According to them, there is a special body which manages it, particularly at mosques in Perth and they need to pay only to the collector (*'Amil*) on duty. As for *Zakah* on assets or income, the income earners among the Malays also pay it, and according to one of the informants, they can go to the nearest mosques, which have their own websites. They can enter and pay *Zakah* whichever way they want. It will do calculation and inform them. They only need to input their income in the ready template, and it will inform the amount to bank-in, so they can transfer directly.

Regarding pilgrimage (*Hajj* and *'Umrah*), informants who have experienced performing *Hajj* said that they have no problem to go to the Holy Land because there is a registered agency which manages pilgrimage. Some said that there is no proper guidance on how to perform *Hajj* rituals as the agency does not provide classes as conducted by the Tabung Haji (Pilgrimage Fund) in Malaysia. However, this is not really a big problem for them as there are religious teachers (*Ustaz* and *Ustazah*) who voluntarily teach them and they can also learn through electronic media. Some of them even hold the opinion that going for *Hajj* from Australia is easier and faster as there is no fixed quota as compared to going from Malaysia or Singapore where there is a very long queue of registered Muslims subject to the fixed quota.

The results of interview show that the majority of informants, regardless of gender, admit to adhering strongly to Islamic teachings and consistently perform obligatory acts of *Ibadah* and recommended practices. However a few of them do not fully observe *Ibadah* for personal reasons although they admit to still being Muslim.

2. Religious Education and al-Quran:

In a Malay society, religious instruction and study of al-Quran is an important aspect in educating the young generation. Similarly in Perth, some parents realize the importance of religious instruction. They also send their children to religious schools called *Madrasah* or arrange for a teacher to conduct al-Quran classes at home. Usually, such classes take place after formal school hours, in the evenings or on weekends. There are certain bodies which took the initiative to establish a *Madrasah* such as Hidayah Centre and Masjid al-Majid located in northern Perth, and other bodies such as MECCA in southern Perth. Children are taught to read al-Quran and *Fard al-'Ain* (personal obligations) in such schools. Some parents, who are more concerned about religious education for their children, send them to religious schools with dual curriculum, religious and formal academic studies. This type of school is called Islamic School and is categorised as a private school. Examples of such schools are found in Kenwick, Thornlie and Dianella.



Pic1:- Al-Quran Lesson at Home.

Source: Napisah Karimah Ismail, field study in Perth (16 March 2016)

Other than classes for children, women in northern Perth also attend weekly class on Saturdays from 1.30 until 3 p.m. This class is conducted by Ustazah (a female religious teacher) from Singapore and the syllabus covers *Ibadah* and *'Aqidah* (creed). The medium of instruction is Malay as all the women attending are Malays. Class venue is rotated among the homes offered by class attendees. Food is served at the end of each class. The researcher had the opportunity to join the class which was attended by more than 20 women. Unfortunately, only a few of them brought along their teenagers to the class. It was observed that the women treated each other like family members. They warmly mingled and shared stories after each class while enjoying the food served. The researcher was informed that it is at such classes that women get Islamic instruction by a teacher, in addition to watching and following religious programs on television at home for those who have the network to receive television and radio programs transmitted from Malaysia.

3. Special Islamic Celebrations:

According to informants, the *Eid al-Fitr* is the liveliest festival celebration for the Muslims in Perth. On that day, the Malay community will put on the same apparel as the Malays in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, that is the traditional *Baju Kurung* and *Jubah* or *Abaya* for womenfolk and the *Baju Melayu* complete with *Songkok* (traditional headgear) and *Samping* (short outer skirt) for the men. The researcher observed that on *Eid al-Fitr* in Masjid al-Majid situated at Hepburn Height, about 20km from Perth town, the ambience is very lively because so many attended. The Mosque Committee estimated that the congregation was more than 10,000 people because the prayer space became overcrowded and many had to pray outside in the mosque square. The committee laid out extra floor mats and put up tents in the mosque square for the congregation's convenience.

The uniqueness of celebrations at this mosque compared to other mosques in Perth is the feast after *Eid al-Fitr* prayer. The food is usually contributed potluck by the generous among the attendees, regardless of race. The committee only has to provide the tent and tables to put the food on at a corner by the side of the mosque square. The researcher's own experience was feeling the liveliness of the occasion with the Muslim community which consisted of various races gathering and enjoying the various dishes after prayer. This kind of situation seldom happens in Malaysia. An interview with Haji Adam, Secretary of the Masjid al-Majid, said that this custom has long been practised and continues till up to now. The only thing that he disliked was that a few would begin eating a little early before the *Eid* sermon was over. This caused the food to finish before the others came out after the sermon, thus depriving them from sharing the food.

The researcher found something interesting, that is, the sermon was delivered in dual languages, English and Malay. It depends on the Imam on duty that day. Usually, the Imam of the mosque is Imam Jalil who originated from Aceh, having migrated to Perth long ago. The Committee of Masjid al-Majid consists of Malays who originated from Cocos and Christmas Islands, thus the sermon, including Friday sermon, is usually delivered in dual languages.

In the interviews, it was said that the majority of working Muslims apply for one day or half day leave to attend *Eid al-Fitr* prayer. The *Eid al-Fitr* prayer takes place in all mosques in Perth and some organizations take the initiative to lease a hall or field for the congregational prayer. This is allowed by the government as their application

is valid and they are given the liberty to assemble. In other mosques, it is not customary to feast after prayer, thus the Muslims disperse and go on their separate ways. For the Malays, it is customary to visit relatives and friends on Eid. This culture is said to continue throughout the month of Shawwal, particularly on weekends, just as is practised in Malaysia.



Pic 2:- Malays in Traditional *Baju Melayu* Begged Forgiveness from Each Other after *Eid al-Fitr* Prayer at the Masjid al-Majid, Hepburn Height, Perth.

Source: Napisah Karimah Ismail, field study in Perth (6 July 2016)

According to informants, *Eid al-Adha* celebration is not as lively as for *Eid al-Fitr*. *Eid al-Adha* prayer is usually held in mosques in the whole of Perth. The difference is that those who wish to make sacrifice do so by giving money to certain agencies to perform the sacrifice overseas especially in countries where there are poor Muslims, such as in Cambodia, Indonesia and so on. For them, the Muslim community in Perth are not categorized as poor as they live as residents or citizens and enjoy various amenities provided by the government. Other than *Eid*, other special occasions for celebrations are *Maulidur Rasul* (Prophet Muhammad's Birthday), *Awal Muharram* (New Year Day for Hijrah calendar) and *Isra' Mi'raj* (Night Journey and Ascension). These events are frequently organized by the Masjid al-Majid and well-known speakers from Malaysia or Indonesia are invited to give talks to attendees, the majority of whom are Malays.

4. Ceremonial Events:

The researcher had the opportunity to attend some ceremonial events while in Perth, among them a wedding (*Nikah*) ceremony, a ceremony animal sacrifice for a baby (*Majlis Akikah*) and shaving its first hair (*Majlis Cukur Jambul*) and a memorial to supplicate for a deceased (*Majlis Tahlil*). The atmosphere for the wedding celebration felt like the researcher was in Malaysia. Some weddings are held in the bride's and bridegroom's homes and some choose to hold it in a hall. According to obtained information, if many guests are invited, it will be held in a hall. The problem with having it at home is the limited parking space, particularly in a residential area. Most of the wedding preparations are acquired from Malaysia and Singapore, such as the wedding costumes, exchange gifts and souvenirs for guests. According to those who originate from Malaysia and Singapore, they would buy each time they visit or order the merchandise through relatives, to bring back to Perth before the occasion takes place. On the wedding day, the custom of wedding procession consisting of *Kompang* (drum or percussion instrument) players singing in chorus behind the groom accompanied by bearers of *Manggar* flowers (flowers made of tinsel) is still being practised to celebrate the groom's arrival. There is also a *Silat* (Malay martial art) presentation before the couple. Besides that, the hall or home is decorated with a wedding dais (*Pelamin*) and a bridal head table (*Meja Makan Beradab*) as practised in Malaysia.



Pic 3:- Ambience of Malay Wedding Ceremony in Perth.
Source: Napisah Karimah Ismail, field study in Perth(16 April 2016)

Besides the wedding event, the researcher also had the opportunity to attend a supplication for a deceased conducted by a group of women. It was done exactly like in Malaysia. After *Surah Yassin* was read together led by one woman acting as head, as a gift for the deceased, followed by *Tahlil* (by *Zikir*, remembrance of Allah SWT) and *Doa* (supplication) for *Arwah* (soul of deceased). Then food was served, the menu of which was the same as in Malaysia. Another ceremony was the *Majlis Akikah* to celebrate the birth of a baby. On this occasion, there is usually a *Berzanji* (rhythmic reading of prayers, praises and narration of Prophet Muhammad's history) group consisting of womenfolk invited to make the presentation. This was followed by a ceremony of shaving the baby's first hair and ended with a feast for attendees.

5. Apparel and Appearance:

Apparel is a physical characteristic which symbolizes personality and identity. It plays a big role in reflecting one's social identity and gives the best opportunity to learn how humans translate their culture (Crane 2000: 1). The Malay community in Perth still adheres to Malay and Islamic style of clothing, especially on festive occasions or ceremonial celebrations besides Eid celebrations. Malay women, particularly from Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore will wear the *Baju Kurung* and some will wear the *Jubah* or *Abaya* on such occasions. The majority of first generation female informants wear the complete *Hijab* (long dress and headscarf) no matter where and whatever the occasion. For them, wearing the *Hijab* is a religious obligation and thus compulsory. However, many of their daughters do not wear the *Hijab* and only wear the traditional dress, *Baju Kurung* on Eid or on special occasions such as weddings. Some of the informants interviewed also were not wearing *hijab* and were even married to non-Malay converts.

The Malay men wear the traditional *Baju Melayu*, *Songkok* and *Samping* on *Eid al-Fitr* and *al-Adha*, for Friday prayer as well as at weddings, especially in families of the bride and groom. The researcher witnessed this at wedding occasions of a Malay home at Girrawheen and in a hall situated at Maddington, Perth. The wedding costumes were similar to the fashion in Malaysia and Singapore and more modern compared to the 1980s and 1990s era. The groom wore the Malay costume complete with *Tanjak* (headgear), *Samping* (short outer skirt) and *Keris* (Malay weapon). And the bride appeared in a more modern style like a gown, adorned with sequins, as worn by brides in Malaysia today.

6. Malay Cuisine and Halal Diet:

On average, the informants, especially from the first generation, choose Malay cuisine almost every day. Side dishes are similar to food cooked in Malaysia as the ingredients required are easily available in retail stores in Perth. Products from Malaysia and Indonesia labelled with the *Halal* logo are also easily available in retail stores which sell Eastern goods, known as 'Oriental' shops usually opened by Chinese or Vietnamese. Thus, it is not a problem for the Malay community to get ingredients for cooking Malay dishes. Rice is the staple menu for the family of almost every informant interviewed, particularly from the first generation. However, the second and third generations, the sons and daughters and grandchildren tend to prefer steak, pasta, salad and other Western foods compared to rice.

The Malay community in Perth still emphasizes on *Halal* (permissible and pure) diet for the family and this is taught to the children. It can be said that all informants say that there is no problem getting halal sources of food, particularly raw meat and chicken, as these are available in shops easily found in Perth. This is unlike the era of the 1980s and 1990s when they first migrated to Perth, some of them had to slaughter chicken by themselves to cook, as chicken sold was not *Halal*.

In terms of menu, especially for Eid celebrations, the food dishes served to guests are almost similar to that in Malaysia such as *Rendang*, *NasiImpit*, *KuahKacang*, *Lontong*, *KuihRaya* and various kinds of rice dishes served. For food served at wedding occasions, the researcher finds that the menu is almost similar to that in Malaysia and Singapore. The main dish is rice served with various side dishes and traditional Malay cakes as *KuihLapis*, *KuihKoci*, *CucurBadak* and so on. On average, womenfolk of the first generation know how to prepare Malay cakes and dishes. For weddings and other occasions, on average all of them mutually co-operate or volunteer to help in preparing the food for the guests because in Perth, catering services for *Halal* food are limited, in fact almost unavailable. Thus, the culture of *Gotong-royong* (mutual assistance) is emphasized to make the occasion a success.

7. Arts and Cultural Etiquette:

There are some traditions and rules of etiquette still being practised by the Malays in Perth which are the same as in the Archipelago. In the arts, the activities of *Berzanji* and *Kompang* form part of the social culture there. There are two *Berzanji* groups, one made up of womenfolk and the other of menfolk. They are frequently invited to make presentations at certain ceremonies and occasions such as *MajlisAkikah* or *CukurJambul* of new babies and sometimes at special Islamic celebrations such *MaulidurRasul* and so on.

Another form of arts is the *Kompang* group playing percussion or drums which is a must for every Malay wedding in Perth. In the old days, *Kompang* group consisted of the elderly, but now many young Malays join in as members. This reflects that the Archipelago culture is alive and practised by the Malay community in the land of kangaroos even though distant in place. Besides that, in terms of home furniture layout and décor, it was observed that the walls of the Malay homes are decorated in similar fashion as other Malay communities in the Archipelago. They love to hang framed calligraphy of the 'Allah' and 'Muhammad' as wall decorations.

In terms of etiquette, parents emphasize some aspects of courtesy to be inculcated and instructed to their children. Among these is the custom of *Salam* or respectful greeting whereby the younger person kisses the hand of the older. They also teach their children to bow their body a little when walking in front of others older than them, out of respect. The courtesy or good manners and cultural arts accentuated among the Malays in Perth, to some extent, reflect the continuity of tradition as found in the Archipelago. They also emphasize the same matters in bringing up their children. Even though many of the children are of mixed identity as a result of mingling and mixed marriage, not all the aspects of being Malay and Muslim are lost, as some of them still emphasize on preserving the Malay culture for the younger generations.

Conclusion:-

Generally, the Australian Malays endeavour to preserve their culture and identity as Malays and Muslims. Even though some aspects of the Malay identity, particularly Malay language, are fading as time goes by, what is more important is their religion. The most important factors in preserving their culture and identity are the family unit, education and social awareness of members of the community. They do not face factors such as political pressure and discrimination, so this gives them the opportunity to continue preserving their culture and identity. However, due to the factors of education and environment, the young generation faces a dilemma as current demands requires them to communicate more in English language and mingle with other communities of different religion and culture. This causes the young generation to be somewhat influenced by the environment and difficult to monitor. They find difficulty to communicate effectively in Malay language as their parents do, and their appearance also differ in terms of apparel fashion.

Nevertheless, the parents' emphasis on the Muslim identity of the young generation in view of the challenging environment is an important element in preserving their identity as Malays from the Archipelago. Families who are concerned instruct and suggest their young to perform obligatory prayers and observe fasting as well as read al-Quran. For parents who are not so concerned, their young are left to follow the current, especially children of mixed marriage. This situation may make the Malay Archipelago culture and Islamic identity fade away as time goes by and may eventually disappear from the young Malay generation of Perth.

Acknowledgement:-

This study is financed by Geran Universiti Penyelidikan (GUP-2019-027), Geran Galakan Penyelidikan (GGP-2019-013), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and University of Malaya Research Grant (PG224-2016A).

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