

Local Telefilm and Cultural Identity: A Study from The Perspectives of Kadazan-Dusun Youths

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KEYWORDS:

Local Telefilm
Cultural Identity
Representation
Kadazan-Dusun Youth

CITATION:

Cyril, M. (2025). Local Telefilm and Cultural Identity: A Study from The Perspectives of Kadazan-Dusun Youths. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 10(10), e003631.
<https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v10i10.3631>

ABSTRACT

This study examined the content of the television telefilm "Ratu Kaamatan," watched by the Kadazan-Dusun youth. It employed content analysis and focus group discussions with the Kadazan-Dusun youth to explore the local telefilm. The cultural identity of the Kadazan-Dusun community was analysed based on seven key elements: language, customs and beliefs, traditional attire, ethnic festivals, traditional cuisine, arts, and way of life. The program highlighted five main components of cultural identity: way of life or lifestyle patterns, ethnic festivals, traditional attire, arts, and customs and beliefs. The study emphasises the youth's dissatisfaction with how their native language is portrayed in the telefilm, as well as the visual representation of traditional attire, traditional music, and the background imagery. This research shows that local telefilm does not fully represent local cultural identity. Although there is insufficient representation, it is still an effort to preserve local culture.

Contribution/Originality: This research contributes to the field of media and cultural studies. This research reveals that, while the film aims to preserve culture, youth were dissatisfied with the inaccurate portrayal of native language and traditional attire, offering crucial feedback for future local media efforts.

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology in contemporary society affects the acceptance and usage patterns of television. At the same time, it also impacts the formation of the cultural identity of the community. This is due to the exposure of various programs or shows from various sources and viewing platforms. The changing landscape in electronic media is shaping the tastes of television viewers. The development of information and communication technology, with a variety of applications that audiences can access and use, is driving this change in the landscape. This allows audiences to select a readily accessible platform for their use. Similarly, [Huma \(2015\)](#) and [Hashim \(2019\)](#) say that audience tastes in choosing shows are also changing with the tide of progress.

Viewers in the digital age are now more passionate about shows that are personal or hold personal value. For example, a show that makes viewers feel part of the storyline is an example of what today's viewers are interested in (Meade, 2015). This creates an experience that can be shared with others (Freedman, 2016). In this context, when a show holds real value for the audience, it provides a self-representation experience. It is this self-representation that helps shape the audience's identity (Kaluvoya, 2016).

Furthermore, globalisation is said to strengthen cultural identity within a society (Wang, 2007; Misra & Singh, 2023). According to Wang (2007), technological advances bring society closer to its cultural roots. The exposure to their unique cultural identity makes individuals more aware and enables them to observe it more deeply. However, it is also stated that globalisation and new media can not only influence the formation and development of cultural identity but can also challenge it (Ho & Ming, 2021). These changes have arisen from technological advancements and innovations in new media. Studies have also been conducted to highlight the diversity in developmental aspects, which can lead to the emergence of new cultures. This poses a potential threat to local cultures. Additionally, the position of their cultural identity can become stagnant due to pressure from a culture that is being assimilated and homogenised (Singh, 2010).

In Malaysia, the media are also utilised to promote and preserve the cultural identity of specific societal groups (Sarifin, Sukimi & Ali, 2021). The use of electronic media to strengthen identity among Bawean ethnic communities in Malaysia is regarded as a collaborative effort to sustain their cultural uniqueness. Film creators in Sabah have also endeavoured to produce media content that includes elements of cultural identity. Initiatives to maintain language vitality as part of cultural identity in local films have been undertaken in Sabah (Dol, 2022). Local films such as *Bimbizangan Movie: The Musical*, which depict daily life in the Kadazan community, not only aid in fostering the community's cultural identity but also provide an opportunity for diverse audiences to understand and learn about the cultural practices of the Kadazan people, including their language and lifestyle.

The cultivation of elements of cultural identity in media content can influence the development of cultural identity (Salleh & Bauer, 2018). In the studies conducted, elements of cultural identity in the media examined received varying feedback from individuals living in urban and rural areas. This is due to the differing levels of exposure to media content among the participants. Exposure to foreign media content versus media content focused on the local community led to a lack of responses from survey participants, who found no common ground in identifying elements of cultural identity (Md Syed & Ibrahim, 2018). The exposure to and promotion of cultural identity elements in media content for viewers is essential to foster the formation of cultural identity more effectively. Therefore, research into the cultural identity elements within the context of the Kadazan-Dusun youth in Sabah should also be undertaken to assess the extent of exposure and emphasis by the show's producers.

1.1. Research Objectives

This study aims to explore the perspectives of Kadazan-Dusun youth on a local telefilm and to identify the elements of cultural identity embedded within it.

2. Literature Review

Cultural identity pertains to the sense of belonging or spirit of a cultural or ethnic group. Its development arises from cultural groups that nurture their culture. It involves learning and embracing traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestry, aesthetic values, thought patterns, and social-cultural structures (Lustig & Koester, 2010). Meanwhile, for Barker (1999), cultural identity is a temporary stabilisation of meaning rather than a fixed entity. The interplay between internal and external factors influences the formation of cultural identity.

Additionally, the formation of cultural identity involves adopting cultural beliefs and practices within a society (Jensen, 2003). This is a fundamental aspect of how cultural identity is developed in a community. Cultural identity also forms a dimension of an individual's self-awareness or self-concept. It is closely linked to social class, ethnicity, nationality, locality, faith beliefs, customs, traditions, and other cultural elements. Therefore, cultural identity refers to individuals and groups within society who share common cultural characteristics (Jensen, Arnett & McKenzie, 2011). However, globalisation enables a hybrid identity, as part of one's cultural identity is rooted in local culture, while another part is influenced by global culture (Arnett, 2015).

Meanwhile, for local Malaysian researchers, the formation of cultural identity should be understood within two contexts of social reality: government interpretation and everyday interpretation. The government's interpretation of social reality, which holds authority, reflects certain expectations related to the identity established by a particular political party. In contrast, the everyday interpretation pertains to individual experiences in daily life (Shamsul, 1996). Therefore, to understand the process of identity formation through the experiences and utilisation of television content, it is important to explore and examine the real-world context as interpreted through daily life.

Additionally, individualism and collectivism are cultural traits that reflect how a person perceives and defines themselves, as well as how their relationships with others are formed within a particular group (Brewer & Chen, 2007). Even so, there are studies indicating that the trend of individualism is increasing, while the trend of collectivism is decreasing (Cai et al., 2019). Hamamura (2018) states that Japan is an example country in Asia moving towards individualism.

Santos, Varnum, and Grossmann (2017) also agree that the cultural aspect of individualism is growing among people around the world. In their study, the cultural element of individualism increased due to differences in cultural factors related to changes in socioeconomic development, the frequency of catastrophes, and climate pressures.

Television functions as a source of local identity and cultural construction (Briandana, 2019). Media can reinforce local identity by featuring settings, issues, and languages specific to the region. Identity also arises from social groupings based on class, ethnicity, religion, and the state. It is shaped through various means, such as symbols and languages used in media content. Social activities within society can also contribute to the development of cultural identity (Jensen & Arnett, 2012). Furthermore, local television plays a crucial role as a platform for forming local cultural identity, offering the community relevant television programmes or shows.

3. Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using content analysis and focus group discussion methods. Qualitative research approaches are crucial for exploring complex societal issues and understanding individuals' viewpoints and experiences. Methods include interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis, each offering a different perspective on the topic (Ng et al., 2018). This method involves a small group of participants engaging in discussion on a specific subject, moderated to keep focus and productivity (Hennink, 2013).

Focus groups are effective at encouraging people to share their opinions and ideas about the research issue because they make participants feel comfortable and reduce bias (Lauri, 2019). The data collected from these interactions can be analysed using various qualitative methodologies, including thematic analysis, which involves coding and identifying patterns within the data. Another approach to systematically evaluate text is through qualitative content analysis, which includes materials like interview transcripts and observation notes. This method involves categorising segments of text through coding and analysing the data to find similarities, differences, and patterns (Puppis, 2019; Roller, 2019). It allows researchers to combine theory-driven and data-driven coding, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research subject (Puppis, 2019).

Qualitative methods, such as focus groups and content analysis, are used in educational settings to evaluate teaching methods and the success of intervention programmes. For example, discussions in focus groups can reveal how parents feel about programmes for children who struggle to communicate with others, which can assist in assessing and enhancing these programmes (Theadore et al., 2011). Qualitative content analysis can also explore how young women perceive and behave towards sex education. This indicates that we need to find better and more engaging ways to teach it (Reid & van Teijlingen, 2006).

Therefore, this research employed a qualitative study because it involves understanding the youth's viewpoints and experiences in watching the local telefilm. This research is in Sabah, including the urban areas of Kota Kinabalu and Penampang, as well as the rural areas of Keningau and Ranau. That location was chosen based on the Kadazan-Dusun population in this area, where the most Kadazan-Dusun live. 32 youth were selected using the snowball sampling method, with a key informant in the research area, and only Kadazan-Youth aged 18 to 25 years were targeted.

The data were collected from six online focus group discussions conducted to accommodate the informant's time constraints. All participants in this research have consented to their involvement by completing the Google form, indicating their agreement to participate. The local telefilm, Ratu Kaamatan and the focus group discussion transcripts were analysed using Atlas.Ti and are based on preset cultural identity elements such as language, customs and beliefs, traditional attire, ethnic festivals, traditional cuisine, arts, and way of life. These presets are derived from past studies on cultural identity.

4. Results

Elements of cultural identity, such as language, customs and beliefs, traditional clothes, ethnic festivals, traditional food, art, and a way of life or lifestyle, are used to analyse the content related to cultural identity in the chosen television programme. However, in a content analysis of the Ratu Kaamatan telefilm, only five aspects of cultural identity which are the way of life or lifestyle, ethnic festivals, traditional clothing, art, and customs and beliefs are featured. Focus group analysis shows that only language, ethnic celebrations, customs and beliefs, arts, and a way of life or lifestyle are recorded.

4.1. Content analysis of the Ratu Kaamatan telefilm

4.1.1. *Way of life or lifestyle*

In the context of the telefilm "Ratu Kaamatan," one of the depicted aspects of cultural identity is a way of life. The telefilm includes several scenes that provide a glimpse into the lifestyles and ways of life of the Kadazan-Dusun people living in Sabah. From 0:0:20 to 0:1:45 in the "Ratu Kaamatan" telefilm, a group of individuals is shown clearing paddy fields. Rice cultivation is a vital part of life for the Kadazan-Dusun people of Sabah. The process begins with clearing rice planting areas, establishing paddy nurseries, and cultivating rice, all carried out in distinct stages. In addition to planting rice in paddies, the Kadazan-Dusun community in Sabah also grows rice in hilly or high-altitude regions.

The way of life of the Kadazan-Dusun community in the telefilm "Ratu Kaamatan" from the third to the fourth minute and fifteen seconds depicts their cultural practices. In this scene, the Kadazan-Dusun way of life typically involves the responsibility of caring for their parents. Not only does the Kadazan-Dusun community practise a lifestyle that emphasises family values, but nearly all Asian countries adopt a similar way of living. Two scenes from the telefilm "Ratu Kaamatan" illustrate the lifestyle of the Kadazan-Dusun community in Sabah. The "Ratu Kaamatan" telefilm highlights their ways of life, which include agricultural activities such as rice planting, and a lifestyle centred on family values, such as caring for the elderly.

4.1.2. *Ethnic festivals*

In the telefilm "Ratu Kaamatan," ethnic festivals such as the Kaamatan Festival are shown to be an essential part of the cultural identity of the Kadazan-Dusun community in Sabah. The festival, the Kaamatan Festival, is portrayed from 1:16:00 to 1:20:00 in the telefilm. The celebration of the Kaamatan Festival is an event that embodies the culture of the Kadazan-Dusun community in Sabah, as well as the Kadazan, Dusun, Murut, and Rungus (KDMR) communities. Traditionally, these festivals are held throughout May, ending at the month's close. However, the activities of the Kaamatan Festival are carried out in each district according to the schedule established by the festival's organising committee. The committee responsible for overseeing the Kaamatan Festival is led by the Committee of the Kadazan Dusun Cultural Association Sabah (KDCA), which was formed specifically to manage the festival's activities. Each district with a KDMR community organises Kaamatan Festival activities following the preset schedule. The final celebration of the Kaamatan Festival takes place at Hongkod Koisaan or KDCA Hall after all district activities have finished.

This ethnic celebration holds great significance for the KDMR community in Sabah, as the Kaamatan Festival symbolises community unity and the sharing of their new harvest. The KDMR community's belief in this unity endows a special value to their society, passing it on to future generations. The celebration of the Kaamatan Festival can now be viewed online. This enhances the spirit of the celebrations while safeguarding and promoting cultural identity among local and international communities.

4.1.3. Traditional clothing

The traditional attire from the telefilm *Ratu Kaamatan* represents a distinct ethnic group. *Ratu Kaamatan* highlights the traditional dress of the Kadazan, Dusun, Murut, and Rungus ethnic groups between 1:17:17 and 1:19:41. The traditional Kadazan Penampang costumes, the traditional Rungus costumes, the traditional Dusun Lotud Tuaran costumes, and the traditional Murut costumes are showcased among the traditional attire.

In the 'Ratu Kaamatan' telefilm, only a few of the traditional costumes of the KDMR community, particularly those of the Kadazans and Dusuns, are depicted. The Kadazan-Dusun of Sabah express their cultural identity through traditional clothing. Moreover, wearing traditional attire allows members of specific social groups to recognise each other. Any community interested in and eager to experience wearing traditional clothes can also do so at various venues such as museums, handicraft shops, and similar places. The practise of wearing traditional garments is not limited to certain segments of society; rather, it is open to anyone who wishes to participate.

4.1.4. Arts

The display from 1:16:50 to 1:17:10 highlights the traditional musical instruments used in the telefilm "Ratu Kaamatan" in terms of art elements. The traditional music of the Kadazan-Dusun community includes gongs, also known as *tagung*, *sanang*, or *tawang*, as well as other musical instruments (Pugh-Kitingan, 2012). The musical instruments in the telefilm utilised by the Kadazan-Dusun community during the Kaamatan festival are also showcased.

The telefilm also showed individuals playing the traditional musical instruments featured in it. Typically, a group of individuals plays the instruments together to maintain the music's rhythm. Some of the instruments can be played alone, while others must be played in groups to achieve the desired rhythm. Weddings also incorporate traditional musical instruments.

4.1.5. Customs and beliefs

The Kadazan-Dusun community maintains customs and beliefs that are still observed today, including marriage customs, death customs, village traditions, and the belief in certain legends that promote goodness. The Kadazan-Dusun community in Sabah continues to practise beliefs such as the *Unduk Ngadau* competition. The *Ngadau Unduk* was organised to honour and commemorate the service of *Huminodun*, who sacrificed herself in the past to save the Kadazan-Dusun community from a severe drought (Misdi & Erdenaa, 2021). The legend of *Huminodun* has become one of the most popular contemporary folktales.

The telefilm also highlighted one of the *Huminodun* customs and beliefs in the Kadazan-Dusun community of Sabah. This belief is becoming increasingly forgotten due to globalisation and technological advancement (Pindah, Bebit & Amin, 2016). Folklore no longer engages the interest of the younger generation because of the appeal of other, more captivating media content.

4.2. The elements of cultural identity in *Ratu Kaamatan* telefilm: Kadazan-Dusun youths perspectives

This section presents findings from a study on how frequently Kadazan-Dusun youths see their cultural identity reflected in TV shows they watch, particularly the *Ratu Kaamatan* telefilm. The data also aims to determine how the shows watched by Kadazan-Dusun youths shape their sense of cultural identity. Language, ethnic celebrations, customs and beliefs, arts, and a way of life or lifestyle are thus used as elements in the discussion on the formation of the cultural identity of Kadazan-Dusun youths in Sabah. The data from the focus group interviews was translated from the original transcripts.

4.2.1. Language

Concerning language, the Kadazan-Dusun youth who watched "*Ratu Kaamatan*" noted that the television programme failed to promote their cultural identity. However, the youth remarked that the shows are aimed at a broad Malaysian audience. Therefore, the national language with a Sabah accent was selected as the main language for the "*Ratu Kaamatan*" telefilm.

"Because they don't speak their native language either, sir." (FGD1, 13)

"I agree with Informant 2 and 7. Because in that movie, they don't highlight cultural identity; they don't speak their native language..." (FGD1,15)

"In my opinion, the use of language is aimed at many audiences, not just Sabahan. They use Malaysian universal language so that not only Sabahan understand but also others. If they use Bahasa Dusun, then it only benefits the Dusuns but not all people of Malaysia." (FGD1, 12)

4.2.2. Ethnic celebrations, customs and beliefs

In terms of ethnic celebrations, the show "*Ratu Kaamatan*" also highlights the festivities of the Kadazan-Dusun people. Various activities related to their cultural identity are performed during this festival. According to the youth, one of these is the *Unduk Ngadau* contest. In the "*Ratu Kaamatan*" show, Kadazan-Dusun youth also discussed *Bambarayon's* customs and beliefs while commenting on rice-planting activities.

"For me, yes, it's most notable in terms of the Unduk Ngadau Match." (FGD3, 15)

"In my opinion, the Ratu Kaamatan telefilm depicts our Kaamatan celebrations. Usually, when Kaamatan festivities take place, the Unduk Ngadau competition is also part of the activities. The purpose of the Kaamatan celebrations is to recognise and rejoice in the good deeds that

Huminodun performed for all of humanity during chaotic times. Not only that, but we also appreciate the hard work of farmers who nurture and harvest the paddy so everyone can enjoy the rice they produce. It is also a tribute to Bambarayon, the paddy spirits. We can affirm that planting paddy is part of our customs and traditions; even though I have never experienced it myself, I understand it through the telefilm." (FGD5, I4)

4.2.3. Art

Regarding art, the Kadazan-Dusun youth note that "Ratu Kaamatan" demonstrates artistic expression. During the Unduk Ngadau competition, traditional musical instruments are played. Typically, these instruments are used at weddings and Kaamatan celebrations.

"For me, when I first saw the telefilm, there were only a few scenes that highlighted our identity but were not really emphasised. There was a scene such as the traditional music equipment being played in that telefilm..." (FGD4, I4)

4.2.4. Way of life or lifestyle

The youths note that "Ratu Kaamatan" depicts the life patterns of the Kadazan-Dusun community, who cultivate paddy fields and harvest rice using traditional methods.

"In that telefilm, I can see that the paddy is being honoured; we witness how they work in paddy fields and how to harvest paddy. In that way, we can uplift our customs, as seen in Kaamatan celebrations, as well as the paddy spirits. From the way of life of the people in the telefilm, we can see the identity shine through." (FGD1, I1)

"For me, after watching the "Ratu Kaamatan" movie, I can see that our identity was portrayed... they show our Sabahan way of life. For example, planting paddy and using traditional equipment to harvest it, such as "Langgaman." They don't use heavy machines to harvest paddy, and they also display the Kaamatan celebrations." (FGD3, I2)

Furthermore, the Kadazan-Dusun youth mentioned that, traditionally, families looked for a soulmate for their children. However, in the age of globalisation, the ways of the past are no longer relevant to contemporary life.

"...but what I realise is that our people back then would find their sons' and daughters' partners. I see that way of life in this movie; the father of Samson wants to find him a wife. But then, the son doesn't agree. He wants to find his partner himself without the interference of the father. That's what happened in our past; nowadays, we are free to find our own partners." (FGD3, I6)

In addition, the youth have embraced *Huminodun* as their role model for lifestyle. The stories of her scarification inspired the youth to relate to her and adopt her way of life.

The takeaway I get from watching this movie is the belief in Humniodun as a figure to admire. The way she sacrifices her life for others resonates with me, encouraging me to be helpful to those in need and not to be selfish." (FGD2, I2)

The perspectives of the Kadazan-Dusun youth after watching "Ratu Kaamatan" show that they were aware of the cultural identity elements depicted in the programme. Among the elements that make up their cultural identity are their language, ethnic celebrations, customs and beliefs, arts, and way of life or lifestyle. They also mention the lack of representation of their cultural identity. Nevertheless, they understand why the lack of representation happened.

5. Discussion

Whenever an audience watches a television programme or media content, representation is usually one of the topics discussed. This is because of the importance of the community group's proximity to the representation of the cultural identity elements being highlighted. In this study, representations of the cultural identity elements of the Kadazan-Dusun community were identified by analysing the content of television shows that the Kadazan-Dusun youth had watched.

The audience's values provide a self-representation experience, which in turn influences their identity (Kaluvoya, 2016). Seven elements of cultural identity are used to analyse the cultural identity of the Kadazan-Dusun community portrayed in the television film "Ratu Kaamatan." These elements include language, customs and beliefs, traditional clothing, ethnic festivals, traditional cuisine, arts, and way of life or lifestyle. Through analysis, only five cultural identity components, namely, way of life or lifestyle, ethnic festivals, traditional attire, art, and customs and beliefs, are emphasised in the programme. The aspect of cultural identity presented in the television programme holds particular significance among the Kadazan-Dusun youth, as it reflects their cultural heritage.

Way of life or lifestyle, ethnic festivals, traditional clothing, art, customs, and beliefs were among the highlights of cultural identity elements in the television programmes analysed for this study. The analysis of the "Ratu Kaamatan" telefilm content revealed the prominence of elements of the Kadazan-Dusun community's lifestyle or way of life. In examining lifestyle patterns, the show emphasises the life of the Kadazan-Dusun community, whose members work in paddy fields, are responsible to their parents as children, and seek a soul mate for their children. Historically, the Kadazan-Dusun community was closely associated with these elements of their lifestyle. Despite this, Kadazan-Dusun adolescents acknowledge that the described life pattern is representative of their culture.

Furthermore, the cultural identity element in terms of ethnic celebrations in Ratu Kaamatan's show highlights festivities for the Kadazan, Dusun, Murut, and Rungus (KDMR) communities. The festival is held annually in May to honour the rice harvest. The importance of cultural identity aspects of the ethnic festival in the television programme confirms their identity as Kadazan-Dusun. During the Kaamatan Festival, marriages and other events related to the cultural traditions of the Kadazan-Dusun community often showcase cultural identity elements such as traditional dress and art. From a legendary perspective, the significance of these cultural identity components of customs and beliefs

is evaluated by celebrating *Huminodun's* victory in the *Unduk Ngadau* competition at the Kaamatan Festival, symbolising sacrifice in a legendary tale. *Huminodun* is a cornerstone of trust within the KDMR community that dates back centuries. Therefore, the prominence of this element in the designs of the Ratu Kaamatan telefilm reflects the cultural identity of Kadazan-Dusun youth.

Television plays a significant role in representing the elements of a social group's cultural identity. When appropriately depicted, it can reinforce the cultural identity of that group within society. The study discovered that Kadazan-Dusun adolescents affirmed their cultural identity by emphasising cultural elements in television programmes and other media content they engaged with. The shared cultural background of the Kadazan-Dusun youth and the prominence of cultural identity elements in the shows they watched contributed to the development of their cultural identity. According to [Md Syed and Ibrahim's \(2018\)](#) study, the shared practice of cultural identity elements can foster a cultural identity, which helps in forming a more accurate understanding of their cultural roots.

However, the Kadazan-Dusun youth stated that the television programme Ratu Kaamatan's depiction of elements of cultural identity was unsatisfactory. As a result, the Kadazan-Dusun youth were dissatisfied with their representation in such a programme, as it failed to convey and emphasise cultural identity characteristics as desired. Among the discussed components of cultural identity are those related to language. From the perspective of the Kadazan-Dusun youth, the television programme should emphasise the native language. Although Ratu Kaamatan's programme features Sabah actors, a Sabah accent, and a Sabah setting, the Kadazan-Dusun youth believe it is preferable for the characters to speak their native tongue. Many Kadazan-Dusun youths who observe such programmes reportedly find the use of their native language more engaging.

Nonetheless, according to many young people, using a widely understood language helps promote the Kadazan-Dusun community's culture. This highlights one of the challenges faced by the broadcasting industry when producing programmes that meet the needs of a specific society. However, it is crucial to carefully consider the depiction of cultural identity elements in a television programme before its release or broadcast. This is because producing unreviewed and unresearched media content can negatively affect how a community group is represented.

Therefore, from the perspective of the Kadazan-Dusun youth, the elements of cultural identity highlighted in the local shows are poorly represented. This is because the storytelling method is too casual and general, focusing more on romance stories rather than those related to cultural identity. Additionally, the visual aspect fails to effectively represent the cultural identity of the Kadazan-Dusun youth. For example, visual depictions of traditional attire, traditional music, and even the overall visual background are considered culturally significant. This suggests that the exaggerated representations have little impact on the audience. As a result, it is also vital to consider how narrative techniques and visual presentation in shows depict elements of cultural identity.

The television program's portrayal of cultural identity elements can help Kadazan-Dusun youth recognise and affirm their cultural heritage as Kadazan-Dusun. It is clear that depicting cultural identity in media content or television shows provides Kadazan-Dusun youth with knowledge and awareness. The Kadazan-Dusun youth involved in this study also stressed the importance of experiencing cultural identity elements through the

programmes or media they consume. They explore their inherited traditions more deeply through their own experiences. For example, Kadazan-Dusun youths participate in activities organised during the Kaamatan Festival to personally experience the event.

In conclusion, the portrayal of cultural identity elements in television programmes or other media content may influence the development of cultural identity (Salleh & Bauer, 2018). This is because the depiction of cultural identity elements in performances or media can promote and thus contribute to the formation of Kadazan-Dusun youth's cultural identity. The preservation of cultural identity elements in media productions and television programmes is currently the focus of considerable effort (Dol, 2022).

6. Conclusion

This study examined the content of television shows watched by Kadazan-Dusun youth. The cultural identity of the Kadazan-Dusun community was analysed using seven elements of cultural identity, including language, customs and beliefs, traditional attire, ethnic festivals, traditional cuisine, arts, and way of life or lifestyle. The programme highlighted only five components of cultural identity: way of life or lifestyle patterns, ethnic festivals, traditional attire, arts, and customs and beliefs. The show emphasised the way of life of the Kadazan-Dusun community, whose members work in paddy fields, are responsible to their parents as children, and seek a soulmate for their offspring. In the television programmes, the element of ethnic celebrations confirmed their identity as Kadazan-Dusun.

During the Kaamatan Festival, weddings, and other events related to the community's cultural aspects, the Kadazan-Dusun community often displays elements of their cultural identity such as traditional attire and art. The study found that Kadazan-Dusun adolescents affirmed their cultural identity by emphasising these elements in television programmes and other media content they watched. However, the Kadazan-Dusun youth were dissatisfied with how cultural identity was portrayed in the television programme Ratu Kaamatan, as it did not effectively express and showcase cultural identity traits as expected. Additionally, using a widely understood language helps in promoting the cultural heritage of the Kadazan-Dusun community. The portrayal of cultural identity elements in a television programme is vital and should be thoroughly examined before its release.

This is evident as the storytelling technique lacks detail, and the visual representation does not effectively capture the cultural identity elements of the Kadazan-Dusun youth. Furthermore, the Kadazan-Dusun youth who took part in this study emphasised the importance of experiencing cultural identity elements through the programmes or media content they consume. Current efforts focus on preserving cultural identity elements in media content and television programmes.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This study has strictly adhered to all ethical procedures for the use of human subjects. Informed consent was obtained from all informants, who were informed of their anonymity, with their responses kept strictly private and confidential. They were also informed that the study posed low risk and that they could withdraw at any time without any repercussions.

Acknowledgement

Part of this article was extracted from a doctoral thesis submitted to Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Funding

No funding.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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