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Institut Kajian Etnik (KITA)
Kolej Keris Mas
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Nama: BELINDA FONG CHONG LYNN
No. Pelajar: P98888
Program: Doktor Falsafah (Pengajian Etnik)
Penyelia: Dr. Eric Olmedo &
PM Dr. Chang Peng Kee
Tahap Pembentangan: Usulan (Proposal)

**THE PROGRESSION TOWARDS VIRTUAL COMMENSALITY:
HOW ONLINE FOOD PRACTICES & NARRATIVES SHAPE
THE YOUNG MALAY COMMUNITY**

Commensality is a key aspect of social dining. The preparation, distribution and consumption of food play prominent roles in the Malay feasting culture. However, with the growth of globalisation and modernity, this commensality has taken on a digital role where the incorporation of digital technology is a big influence in eating and drinking episodes. This is even more enforced in the rise of single-person household globally, as well as the impact of global lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made traditional commensality a challenge. As such, solitary eating has increasingly become the norm, which has also been infiltrated by the use of social media platforms to convey a sense of connectedness during mealtimes. This study aims to explore the socio-cultural dynamics lying behind the influence of mukbang videos on everyday practice of commensality in the young Malay community, and in that sense, examining how the emerging methods of food consumption and human foodways contribute to changes in the ways they eat and transfer their food knowledge. Two theories may be used to further explain the phenomenon – the Compensatory Internet Use where the viewers may be using mukbang to fulfil certain social gratifications, as well as to identify themselves with the mukbang artists, as shown in the Social Comparison Theory where the established interpersonal networks through mukbang videos are serving as sources, conduits and filters of cultural knowledge. Therefore, the understanding of the various features of the online environment can systematically alter people's choices for establishing connections to other members, and how these choices may influence ways that people use each other as sources of social comparison, and thereby as reference points for behaviour change.

Nama: TANG YING YING
No. Pelajar: P100935
Program: Doktor Falsafah (Pengajian Etnik)
Penyelia: PM Dr. Kartini Aboo Talib @ Khalid,
PM Dr. Chang Peng Kee &
Dr .Rachel Chan Suet Kay
Tahap Pembentangan: Usulan (Proposal)

**SUPERDIVERSITY NETWORKS: SUSTAINING YOUTH INTEREST IN
CHINESE CLAN ASSOCIATION**

Chinese associations, along with Chinese schools and Chinese newspapers have long been recognized as the "three pillars" of overseas Chinese societies. These associations have played an important role in the evolution of Chinese diaspora in Malaysia and all around the world. As Malaysia develops into a modern nation, the role of Chinese clan associations in the country has gradually evolved. As clan associations grow and prosper, their reach extends beyond assisting clan members in their daily lives and needs, and into social efforts like supporting education and driving charity efforts. While Chinese clan associations have made significant contributions to the community, they find it a challenge to attract youth nowadays; finding successors has become a pressing problem as the number of new members they received gradually decrease over years. Using Chan She Shu Yuen Clan Association Kuala Lumpur & Selangor (CSSYKL) as an example, this study aims to examine its history, evolving role, struggles and challenges, with special attention on its youth wing and youth participation in the clan association. This study will also explore the social support system and diverse networks that help them to sustain the century-old clan association. Adopting Pierre Bourdieu's framework on cultural and social capitals, this paper will examine how clan association can serve as a platform for its members to build and accumulate their social capital and how "Chineseness" – an embodied form of "cultural capital" is used as a catalyst in this process. This study employs qualitative research methods that combine field research, interviews and content analysis to collect both primary and secondary data. It is expected that through the systematic research, this paper would provide an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of CSSYKL and its future direction.

Nama: JASMINE PHANG LI SHUN
No. Pelajar: P102135
Program: Doktor Falsafah (Pengajian Etnik)
Penyelia: Dr. Eric Olmedo & Dr. Pue Giok Hun
Tahap Pembentangan: Usulan (Proposal)

THE ULAM SCHOOL AS RISK MITIGATION SYSTEM: THE ROLE OF 'ULAM' IN ADDRESSING INEQUALITY

This study proposes to investigate the role of the ULAM School as a risk mitigation system in addressing the issue of inequality through *ulam* – traditional salad plants. An ethnically driven food, *ulam* is widely recognised for its nutritional benefits and is intricately linked to the culture of indigenous ethnic minorities, who act as gatekeepers of *ulam* knowledge. While the School's objective is the propagation of *ulam* knowledge in order to tackle public health concern, this study conceptualises the School as a risk mitigation system, further extending and exploring *ulam*'s role in bringing about positive impacts to the marginalised gatekeepers of *ulam* knowledge. It applies Ulrich Beck's theory of risk society, which posits risk as the product of the mediation between the individual self and institutional structures, while inequality is the unjust distribution of life chances and unequal risk exposure. This study proposes that the intervention of risk mitigation system brings about positive changes to the individual, eventually resulting in a decrease in risk exposure. With marginalisation being a manifestation of inequality, attempts in lowering risk exposure also leads to the addressing of marginalisation, and hence, of inequality. Qualitative in approach, the study employs participant observations and interviews for the collection of data, with thematic analysis to be conducted on them. Of focus are the marginalised youths of past substance users of the Sarawak indigenous group – the Orang Ulu – based in Miri. This research thus hopes to bring significant practical and theoretical implications: of highlighting the multiple functions and benefits of *ulam*; of capitalising the potential of the ULAM School project beyond the area of food education; and of extending Beck's hypothesis to that of risk management.

Nama: MOHD IHSAN BIN MOHD PATTI
No. Pelajar: P104879
Program: Doktor Falsafah (Pengajian Etnik)
Penyelia: PM Dr. Kartini Aboo Talib @ Khalid & Dr. Rachel Chan Suet Kay
Tahap Pembentangan: Usulan (Proposal)

KEPIMPINAN POLITIK: PENGARUH ETNIK BUGIS DALAM PILIHANRAYA UMUM DI TAWAU

Bugis ataupun *To Ugi* adalah salah satu kelompok etnik dalam rumpun Melayu yang mendiami Sabah dan semenanjung Malaysia. Nama Bugis sering dikaitkan dengan pengaruh politik bermula dari campur tangan politik pada zaman kesultanan Johor dahulu. Oleh yang demikian, dalam kajian ini pengkaji ingin memfokuskan pula kaitan etnik Bugis dengan pengaruh politik di Sabah khususnya di daerah Tawau. Tawau merupakan salah sebuah daerah kecil yang terletak di pantai timur Sabah berhampiran dengan sempadan Indonesia dan kini telah berkembang menjadi salah sebuah bandar yang maju. Fokus kajian yang ingin dikaji adalah melibatkan kepimpinan politik dan pengaruh etnik Bugis dalam menentukan kepimpinan dan pengundian dalam pilihan raya. Populasi komuniti Bugis di Tawau sehingga kini dilihat semakin meningkat sehinggakan Tawau dikenali sebagai 'Bandar Bugis'. Namun, persoalannya pengkaji ingin mengenalpasti sejauh mana pengaruh etnik minoriti ini benar-benar memainkan peranan yang besar dalam pembentukan politik di Tawau. Ianya melibatkan komuniti Bugis walaupun merupakan kumpulan etnik minoriti namun berjaya membentuk satu komuniti yang berpengaruh yang dapat mendominasi kawasan-kawasan di Tawau. Secara khususnya, konteks kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk melihat etnik Bugis dari segi identiti dan kepimpinan dalam membantu membina negara bangsa. Selain itu, ianya juga adalah untuk menilai perkembangan politik dan peranan etnik Bugis di Tawau serta menilai prestasi kepimpinan politik etnik Bugis mengikut pilihan raya. Kajian berbentuk kualitatif ini menggunakan instrumen temubual dengan beberapa pemimpin politik etnik Bugis Sabah serta kajian ke perpustakaan. Usulan ini perlu di beri perhatian dalam memahami kepentingan kajian iaitu keterlibatan etnik Bugis dalam politik yang selama ini kurang ditonjolkan khususnya dalam bentuk penulisan ilmiah. Seterusnya, kajian ini juga penting kerana dapat menambahkan penyelidikan sedia ada berkaitan perkembangan politik di Tawau dan sekaligus menjawab persoalan yang ada berkaitan dengan etnik Bugis dalam pilihan raya. Tambahan, kajian ini juga akan menyoroti strategi dan cabaran yang dihadapi oleh etnik Bugis dalam mengekalkan pengaruh politik di daerah Tawau, Sabah.

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Penceramah Jemputan | Guest Speakers

- Prof. Ulung Datuk Dr. Shamsul Amri Baharuddin
 - Prof. Madya Dr. Mohd Sobhi Ishak
 - Prof. Madya Dr. Shanthini Pillai
 - Nurul Akqmie binti Badrul Hisham

Urusetia | Committee:

- Prof. Ulung Datuk Dr. Shamsul Amri Baharuddin • PM Dr. Kartini Aboo Talib @ Khalid • Dr. Shazlin Amir Hamzah • Dr. Pue Giok Hun • Cik Najatulmuna Hamdan
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