

Cultural difference in malaysia

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

What are cultural differences between Malaysia and other countries? In general culture can be defined as a way of life and process of development of the personality, spirit, mind, and the human effort in a community or cluster. Culture can be understood as the creation of human community in various forms, whether tangible or intangible. Culture is very important because it shows the difference between societies to another society. The cultural features are obtained through a learning process, practices of sharing and cannot be separated from language. We cannot be denied that the Malaysian culture is very different compared to other countries.

Malaysia is a multiracial country living in harmony compared to other countries. Among the three main races in Malaysia are Malays, Chinese and Indian. In addition, Malaysia is a homeland to approximately 80 ethnic groups, especially in East Malaysia including Baba and Nyonya, Kadazan and Iban. The total of Malaysia's population is 28.3 million of which 91.8% are national citizens while 8.2% are non-citizen. Furthermore, indigenous people were 67.4%, of which 56.4% are Malays ethnic and 11% of the other natives. Approximately, the total of Chinese ethnic in Malaysia's population is 24.%, 7.3% are Indian with a total of 1.86 million people, while other race is 0.7%. Almost 85% of Indians in Malaysia are Tamil community. In terms of religion, Islam is the official religion of the Government of Malaysia as subject under the Constitution and the most widely professed religion with the proportion of 61.3%. As a multi-racial country, other religions practiced are Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism. In terms of language, Bahasa Malaysia is the official language of the country.

However, other races are free to use their mother tongue like Chinese and Tamil.

English an international language which play role as a second language in Malaysia and widely used in the fields of education, trade and industry. Malaysia national population practices are vary according to their own religion. According to the practice of Muslim believers is to pray five times a day, fasting during the month of Ramadan and eat kosher food. Muslim believers not allowed to drink alcohol, eat pork, do not eat the flesh of slaughtered animals, stealing and committing sins. Buddhist faith practice is to remove their shoes before entering the temple and prostrate statue of Buddha.

They are not allowed to kill all living beings, stealing, lying and drinking alcohol. Hindu people required to wash their feet before entering the temple, fasting, tying a banana tree during religious ceremony and wearing black mark (pottu) in the middle of forehead for unmarried women, while for married women must wear red mark called as kum kum. Hindu believer do not allowed to drink alcohol, stealing , lying, give respect for parents and do not allowed to eat beef because according to their religion cows considered as gods. In addition, each religious wedding ceremony is different.

In Malay wedding ceremony, marriage contract and enthronement is very important practice that must be done because it's a part of wedding. For Buddhist, both bride and groom usually get the blessing from the divine. They also practiced tea drinking custom in wedding ceremony that aims to strengthen family relationship. In Hindu wedding ceremony, the primary witness of marriage is the sacred fire (agni). Both bride and groom need to

<https://assignbuster.com/cultural-difference-in-malaysia/>

turn around the sacred fire in circular motion for seven times. Malaysia culture is based on Malay culture as the original people of this region.

Malay culture based on Sharia law and Islamic principles. Malay cultural give more important to values and preferred politeness, simplicity and harmony among family members, neighbours and society. Example; in general handshakes suffice for both men and women, although some Muslim ladies may acknowledge an introduction to a gentleman with a nod of her head and smile. The traditional greeting of " salam" resembles a handshake with both hands but without the grasp. The man offers both hands, lightly touches the visitor's outstretched hands, and then brings his hands to his chest to mean, " I greet you from my heart".

The visitor should reciprocate the " salam". Furthermore, in Malaysia culture, the right hand is always used when giving and receiving objects like gift or money. Pointing is normally done using the thumb as using the right forefinger is considered rude. Here is some general gift giving etiquette. In Malay culture, if invited someone home, don't ever give pig and dog toy to children and don't give any products that made from pig skin. White and yellow wrapping should be avoided because white symbolizes death and mourning while yellow symbolizes colour of royalty.

In Chinese culture, if going to visit relative home, bring a small gift of cake or fruits for children. Giving flower should be avoided because flower do not make good gift and usually used at funerals. Besides that, the gift should wrap with cheerful colour like red, pink or yellow except white, blue, or black because symbolizes mourning colours in Chinese culture. In Indian culture, the gift should be given with the right hand and not wrap the gift with white

and black colour. In generally, the gift should not open when received to avoid people think you are greedy.

The way names are used also varies between ethnicities. The Chinese people traditionally have 3 names. The surname is usually first name and two personal names. Example: Wong Jae Suk. Malay people do not have surnames. Men use term " bin", so Kamarul bin Mohamad is Kamarul the son of Mohamad. Instead women add their father's name to their own name with the term " binti". Indian people doesn't use surname. Men use s/o to refer themselves as the son of their father. Example: Ajay s/o Abishek. Culture and communication depends on each other and have a reciprocal relationship.

According to Hall, " culture is communication, communication is culture". This indicates that communication is two-way. Different culture held different values. The way we communicate depends on our culture, rules and norms. For example, American usually treats and exchanged with unknown person. Meanwhile, The Malaysia does not prefer to treats or exchanged with stranger. This showed that Malaysia cultural and American cultural are totally different. Malaysia practices courteous communication. For Malay society, interact courteously very important and showed our values of norms.

For example, using proper words when talk to someone older than us like Sir or Madam. Besides that, culture is also shown through verbal and non-verbal communication. Speak rude and negative words are prohibited. Malaysian traditional cultural games are batu seremban, wau, mah-jong and kabadi. Batu Seremban and Wau is Malay traditional games, Mahjong is Chinese traditional game, while Kabadi is Indian Traditional game. Batu Seremban

also known as a Selambut. This game often played in leisure time by girls, either individually or in groups. It's usually using glass marbels or small stones.

Wau is known as kite and normally played by rural people. Wau created in various design and has its own name like wau in shape of brid, stingray, peacock and many more in various colour. However, Mahjong played by four individual and it involves strategy, tactics, skill and calculation. In Asia, mahjong is also popular as gambling. In kabadi, each team consists of five players on the reserve bench and this game played for 20 minutes. A team will be sent forward to the opponent's team, which aims to touch and push one of the players before turning back to his team.

The players who have been touched by the opposing team will be out and left the field. From aspect of the traditional dance, the various customs and culture can be learned from various ethnic groups in Malaysia. Dance can be defined as a movement of the body, legs and arms to the beat of themusic. The traditional dance has own purpose and tribes. Examples of traditional dance in Malaysia are gamelan, zapin, kathak, dragon dance, kathak, bharathanatyam and many more. Zapin dance is famous dance in the state of Johor and usually performed in both formal and informal events like wedding or opening ceremony.

Kathak dance is one of the Indian classical dances which are originated from Kerala. Kathak means " art of the storytelling". While, bharathanatyam it's also Indian classical dance based on Indian epics in motion of dramatic and passionate. Amorous dragon dance is a traditional cultural dance in China. Lion dance and dragon dance often played on Chinese New Year. As a <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-difference-in-malaysia/>

conclusion, this discussion showed dramatically that Malaysia's cultural very different compare to other countries. It's more follow to the traditional, principle of the religion and give more important to norms, values and rules. I am very proud to be a Malaysian.