

## NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY: CHALLENGES IN NATION BUILDING

**Taufik B. A. Latif<sup>a</sup>, Afi Roshezry B. Abu Bakar<sup>b</sup>, Muthualagan Thangavelu<sup>c</sup> & Ira Meilita Ibrahim<sup>a</sup>**

<sup>a</sup>Faculty of Creative Industries, Department of General Studies  
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

<sup>b</sup>Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Department of Journalism  
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

<sup>c</sup>Centre for Foundation Studies, Department of Arts and Social Science,  
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR)

### ABSTRACT

This paper will discuss the importance of cultural issues in a pluralistic society in strengthening the unity of the country and the construction of a Malaysian race or Malaysian society. Cultural diversity in a country like Malaysia, a multi-ethnic society, is considered a uniqueness and a specialty. Similarities and differences of lifestyle should be taken into account in shaping the national culture to reflect the identity of Malaysia's plural society in terms of language, race, religion and culture. Culture is very important to inculcate the spirit of nationalism and nationhood that will guarantee the stability and harmony, as well as unity in Malaysia. The formation of the National Cultural Policy in 1971 was a right step. However, how far has this policy achieved its goal since its implementation 41 years ago? The focus of this paper is to examine the challenges that can jeopardize the goal of the National Cultural Policy, and the efforts that should be done to strengthen this policy. This paper is important in the effort to build a nation of excellence, glory and distinction.

**Keywords:** *culture, challenges, unity, Malaysian*

### INTRODUCTION

Culture is one of the important aspects when studying a multi-cultural nation such as Malaysia. Culture is the way of life that distinguishes and groups

human beings in society. In the context of Malaysia, culture is seen as an aspect of similarity and distinction rather than away of life of the people of Malaysia that we refer to as 'Society of Malaysia'. By that design, culture for a country comprising people of multi-ethnic and different backgrounds is very important.

The National Cultural Policy Formulation is seen as vital for a developing country with a multi-ethnic population. This policy is necessary when it is instrumental as a guide in designing, creating and shaping the identity of Malaysia in the eyes of the international world.

The term "culture" is derived from the Sanskrit word "Buddhayah" which is a plural word derived from the word "buddhi" which means sense and intellect., whereas the term "culture" (culture) in the English language is taken from the Latin word "colore" meaning work and work.

The Kamus Dewan (2007) defines culture as the way of life of a society, civilization and progress.

According to Edward B. Taylor, "*culture is, that complex whole which includes, knowledge, belief, art, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*". (J. Goodsblom: 1980)

Meanwhile, Mohd Taib Osman (1983) identifies culture as not complete or homogeneous which is a result of the dynamism of human behavior due to the changes in human development and its surroundings.

What is National Culture? According to Ahmat Adam (2000), the phrase 'National Culture' refers to:

*"the culture as formal and official in nature but cut across ethnic lines. National culture also consists of values, attitudes, thinking and philosophy of life of the people. This means that in the context of Malaysia's national culture, it is common and official to all races and reflects the people of Malaysia."*

One of the criteria of culture is that it can change. Time and the development of information and communication technology thus give ways for change to happen in one culture. Globalization is said to influence it most. Globalization can support either homogeneity or fragmentation. First, globalization allows nations and citizens of the world to share common values and knowledge, events due to the advancement in information technology and telecommunication. Idealistically, globalization should be a platform that enables the local to synergize with the global factors and vice versa. Meanwhile, Ernest Gellner, an influential theorist on the cultural

dimension of nationhood, also believes that globalization can also lead to fragmentation. He argued in his book, 'Nations and Nationalism' (1983) that:

*“for a given society to persist, it must be one in which its people “can breathe and speak and produce...the same culture.”But now “in the age of fragmentation of the world system,”notions of culture that were once constructed on the basis of the “national” must be reviewed. This new “crisis of identity”affecting both the center and periphery of the world system, reflects the tenuous conception of a bounded notion of culture and the idea of a homogenizing national identity—the “imagined” oneness of the nation-state “community”and its rather static, elitist and conflated conception of identity”.*

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Basically, each ethnic community is ethnocentric as they feel that their cultural elements are superior compared to other communities that are often looked upon as inferior, weird and immoral (Cox, 1959).

This ethnic tie becomes more important when shared elements exist such as religion, language, family, culture, tradition, history and descent. Furthermore, the tendency to protect one's traditions increases when similar information is shared and could be used to protect their interests. With such perceptions instilled in the ethnic communities, the founding of a new nation becomes more difficult especially if it involves the whole society. (Wan Norhasniah Wan Husin, 2011)

The scenario will be even more complex to achieve the objective of nation building when some of the ethnic groups are keen to compare with each other in terms of race such as skin color, tradition, origin, language or even arts.

It will be more complicated in reinforcing ties between communities because it needs the diverse community to pledge to the new nation in order to establish a national identity (Bell & Freeman, 1974)

Good ethnic relations in a multi racial society like Malaysia actually depend much on the governing body in that particular country. For example, there have been numerous actions taken by a number of nations such as Russia who implemented the assimilation process towards their society (Kuzio, 1999).

Besides, there are a number of countries that focus on equality. For instance, Malaysia and Indonesia formulate a national identity that every citizen can attach to.

The following are some examples on how a country can establish the unity and national identity of its people by applying the assimilation process in order to ensure people's loyalty towards the government.

In France, solidarity among the citizens was based on the native cultures and traditions. This came after World War II (WW2), when France rebuilt its nation based on the Marshall Plan. As a result, foreign communities such as those from Portugal, Poland, Turkey, Morocco and Algeria began arriving in huge numbers in 1962. To preserve its culture, the government reacted by ensuring that the immigrants assimilated with the native culture. Those aspects included implementing the ruling to accept and use French as the national language, and French customs and traditions as the country's sole national culture. In fact, the French government rejected integration even on the grounds of maintaining traditions among its immigrants. Even though they had received a lot of resistance from many groups domestically and internationally, they maintained a firm stand. Hence, a national ideology was successfully implemented.

A similar scenario was witnessed in the USA nation-building experience whose population was made up of various ethnic groups and races. In the earlier days, the country was inhabited by natives from Aztec, Mayan, and Incan civilizations also known as Andean and Indian communities (Friedle, 1984). With the arrival of the European communities such as the Anglo-Saxon, America flourished into what it is today and has been categorized as early settlers responsible in developing the nation's first effective settlement and these settlers were not regarded as immigrants. The implementing of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) elements was the proof (Huntington, 2005). According to Huntington, the America's national principles were founded upon the fundamental principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.

It is also quite similar with the Malay status as the native inhabitants which have been proven many times and again in history (Winstedt, 1961), politics (Abdul Rahman Embong, 2000), language and arts (Asmah, 1988), documents and studies.

With a strong determination to preserve the identity, stiff penalties would be meted out to any ethnic community that finds it difficult to assimilate. One implication was when the American government prohibited a massive migration by the Chinese community in 1889 as the community found it difficult to assimilate due to their deeply ingrained Chinese traditions that could pose a danger to American civilization.

In the Malaysian context, the implementation of the National Culture Policy is in line with the elements of nation building. According to Roskin (2010), nation building has five important elements such as identity, legitimacy, penetration, participation and distribution.

### **NATIONAL CULTURE POLICY**

The National Culture Policy was introduced and implemented in 1971 as a result of racial riots on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1969. Tunku Abdul Rahman, the then Prime Minister explained that the absence of a single national identity amongst the country's many ethnic groups, as well as misunderstanding or miscommunication between them, was the underlying factor in triggering violence. (Ghulam S.Y: 2012)

During the National Culture Congress held at the University Malaya (16-20 August 1971), there were 52 papers being discussed and debated on various aspects of culture. The outcome from the congress led to the introduction of three basic principles:

- i. National Culture would be based on that of the indigenous inhabitants of the region;
- ii. Elements from other cultures, which were suitable and reasonable might be incorporated into the national culture; and
- iii. Islam would be a crucial component of the National Culture.

Thus, one of the obvious outcomes of this policy was the implementation of a national language whereby the Malay language is recognized as the sole official language and Islam as the sole official religion of the country.

There are three main objectives of the National Culture Policy:

- i. to strengthen the unity amongst the nation through culture,
- ii. to nurture and safeguard the national identity, and
- iii. to enrich and improve the standard of living and balancing the spiritual with the physical.

It is clear that Malaysia's national identity based on the Malay culture is used as the core of the formation of the National Culture, and it finally emerged as the national identity.

National culture is important in protecting national identity and harmony among ethnic groups from the threat of globalization and cultural imperialism. There is no doubt that the people desire to see Malaysia as having a pure culture that is focused on nurturing

the spirit and sense of belonging or 'sense of belonging as a proud Malaysian citizen with its own home-made Malaysian identity' (Skeat W.W. :1967).

## CHALLENGES IN NATION BUILDING

### Germination of culture

The Dictionary of Philosophy (1996) defines culture as:

*"The way of life of people, including their attitudes, values, beliefs, arts, sciences, modes of perception, and habits of thought and activity. Cultural features of forms of life are learned but are too pervasive to be readily noticed from within".*

It has become a "norm" in which each of the things we try will surely earn a variety of challenges. The National Cultural Policy is not spared from this though it has entered the age of 41 years. Among the challenges is that there is a proliferation of culture among the "Malaysian race" itself. Germination of this culture actually refers to a culture that is popularly known as "popular culture" among academics. In short, popular culture refers to "the invention produced as Cultural Objects intended for the market" (Ahmat Adam: 2000). It can also be seen as mass entertainment produced by the technology available and more easily recognizable as (entertainment people). The film industry, advertising, television shows, magazines, shifts in music genres, trends and fashion can be categorized as popular culture. Among the values that dominate the themes of popular culture is that of the have-nots, that is, the powerless, the poor, the one who does not own economic and cultural capital. This may somewhat fall in line with Karl Marx's use of the word "proletariat" to describe the people who are oppressed by those who have. The K-Pop culture (Hallyu) that spreads among teenagers in Malaysia is one of the best examples of the growing spread of popular culture in our country.

According to a study conducted by the South Korean Ministry of Culture last year, there were 2.31 million fans of Hallyu or the Korean cultural wave in Asia based on formal club membership fans. (Kosmo: 19 November 2012). This shows how the enormous influence of this K-Pop culture not only in Malaysia but also in other parts of Asia. The K-Pop culture did not show any decline in its growing influence even with the emergence of Gangnam Tsunami which also originated from South Korea. Since its official release on July 15, the song Oppa Gangnam Style has dangled and sat on Billboard Korea K-Pop Hot 100 and Billboard YouTube Music Chart, and even made it to iTunes Music Video Chart a few times, putting itself on par with the big names in the Music Industry world. In addition, till Aug 23, 2012, Oppa

Gangnam Style has been downloaded 2,545,837 times as much as in Korea and ranked 44 in the U.S. iTunes. (Utusan Malaysia: 2 September 2012).

Thus this shows the strong influence of music from South Korea, not only in Malaysia but all over the world. This is also due to the role played by the mass media in glorifying the culture or external music than music or the culture of the locals. This can be proved by the influence of K-Pop music on our Malaysian society recently. In fact not only in music, Korean dramas have also become a hit or fever among Malaysians as it is easily accessible in our local television stations either on both free and pay television stations. These stations have allocated a special slot for Korean dramas. Nowadays, the Korean cultures have slowly gained popularity and acceptance in this country. We can hear Malaysians giving greetings in the Korean language and the Malay radio station playing Korean songs every day. This has indeed weakened our national culture especially among the younger generation.

Therefore, the mass media should take the initiative to restore the spirit of our national culture that is increasingly blurred by the intrusion of foreign ones. Programmes that promote and inculcate patriotism through national songs, as well as dramas in the form of Malaysian heroism should be increased and broadcast regularly, not just during certain times such as the month of independence and so on. The steadfast loyalty to our national culture is fast waning among our teenagers today.

### **Status of National Language.**

Article 152 in Federal Constitution of Malaysia states that the Malay language is the national and official language for this country. This shows that the Malay language is an integral part of our national identity and it becomes a shared culture in this country, where all Malaysians should communicate in this language. Even though the constitution accords a special privilege to the Malay language, the status of the Malay language as the national and official language remains very pathetic. After 55 years of independence, there are still some Malaysians who are not conversant in the Malay language. Furthermore, the spirit of slogan “Bahasa Jiwa Bangsa” has faded slowly. This trend will slowly diminish the special privilege of the Malay language and the language, as a national and official language, will only exist on paper. Without the Malay language, our national culture will be considered as rhetoric and this will be an obstacle towards nation building.

The gradual erosion of the Malay language can be attributed to the changes in our education policy. According to Abu Bakar Abdul Hamid (2000) in his article “National Cultural Policy: Meeting the Challenge of Ages”:

*“Liberalization of education as reflected in the amendment of the Education Act 1996 will take a concerned effect in the long term of developing a united Malaysian citizenship and resilient Malaysian identity.”*

The amendment of the Education Act 1996 allowed, apart from the Malay language as the sole medium of instruction in schools, other languages such as English, Mandarin and Tamil to be used. In fact, even today, we have pre-schools that use English as their medium of instruction. This is the main factor that leads to the low acceptance for our beloved Malay language as a National language. To make matters worse, this scenario also happens in our higher learning institutions especially in Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEI) where the Malay language has become the second and sometimes third class language after English language. Today, we are witnessing the most worrying scenario that our younger generations could not communicate in the Malay language, especially those who have received their education from overseas or private education institutions.

Even the Malay elite and the Malay middle class are reluctant to use the Malay language when communicating with other Malays. They prefer to communicate in English. They also send their children to private and international schools, where the Malay language is not the medium of instruction. As a result, their children are unable to communicate fluently in the Malay language. In future, we will have two distinctive groups of Malays, one that is fluent in their mother tongue and the other that cannot communicate in the Malay language.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> Music Industry Award (Anugerah AIM) recently, even speeches during award ceremonies are punctuated with English words, thus diluting the essence of the Malay language. Sad to say, even to utter “Terima Kasih” is no longer common as people prefer to say “Thank you” instead. This music award event was telecast live to a predominantly Malay audience. However, these days the audience is made up of teenage idols, and they inevitably prefer to use English rather than the national language. This is only one example of the attitude of some Malays who are reluctant to use the Malay language. How are we going to ensure that other races will accept and embrace the Malay language as the national language if Malay elites and the middle-income Malays are unwilling to use their mother tongue?



As Malaysians, we should love our national language, and be proud of it as it is the key element of our National Culture. Our effort to make the Malay language as a shared culture in this country will be meaningless if Malaysians shy away from the use of their national language. This will have adverse repercussions on nation building.

### **Acceptance (Shared Culture)**

The final challenge is the concept of acceptance among Malaysians as a necessary social act. The concept of acceptance referred here is "common culture" which refers to the cultural elements of a common practice across ethnic boundaries. For example, dance and food are favored by various ethnic groups can be categorized as a shared culture even in principle, it came from different groups. But it can also be incorporated in our national culture if it has the features of high-value cultural and aesthetic values or has an element of sophistication. (Ahmat Adam: 2000). Other examples given are the acceptance of "rojak, yong taufoo and even boiled noodles" as iconic Malaysian dishes for a food tourism event featuring famous chefs from different ethnic groups. ( The Star : 10/11/2012)

Yet, the emphasis is on the acceptance of the Malay language not only as an element of integration but also to the construction of a common culture. (Ahmat Adam: 1994). Regrettably, the use of the Malay language as a shared culture has not been seriously implemented, just like what is in the Malay proverb "*melepaskan batuk di tangga*". One example is the issue of the 8pm news in our local TV stations. There are some stations that still use other languages as their medium during the peak hours. To be honest, from our point of view, in order to strengthen the national language, priority should be given to airing news in the Malay language only. In addition, in the field of business, various companies, including banks (local or international), use multi languages. For example, the ATM machine screens use three languages i.e. Malay, Mandarin and English. The question is - do we need three languages in order to understand the simple instructions? If the answer is "YES", then it shows that our education system has failed in their objectives to place the Malay language as the national language. The Malay language is a compulsory subject right from pre-schools to upper secondary schools in our education system. So it is despicable if Malaysian can't read simple instructions in the Malay language.

Apart from that, many government programs are conducted by using the abbreviation of the English word. For example "I am 4 U", "Rakan Cop", NKRA, RTC, UTC and others. Honestly, each program did achieve their main objectives. But the issue here is why use English and not the Malay language as their title for each program? We believe it is much more

appropriate for the government to use the Malay language instead of English in all their national programs, and which is in line with the constitution under Article 152.

Acceptance of a national cultural identity among Malaysians is still low. This has impeded the process of nation building and there have been unnecessary delays. Until today, we are still looking for Malaysians that have features which symbolize the culture of this country. As long as the concept of acceptance cannot be digested in every layer of human society, regardless of race or religion, the reality of a national culture evolving will only exist as a government policy.

## EFFORTS TO BE TAKEN

### Glokal concept

There are various efforts that can be done either by the government or private sectors to strengthen the National Cultural Policy. Among them is the use of the *Glokal* concept among Malaysians. The term '*glokal*' is scientifically described in a book entitled "*Dinamika Bangsa Melayu Menongkah Arus Globalisasi*", published by National University of Malaysia (UKM), 2004. According to Mohamed Anwar Omar Dinin in the book, the term '*glokal*' is a combination of global 'and' local' and it happened during the process of further globalization. He said that the essence of the meaning is taken from the concept of 'dochakuka' in the original Japanese language on agriculture. But as a concept, it brings other meanings. The term 'dochakuka' also means cultivating agricultural land. It can also mean changing farming techniques and efficiency to suit the local situation and abroad. 'Dochakuka' had been implemented during the Meiji era in 1876, and was based on the techniques, efficiency and agricultural marketing strategies. In fact, according to Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam in his book "Vision of Nationhood: Towards a nation building", he states that the '*glokal*' is meant as an effort to increase local capacity to explore or step globally, i.e. to the international market.

In short, this concept suggests each universal element which is good and useful can be localized. For example, McDonalds and Subway can be transformed into local entities such as Burger Mat Salai, Otai burger and Roti John.

### Policy Strengthening

The National Cultural policy needs to be further improved and strengthened. Although the policy was enacted legally in 1971, it is still not widely acceptable until today but the improvement and strengthening of the policy should be done continuously. This is because the Cultural Policy should not only bind loyalty among people, but also foster national unity. Positive values should be accepted as universal rights for all people in this country, but local values as divine, tolerant, considerate, high sensitive, and other taboos as polite and courteous. (Abu Bakar: 2000). It can be done with the cooperation between the government and private sectors in various fields. For example, this is evident in the fields of entertainment, broadcasting and economy. This could indirectly not only strengthen the national policy itself but also the identity and unity of all Malaysians.

It is time for the national cultural policy to be reviewed in line with the changes that have occurred in this country and abroad. Professor Datuk Dr Shamsul Amri Baharuddin (2002) said that cultural openness becomes one of the supporting pillars of economic and political success in this country. Thus the culture of openness should be considered in the review of the national cultural policy, so that it is acceptable to all segments of society, hence forging a cultural identity for all. Though the changes have to be done drastically, it is still the duty of all Malaysians to reciprocate to these changes without compromise.

## 1 Malaysia Concept

The 1 Malaysia concept was introduced by Dato' Sri Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, our current Prime Minister in 2009. 1 Malaysia is built upon the foundations of our Federal Constitution, the Rukun Negara, Vision 2020 and the National Mission. The goal of 1 Malaysia as stated in the Government Transformation Programme book (2010) is :

*“ to make a nation where it is hoped, every Malaysian perceives himself or herself as Malaysian first ,and by race, religion, geographical region or socio-economic background second, and where principles of 1 Malaysia are woven into economic, political and social fabric society.”*

There are eight moral and aspirational values in the 1 Malaysia concept, i.e culture of excellence, perseverance, acceptance, education, integrity, wisdom, humility and loyalty. Thus these moral and aspirational values should be included in our national cultural policy to be in line with the Malaysian identity that we want to achieve.

One of the moral and aspirational values is acceptance. The concept of acceptance of 1 Malaysia concept reflects the positive action that fully accept things with a sincere heart, with no element of compulsion. (Ruslan Zainuddin : 2010). Therefore Malaysians can accept whatever is good and beneficial to help build a cohesive nation. In this case, the element of the national language as one of the country's national cultural identity should be accepted by all members of society. If this is totally unacceptable, any attempt to form a united Malaysian with Malaysia's cultural identity will not be realized and the goal of 1 Malaysia will also be buried. In addition, we must also accept elements of other good and suitable folk cultures as part of our national culture. Therefore, we should emulate the attitudes that exist among the people in Sabah and Sarawak who have long practised the concept of 1 Malaysia. Our Prime Minister in his personal statement on Malaysian Day, (16 September 2009), says:

*“ Sabah and Sarawak... are vibrant examples of how Malaysians of different racial, religious and ethnic roots can come together... The story of Sabah and Sarawak is the story of 1 Malaysia... They are a testament to the fact that our differences unites this country, and that the true power of Malaysia is revealed when Malaysian of all races, religions and ethnicities live in harmony with one another..”*

Therefore, to ensure the success of the national culture and the subsequent creation of a truly authentic Malaysian nation, the key principles of the concept of 1 Malaysia, which is togetherness and the sense of belonging, should be observed in the implementation of the national cultural policy.

### **Our Role**

The success of the National Culture Policy and the empowerment of national culture at large are held by all levels of society. It does not matter whether the government, the private sector, certain agencies, or the general public, they have their roles to play. Presently there are some suggestions that can be focused by parties concerned.

After more than 40 years the policy launched, the government has been working to create a national culture in our country. Some of the efforts succeed and some fail. To address this matter is not just through the approach of changing the name of the ministry (a few times since 1980s) and the broken-merged of several departments but understanding the importance of ideal related to national culture. This is important because the national culture in the context of Malaysian society is very diverse in nature. Therefore the government should clearly explain the concept of national culture, which is considered by some are still not clear. According to Shamsul Amri (2005) the culture in our country can be understood in two forms i.e. culture in the form

of idealistic (to build nationhood), and culture in the form of pragmatic (commercial). Moreover, prejudice towards the national culture still exists, while we realise that the national culture will not threaten other cultures. Thus, the government, through the present Ministry of Information, Communications and Culture, should develop a specific and concrete plan of framework, can be observed clearly, has a source of inspiration and supervision, realistic and set up a period to evaluate its achievement (Aziz Deraman, 1999), as did in the economic development.

Another impending issue is the use of the Malay language or Bahasa Malaysia, which is the national language constituted in Article 152 of the Constitution of Malaysia. If we can accept the Malay language as the national language, the official language and the language of social cohesion of Malaysians, honestly and sincerely, surely there is no reason for us not to try to realize that fact. Extensive use of the national language should involve all levels of society. What we can still see is less evident of involvement from various parties, particularly from the private sector, corporate and trade in the use of the national language. Is it because the language is not a language of progress, thus it is not used? After 55 years of independence and soon the approaching of year 2020, the Malaysian society should be able to speak, write and express ideas effectively in Malay language. No more room for excuses like do not know, do not understand and others used. Furthermore good command in the national language is very important in the process of building a united Malaysian nation.

Apart from that the media also has a role to play. Either print or electronic media each has a role to ensure the success of this national culture. They have the responsibility to develop Malaysian culture which is right and good. The print and electronic media should reflect the culture of Malaysia not only from the point of correct usage but the contents should also be infused with moral values, positive, and pragmatic. Thus the values of news and entertainment that full with hedonic nature, provocation, slander, violence and unbridled humour must be controlled and monitored. No doubt that in this era of globalization, culture should not be taken as static. We need to look at culture with an open mind and be willing to change. Through the explosion of information technology and mobile communications it is easy for external influence to enter and seep into the soul of the society. The young generation is seen as the group that is easy to receive and affected by this condition. Not only western influence but influence from Asian countries, particularly Korea has permeated and influenced our young soul. Thus, the media and new media should play a role in nurturing culture because it can affect the thinking, behaviour, character or injecting understanding of communities to determine the form of culture we want to embrace. (Suhaimi Ibrahim, 1999).

## CONCLUSION

In the wave of modernization and globalization, national culture has been championed since 41 years ago and it should be maintained in the construction of the Malaysian nation. Despite various challenges faced by this policy, we cannot deny the contribution of this cultural policy in building a united Malaysian with distinctive Malaysian flavor. Today we can be proud of the national dress, national anthem, national flower, foods and dances as part of the cultural identity of Malaysia. However, the real aim of this policy is still much to be achieved. A culture to be accepted as the official culture should encompass all walks of life and lend a vibrant force in carving out a cohesive and cosmopolitan nation. Thus the cultural characteristics of the country should be national and should reflect the noble values shared by the people of Malaysia. (Ahmat Adam :2000)

It is time to seriously address and strengthen our national cultural policy in order to realize the goal of nation building. Our dream of achieving a developed nation status will be meaningless if the national culture is at risk and remains fragile. Indeed, the existence of the country's stability is intricately linked to the stability of the country's culture, and every effort must be made to make this delicate but vital relationship work. In essence, the nation will only thrive when the people come together as one sharing a one common language and embracing a one common culture.

## REFERENCES

- A. Aziz Deraman. (Ogos 1999) Transformasi Budaya: Pengisian wawasan 2020. *Dewan Budaya*, 21(8), Ogos, pg. 6-9
- Abu Bakar Abd.Hamid. (2000). *Dasar Kebudayaan Kebangsaan: Menghadapi Cabaran Zaman. Seminar & Forum Perdana Penghayatan dan Pengukuhan : Kemerdekaan Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur : Arkib Negara & Kementerian Kebudayaan Kesenian & Pelancongan.
- Abdul Rahman Embong. (2000). *Negara- Bangsa Proses dan Perbahasan*. Bangi : Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Ahmat Adam. (2000) *.Budaya Populer dan Sepunya dalam konteks pembentukan kebudayaan Kebangsaan*. Institut Kajian Pembangunan. Kota Kinabalu.
- Ahmat Adam. (1994). *Isu Bahasa dan Pembentukan Bangsa*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Asmah Omar. (1988). *Susur Galur Bahasa Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

- Bell. W & Freeman. W. E (1974). *Ethnicity and Nation-Building*. Beverly Hills :Sage Publication
- Cox O.C. (1959) *Class and Race*. New York.:Monthly Review Press.
- Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. (2007). *Kamus Dewan (Edisi keempat)*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasadan Pustaka.
- Ernest Gellner. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Freidel. D. C (1984) *America Is*. Ohio: CharlesE.Merill Publishing.
- Ghulam S.Y. (1/11/2012). The Culture Issue – Wither National Culture?. Retrieved from <http://www.projectmalaysia.org/articles>
- Goodsblom J. (1980) *Nihilism and Culture*. Oxford: London.
- Huntington. S.P (2005) *Who are We? The Challengers to America's National Identity*. New York:Simon & Schuster.
- Jabatan Perdana Menteri (JPM). (2010). *1 Malaysia Government Transformation Programme: TheRoadmap*. Kuala Lumpur :Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Bhd.
- Kosmo 19 November 2012. Demam K-Pop di Asia . Retrieved from [202.190.126.83/kosmo/content.asp?...Kosmo](http://202.190.126.83/kosmo/content.asp?...Kosmo).
- Mohamed Anwar Omar Din (2004). *Dinamika Bangsa Melayu Menongkah Arus Globalisasi*.Bangi : Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia .
- Mohd Ali Rustam. (2008). *Wawasan Kenegaraan ke arah pembinaan negara bangsa*. Melaka:Pejabat Ketua Menteri Melaka (Ayer Keroh).
- Mohd. Taib Osman. (1988). *Kebudayaan Melayu dan Beberapa Persoalan*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Roskin M.G, Rober L.C, Medeiros J, Jones W.S. (2010) . *Political Science: An Introdcution*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Ruslan Zainuddin, Mohd. Mahadee Ismail & Zaini Othman. (2010). *Kenegaraan Malaysia (Edisi Kedua)*. Shah Alam :Oxford Fajar Sdn. Bhd.
- Shamsul Amri Baharuddin. (Februari 2002). Evolusi Budaya Nasional. *Dewan Budaya*, Februari, ms100 – 105.
- Shamsul Amri Baharuddin. (Disember 2005). Antara 'bangsa idaman' dan 'kebudayaan kebangsaan: wacana dan kenyataan. *Beringin Jurnal Akademi Seni Kebangsaan*, 1/2005, Disember, pg. 9=27
- Skeat W.W. (1967). *Malay Magic*. New York : Dover Publication.
- Suhaimi Ibrahim. (Ogos 1999). Toleransi budaya. *Dewan Budaya*, 21 (8), Ogos, pg.20
- Taras Kuzio. (1999) *Nationalising State or Nation Building?A Critical Review on the Theoretical Literature and Empirical Evidence in Actual Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalism*. Columbia University: New York.
- The Star : 10/11/2012 (A 'rojak' of iconic dishes) pg.10.
- Utusan Malaysia 2/9/2012 . Wabak Oppa Gangnam Style. Retrieved from [utusan.com.my/utusan/.../Wabak-Oppa-Gangnam](http://utusan.com.my/utusan/.../Wabak-Oppa-Gangnam).
- Wan Norhasniah Wan Husin. (2011). Nation –Building and 1 Malaysia Concept: Ethnic RelationsChallenges in the Educational Field.

*International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*.228-237. Vol 1  
No 9 (Special Issue).

Winstedt. R.O. (1961). *The Malays: A Cultural History*, London: Routledge  
and Kegan Paul.

Yusof Ismail. (2007). *Dasar-dasar utama kerajaan Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur  
:Percetakan Zafar Sdn.Bhd.