THE INTEGRATION OF CHINESE AND WESTERN VALUES AS GLOBALISED CULTURAL CAPITAL AMONG THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE

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ABSTRACT

This study compares the socialisation effects of pursuing Chinese-medium and English-medium education in Malaysia, focusing on the Malaysian Chinese. For this study, they are known as the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese. In terms of identity, these two groups have been said to differ. Using the framework of cultural capital, which has been widely used in educational research, I compare these identity differences, manifested through worldview, consumption tastes, and ambition. These are also known as the three aspects of cultural capital - the institutionalised, the objectified, and the embodied. Basing my research design on other landmark cultural capital studies, such as the BBC-LSE Great British Class Survey (2013), I have designed a questionnaire that encapsulates these identity expressions. However, I have also included a follow-up interview in order to delve deeper into the phenomenological aspect of these consumption-based identity differences, an aspect which has not been mined in full detail in most similar studies. My findings indicate that cultural globalisation is bringing two formerly disparate value systems into the forefront, repackaging some of its attributes as desirable cultural capital (global habitus), and transmitting these values into Malaysian Chinese youth, who embrace it to remain competitively relevant, regardless of education background. This is done through the platform of the mass media. I thus conclude that in an increasingly borderless world, facilitated by transnational media flows, the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese are experiencing a convergence.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini membandingkan kesan proses sosialisasi melalui pendidikan bahasa Cina dan pendidikan bahasa Inggeris. Dalam kajian ini, kedua-dua kumpulan ini dirujuk sebagai masyarakat Cina Malaysia bersekolah Cina dan masyarakat Cina Malaysia bersekolah Inggeris. Dari segi identiti, kedua-dua kumpulan ini dikatakan berbeza. Menggunakan kerangka modal budaya yang kerap digunakan dalam kajian kesan pendidikan, saya membandingkan perbezaan identiti ini, yang dapat dikenalpasti melalui nilai-nilai, gaya hidup, dan cita-cita. Ketiga-tiga elemen ini juga dikenali sebagai elemen modal budaya, iaitu modal institusional, modal perbendaan, dan modal penghayatan. Rekabentuk kajian saya berdasarkan kajian ternama yang juga mengukur modal budaya, seperti kajian BBC-LSE Great British Class Survey (2013). Saya telah mereka alat soal selidik yang merangkumi ketiga-tiga elemen penyampaian identiti ini. Tambahan kepada itu saya telah menjalankan temuramah yang mengikuti soal-selidik ini. Tujuannya adalah untuk mendalami proses fenomenologi di sebalik penyampaian identiti yang berbeza antara dua kumpulan tersebut, aspek yang kurang diberi perhatian dalam kebanyakan kajian. Dapatan kajian saya menampakkan bahawa pengaruh globalisasi budaya merapatkan kedua-dua sistem nilai yang berbeza di pentas dunia. Nilai-nilai ini diiklankan media massa sebagai modal budaya yang membantu meningkatkan kepentingan individu di pasaran pekerjaan. Pemuda-pemudi masyarakat Cina Malaysia dalam kajian ini memeluk nilai-nilai yang diiklankan ini tidak kira latar belakang pendidikan mereka yang dilihat mengikut bahasa pengantara. Kesimpulannya, dalam dunia yang semakin mengatasi sempadan, pelajar-pelajar aliran bahasa Cina serta aliran bahasa Inggeris (atau bahasa Melayu) tetap sama mengalami proses penumpuan kebudayaan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

SRK	:	Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan (National Primary School)
SRJKC	:	Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (National Chinese Type Primary School)
SMK	:	Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (National Secondary School)
SMKJC	:	Sekolah Menengah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (National Type Secondary School)
STPM	:	Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (Equivalent to A-Levels)
SPM	:	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Equivalent to O-Levels)
PMR	:	Penilaian Menengah Rendah (National Examination at the end of Form Three)
IS	:	International School
CIS	:	Chinese Independent High School

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0   INTRODUCTION

"Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school." - Albert Einstein

Education has been said to shape a person's character and choices in life. While education officially transmits knowledge, values shape individual attitudes towards the content. In the Chinese tradition, "study, for Confucius, means finding a good teacher and imitating his words and deeds" (Riegel 2013). In the Western tradition, "the Socratic method emphasises the ability to question the boundaries of knowledge" (Gooch 2008). These two education philosophies represent the core of Chinese education values and Western education values, and clearly differ in their orientation towards content. Both philosophers, Confucius and Socrates, are hallmarks of their respective education systems.

My thesis studies the differences in values transmitted through the Chinese language-based education system, and that of the English-language education system in Malaysia – and how they manifest in individuals' tastes. The approach taken is sociological, using a symbolic interactionist perspective. The context is in Malaysia, in particular among the Malaysian Chinese, who have historically had the options of Chinese-language and non-Chinese-language (i.e. English) education. I examine the way these values from different education systems are expressed through socialisation agents, consumption, and worldview. These attributes are indicated using the concept of cultural capital. My study compares the aforementioned differences across the period before Malaysia's Independence, and the present, sociologically described as the era of globalisation, to see if the greater availability of mass media has affected the differences in values.

1.1   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Chinese Diaspora covers approximately 40 million people across all continents of the world, originally leaving mainland China for other places in search of better economic opportunities (Jacques 2008). Also termed the 'overseas Chinese', they continue to possess a strong sense of shared identity based on their powerful attachment to mainland China (Jacques 2008). In Malaysia there are 6 601 000 people of Chinese ethnicity (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2014).

The powerful attachment felt by the overseas Chinese tended to override regional and political differences (Jacques 2008), even as its members continued to be

involved in the economics, politics and culture of their new homes. However, not all overseas Chinese and their narrative of 'Chineseness' could be contained within one single rubric, that of being under the cultural hegemony of China (Ang 2001). This makes the issue of 'Chinese identity' formation complex.

Particularly under the influence of globalisation, which its supporters insist affects not just the economic and political but also the cultural sphere, can this notion of 'Chineseness' still hold water? Can there be one single definition of Chineseness (which Ang has stated is not the case) or can there be several? How do overseas Chinese define Chineseness unique to their country? This study delves into these issues by looking at the case of the Chinese in Malaysia.

Before achieving Independence in 1957, Malaysia was known as Malaya. Historically, Malaya was a British colony throughout the 19th century. During that time, Chinese migrants from South China arrived in large numbers to Malaya due to economic opportunities such as tin mining. Malaya was then made up of various ethnicities, from the Malays, to the Indians and Chinese who migrated here for work. Throughout their colonisation, the British maintained control over the local education system, overseeing the establishment of schools. This policy extended to the Chinese migrant community in Malaya. This thesis compares the education systems and values extant during this colonial era and its legacy up to the Malaysian Independence; and that of the existing education systems and values in the present.

The Southern Chinese migrated to Malaya hoping to succeed in their life endeavours in making money. While doing so, they continued to maintain ties with their families

back in mainland China (Cheong, Lee and Lee 2013). However, when they succeeded in earning a steady income in Malaya, they found it difficult to leave their prosperous lives behind and return to China. Thus they aimed to settle down, establishing a base in Malaya and developing a need to educate their children.

Original Chinese migrant-formed schools imported textbooks, a syllabus, and teachers from mainland China, and differed greatly from the existing English-language schools set up by the British colonial administrators at the time (Purcell 1948). The values practiced in Chinese-language schools were based on the millennia-old Confucianism, widely practiced in China. The English-language schools meanwhile, inherited an English literary tradition and a set of Western liberal democratic values. The legacy of this difference continued to last over the years as generation after generation attended these schools and brought up their young.

The differences were most visible through the use of language by the Malaysian Chinese (who had settled in Malaya) and how this affected their consumption of mass media, such as books, newspapers, movies, television programmes, and others. Even their outlook on things such as ambition, values, and attitudes differed. Education clearly caused a difference between people's behaviour, regardless of whether they identified as the same ethnic group at large.

However, after several events which led to the Malaysian Independence, the Malaysian state was reformed and this included its education system. The great divide between the Chinese schools and the English schools were transformed, as

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some Chinese-language schools were converted to English-language ones, and then eventually the English-language ones to Malay-language ones. As Malaysia's economy developed and opened up to the global market in the 1970s and 1980s, the nation became a part of the globalisation process. This entailed an opening up of values to embrace free-market ideology and other subsets of the latter which could result in a transformation of individual attitudes. Thus individuals would no longer be solely defined by the values embraced by education. As numerous hyper-globalisation theorists had argued that globalisation would impact the cultural sphere, causing a homogenisation of local cultures, for this reason, I conducted this study to examine if this was indeed the case.

1.2   RESEARCH AIMS AND SCOPE

My study has four main aims. The first is to compare the value system embraced by students of the Chinese-language education system and students of the English-language education system in Malaysia.

The second aim is to apply the framework of cultural capital to explaining the different outcomes of different education systems to the case of the Malaysian Chinese. This is a novel attempt to do so as such a framework has not been used in identity studies in Malaysia.

The third aim is to contribute to the area of Malaysian Chinese identity studies, from the micro sociological perspective, as this has been highlighted to be an area which lacks study.

Finally, within the context of globalisation, my last but not least aim in terms of importance, is to contribute to reaffirming the cultural globalisation perspective. I also show that mass media is the main socialisation agent crucial to promoting the goals of the forces of cultural globalisation.

However, my research also has limits in terms of scope. This research is conducted during the period between 2013 and 2014, and is focused on a select group of Malaysian Chinese. They are undergraduate students who are between the ages of 18 to 25, studying at tertiary institutions in the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city. Two such institutions are chosen – one which conducts its classes in the Chinese language, and another which conducts its classes in the English language. In order to enrol as a student in any one of these two institutions, the student has to have undergone primary and secondary learning in the language of choice. The Chinese language institution requires literacy in Chinese language and the English language institution requires competency in English language. The capital city is the location of choice because it would be centremost in receiving influences from the globalised world, due to higher accessibility to information communication technology and travel facilities. A larger concentration of foreign migrants and students are also found here, enabling access to a higher level of bonding social capital, or a social network which reaches beyond nation-state boundaries. The

research is intended to be specific and is not meant to be used to generalise Malaysian Chinese elsewhere in the country or in other parts of the world.

1.3   GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

From my literature review, which is elaborated in more detail in Chapter 2, I have gathered several gaps in the literature. Firstly, this is the lack of studies utilising the cultural capital framework in Malaysia. While I Lin Sin (2014) has studied cultural capital among UK-educated Malaysians, the approach used is ethnography, and my study is the first to utilise a survey akin to that which has been carried out by large scale studies such as the BBC-LSE 2013 British Class Survey.

The second gap is the lack of micro sociological studies on Malaysian Chinese identity, highlighted by Lee Yok Fee (2014) in his review of the existing literature. He advocated the 'everyday-defined' approach which focuses on subjective definitions of 'Chineseness' as an identity. This paradigm is closely aligned with the cultural capital approach that I use, because it assumes that individuals have the autonomy to define their own identities.

The third gap is the currently burgeoning field of cultural sociological studies emphasising a type of cultural capital known as cosmopolitan cultural capital, or the 'global habitus'. Habitus is another name for embodied cultural capital, and current research by Igarashi and Saito (2014) states that education is now responsible for promoting 'cosmopolitanism' (or openness to the world) as a new type of embodied cultural capital. Replacing the simple dichotomy of 'highbrow' versus 'lowbrow',

being cosmopolitan is now seen as desirable by the competitiveness-advocating global job market (Brown 2014).

1.4   PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to contribute sufficiently to sociological knowledge, my thesis is designed to answer four research questions. Based on my research aims above, the questions are:

1. What values and norms do Chinese-language education and English-language education pass on to its students?

2. How do the possession of these values and norms manifest in individuals' tastes and consumption?

3. Do these values and norms affect the individual's worldview, or attitudes towards issues in life?

4. Does cultural globalisation have an impact on the prior possession of norms and values?

These questions have been converted into the three forms of cultural capital, which are the institutionalised, objectified, and embodied. The following section discusses how my research design incorporated all these three elements to answer the four research questions.

1.5   RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is based on the theoretical framework known as cultural capital, first introduced by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, and is commonly used in educational research to indicate differences in outcomes based on educational attainment. This framework can be used as a heuristic device to answer my research questions regarding values and norms obtained from school, how it manifests, and how it may be affected by globalisation. More on this theoretical framework will be elaborated upon in Chapter 2.

For the purpose of comparing cultural capital, I relied on the most common method used by scholars of this framework. The survey questionnaire was used to capture responses from my sample of respondents regarding their possession of norms and values, the source of these, how they influenced their taste and consumption, and finally their attitudes. The survey is the best method for studying cultural capital, as it tends to include reasonably large numbers of people representative of their respective social groups. The data is also detailed, as each aspect of cultural capital includes many forms, especially the objectified aspect which refers to consumption of goods and services.

The questions were grouped into categories such as:

1. Institutionalised Cultural Capital (dialect group, age, language spoken at home and outside, language of literacy, type of school attended at primary,

secondary, and tertiary levels, level of education, type of studies interested in)

2. Objectified Cultural Capital

   a. Fashion (favourite type of clothes, fashion trends, source of fashion ideas, reasons for choosing each source of fashion ideas)

   b. Hobbies (activities in spare time, reasons for choosing specific activities, common conversation topics, reasons for choosing conversation topics)

   c. Favourite locales (choice of shopping mall for leisure time, reason for choice of shopping mall)

   d. Mass Media (movie choice, television choice, music choice, magazine choice, book choice, print newspaper and online newspaper choice, website choice, aspiration/ambition)

3. Embodied Cultural Capital

   a. Education (type of primary school, type of secondary school, type of tertiary institution, norms and values obtained from each)

   b. Peers (language most commonly spoken by peers, ethnic group composition of peers, way in which respondent got to know peers, common conversation topic, peer hobbies)

   c. Family (language spoken at home, father's and mother's education levels, common conversation topic)

   d. Mass media (type of website, type of Facebook newsfeed, language of preferred magazine, reason for movie choice, reason for music choice,

reason for television choice, reason for magazine choice, reason for print and online newspaper choice, reason for book choice, reason for website choice)

Knowing that a survey has benefits and limitations, I addressed one of these limitations, which is the lack of elaboration caused by a close-ended survey. Among the respondents of my survey, I conducted in-depth interviews with those who were willing to elaborate on their attitudes towards these norms and values. In addition to this, I interviewed several other individuals who also belonged to the Chinese-educated and non Chinese-educated backgrounds, who were of the relevant age cohort but not from the initial questionnaire respondents. The following is a list of the general questions that were asked in the interview. The following is not an exhaustive list of the questions asked, but served as an interview protocol, which is a general guideline for the direction of the conversations.

1. Did you attend a Chinese medium or non-Chinese medium primary school? Please describe the type of school. What were the main values and norms that you picked up here?

2. Did you attend a Chinese-medium or non-Chinese medium secondary school? Please describe the type of school. What were the main values and norms that you picked up here?

3. As for tertiary education, what was the main medium of instruction used in your institution? Please describe the type of institution. What were the main values and norms that you picked up here?

4. Which of these schools (from 1, 2, and 3) do you identify most strongly with? Why?

5. Within your family, what is the main language spoken, and what are the topics usually discussed? What topics do your family members discuss with you and with each other most often?

6. How importantly do you view career ambitions and making money?

7. In terms of your identity formation, which of the following influences on your personal values was/is the strongest?

8. Please elaborate more about your current individual identity, your inspirations and aspirations, how you view the world, and where you view your place within it.

This inclusion of further interview questions was intended to address the issue within studies of cultural capital, where scholars debate how best to capture the 'embodied' aspect, which includes abstract concepts such as attitudes. The interview added a phenomenological, sense-making aspect to the survey which I myself designed. Respondents were able to express their own interpretations of norms and values through this interview. At the same time, my survey also included something which not many other landmark cultural capital surveys had done – questions asking for the reason for respondents' consumption tastes.

1.6   ORGANISATION OF THIS THESIS

My thesis comprises eight chapters. An introduction to the problem, research aims, scope, theoretical framework and research design has been seen in this first chapter. The second chapter discusses the issues surrounding the usage of cultural capital as a theoretical framework and the third chapter reviews existing literature on Malaysian Chinese identity, focusing on Chinese-language schools, English and Malay-language schools, and their related value systems. The fourth chapter outlines my methodology and how it innovates on the way cultural capital is usually operationalised. My findings are presented in the fifth chapter which is a comparison of institutionalised cultural capital; the sixth chapter which is a comparison of objectified cultural capital; and the seventh chapter which is a comparison of embodied cultural capital, as well as excerpts from interviews with respondents on their attitudes towards these. Finally, in the eighth chapter, I discuss how I have answered my four research questions and met my four research aims. I conclude in the ninth and final chapter.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the key terms and issues relevant to understanding this study are explained. As this thesis focuses on cultural capital as a measurement of different values and lifestyles among Malaysian Chinese youth, the concepts of cultural capital and issues revolving its understanding and operationalisation will be discussed.

2.1 CULTURAL CAPITAL

This study utilises the concept of cultural capital to explain value and lifestyle differences among two Malaysian Chinese linguistic groups. These are the Chinese-educated and non-Chinese-educated Malaysian Chinese. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) first coined the term cultural capital to describe the worldview, life experiences, and lifestyle preferences of select group of people demarcated by their relations to the means of production[1]. For him, economic class was not enough to define their

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[1] Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Cambridge University Press, Harvard: MA

situation, but a new term was necessary to describe their phenomenological condition, i.e. the methods they used to define their reality and to construct logic and common sense. Cultural capital includes three forms, which are the objectified, institutionalised, and embodied forms. The embodied form is the *habitus*, or lived dispositions; the objectified form is the consumption of commodities; and the institutionalised form includes the legitimacy accorded to forms of cultural capital by social institutions such as education (Igarashi and Saito, 2014).

Cultural capital may be interpreted phenomenologically because it includes the intangible aspects that make up a person's life chances. Bourdieu wrote that there are three aspects to measuring cultural capital, which are the embodied, the objectified, and the institutionalised. Igarashi and Saito (2014) write that the embodied is the habitus, or lived dispositions; the objectified is the consumption of commodities; and the institutionalised include the legitimacy accorded to forms of cultural capital by social institutions, e.g. education. However, these aspects are vague in nature and for the purpose of this research, need to be operationalised.

Bourdieu's explanation of cultural capital has inspired various studies. Originally he meant to employ it as a way of explaining differences among children's academic performances in schools. It was not socioeconomic background alone that influence a child's ability to catch up with lessons, he theorised, but their level of exposure to the kinds of cultural material often discussed in schools. Children who were exposed widely to highbrow cultural material were able to connect with these ideas and extrapolate from them; but children who lacked this exposure struggled. What

society deemed as highbrow were often desirable ends, and schools sought to equip its students with knowledge and appreciation of these. Often what was deemed highbrow formed the building blocks of education. Acting as an agent of socialisation, then, education served to stratify children according to their levels of cultural appreciation.

Adding this on to the Marxian concept of social class rendered a deeper, more idealist element to explaining the cycle of inequality. A person could become a nouveau riche, and attain a large inheritance, but still display features of the uncultured. Thus such a person could still be singled out as not belonging to old money. In Thorsten Veblen, the economist-sociologist's Theory of the Leisure Class, he argues that the wealthy displayed their status through deliberate wastage. Consumption was a large attribute of identity among those who sought to maintain their higher status. It helped them announce to all and sundry who and what they were. In fashion cycles those who could afford it always had the newest designs. A few seasons much later, these designs would be sold on discount and then only could the non-wealthy and the poor display them. Similarly, a person's taste, or set of preferences for goods and lifestyle, worked the same way. While Veblen's approach focused on the material, Bourdieu stressed the ideal. Ideas, phenomenological factors largely shaped an individual's preference.

Several studies have experimented upon this idea that cultural capital can be measured and have sought to conduct surveys meant to do so. My literature review will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of these studies, tying in with my

objective of offering my own method of measurement within the community of the Malaysian Chinese. These studies have been useful landmarks in providing a starting point in converting the sentience of cultural capital into something more empirical. Nonetheless from a reading of these findings, my major problem is with the exact indicators used to denote a person's cultural awareness. I argue mainly that these indicators are too superficial, and thus it once again falls into the issue of a lack of phenomenological discourse. An individual can manifest trappings of a luxury life, replete with all its mannerisms, but fail to appreciate the underlying worldview. This falls into subjective territory, and thus a phenomenological dimension was used to add depth to an otherwise limiting survey.

2.2 TWO INTERPRETATIONS OF BOURDIEU: THE 'WILD' AND THE 'DOMESTICATED'

Having introduced the concept of cultural capital, I adjourn to explaining my use of the theoretical framework of cultural capital as an indicator of identity, and how it has been applied by other scholars.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital placed great importance on identity, particularly where *habitus* as its embodied form is concerned (Langman, 2012). In the case of the Malaysian Chinese, identity can be expressed through *habitus* by having either a collectivist or cosmopolitan outlook, where Chinese-language

education tended to emphasise Confucianism and English-language education emphasising Western liberal democratic values.

Bourdieu's concept became famous in English-language sociology from the late 1970s, after the translation of his manuscript, *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture* from French to English (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). Since then, many scholars have attempted to operationalise Bourdieu's cultural capital to explain differences in students' educational outcomes. The field of education has seen many studies conducted using this theoretical framework to establish links between students' cultural capital possession and their academic performance. Nonetheless, these scholars differ in their interpretation of how Bourdieu's concept should be applied and converted into researchable form.

The main debate within the application of the concept of cultural capital has been with its operationalisation. There are two interpretations of Bourdieu by scholars where some believe cultural capital can be empirically described; and some who believe it is something that cannot be measured in a scalar way.

Bourdieu's concept included three forms, some of which were empirical and calculable, while some were in the abstract. The objectified form included consumption practices while the institutionalised included educational qualifications. The embodied form meanwhile could only be interpreted in a phenomenological sense, as it referred to ambitions which required an interpretation of the way respondents created meaning.

Goldthorpe (2007) summarised the divide among scholars of cultural capital, classifying their interpretations of Bourdieu into two camps. These were the 'wild' and 'domesticated' interpretations of cultural capital. The 'wild' form referred to an interpretation of Bourdieu in his original, unabridged meaning, where the abstract embodied form of cultural capital was acknowledged. The 'domesticated' form referred to an interpretation of Bourdieu in a way that had converted the forms of cultural capital into empirical attributes. The main reason for this difference in interpretation was because it was almost impossible (van de Werfhorst, 2010) to operationalise the abstract embodied form of cultural capital into measurable data. The problem lay with constructing an appropriate research design.

The scholars who lay under the 'wild' interpretation of Bourdieu included in their analysis, indicators of objectified cultural capital such as the respondent's possession of books (Graetz, Mohr & DiMaggio, Sullivan, DeGraaf); and participation in cultural activities or *beaux arts* such as attending museums (Rosigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, Katsilis & Rubinson), theatre (Katsilis & Rubinson), and art exhibitions (Aschaffenburg & Maas). The scholars who lay under the 'domesticated' interpretation of Bourdieu included embodied cultural capital indicators such as attitudes to culture and familiarity with cultural variables (DiMaggio); and interest in politics, philosophy, and other cultures (DeGraaf). Most researchers had also included the institutionalised aspect of cultural capital by asking for respondents' educational qualifications. Several also focused on the respondents' parents' level of education (Robinson & Garnier, Jonsson).

Goldthorpe (2007) insists that the 'domesticated' interpretation involved a radical misinterpretation of Bourdieu, so much so that it almost becomes a falsification of Bourdieu. This is because by doing so one ignores the importance of *habitus* which delineates the phenomenological aspect of identity from other superficial accomplishments that the individual may have. Two people may have the same educational qualifications and amount of assets but display different ambitions and attitudes. This difference could amount to different life-chances, or opportunities for advancement. As noted by the Marxists, culture is an ideology grounded in the mode and the means of production, and though abstract, serves to stratify the haves from the have-nots.

Lareau and Weininger (2003) claimed that cultural capital is often 'arbitrary', in that there is no comparison between high and low amounts in a scalar way, while educational qualifications could be measured in a scalar way. Thus, to attempt to distinguish between students' cultural capital and their achieved school grades (DiMaggio) would be alien to Bourdieu's approach (Lareau and Weininger, 2003) as there would be no meaningful link to establish between the two variables. At the same time, Goldthorpe also claimed that DeGraaf misunderstood Bourdieu by attempting to attribute educational affinity to *beaux arts* participation, and educational skills to family reading behaviour, establishing unreliable causal effects.

Instead, in order to stay true to the 'arbitrary' sense of cultural capital, Lareau and Weininger insisted that the 'wild' interpretation of Bourdieu should include the analysis of knowledge, skills, and competencies that parents and students are able to

deploy in their interactions with teachers and administrators, in complying with institutionalised standards of evaluation. These indeed appear to be something which cannot be generalised and therefore needs to be discerned using phenomenology.

While the field of education has benefited much from studies of cultural capital, the area of social stratification has also seen many such studies. A social class system is one of the forms of social stratification. Savage et al (2013) defined social class as a composite of cultural, social and economic capitals. Possession of highbrow cultural capital increases together with a rising level of social class (Savage et al 2013). Education is also linked to social class, as it is often cited as an index of social class in research (Block 2013). As a socialisation agent, it also produces and reproduces social inequality.

While social class includes more than just cultural capital, the latter has often been measured as an indication of social class. Three recent landmark studies are highlighted here to establish the way scholars have interpreted the concept of cultural capital and constructed a research design. In 2006, Bennett and Silva carried out a study on cultural capital and social exclusion, examining the relationships between economic, social, and cultural assets in the organisation of social stratification in the UK. Their findings confirmed the relevance of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital to explain social inequalities, as there were consistent and systematic correlations between level of cultural capital, measured by level of education, distribution of different kinds of cultural tastes and interest, and levels of cultural participation. In their survey, Bennett and Silva (2006) composed survey questions on eight cultural

subfields to assess taste, participation, and knowledge – including questions on TV, film, music, reading, visual arts, eating out, and personal style embodiment.

In 2009, Noble and Davies investigated the reason why social class effects on students' attainment disappear only to be replaced by the effect of cultural capital. Their findings suggested that cultural capital affects participation in higher education independent of social class. Noble and Davies (2009) designed their questionnaire to include items such as leisurely activities; regularly watched TV programmes; book preferences; family members lived with, parents' occupation, education levels, reading habits, common conversation topics and leisurely activities.

In 2013, a major study on cultural capital and social class was conducted by Savage et al, namely the BBC-LSE's Great British Class Survey Experiment (GBCS). The aim was to elaborate a new model of social class to show how measures of economic, cultural, and social capital could be combined to provide a powerful way of mapping contemporary class divisions in the UK. They sought to establish the links between class and specific occupational, educational, and geographical profiles. Savage et al claimed that they are now entering the third phase of the analysis of social class, which differed from the first phase's six-fold approach, and the second wave based on occupation which was developed in opposition to the former. Savage et al (2013) designed the GBCS to include questions on people's leisure interests, musical tastes, use of the media, and food preferences.

Similarities and differences exist between all three landmark studies. Cultural capital possession was found to have links to levels of cultural participation; participation in

higher education; and specific occupational, educational, and geographical profiles. Thus cultural capital was found to influence people's life-chances. However, while Savage et al (2013) prioritised social class, Noble and Davies (2009) found its influence declining, and Bennett and Silva (2006) had not prioritised it. Arguably, social class might not be directly related to cultural capital, though it might influence the attainment of cultural capital. Bourdieu had not included social class as an aspect of cultural capital, nor does it translate into objectified, institutionalised, or embodied form. However, an individual may attain a high ability to consume, a high level of education, and lofty ambitions if their material possessions allowed it. As social class indicates a person's socio-economic background, it includes a material base. Although in most instances it is not directly separable from culture, it is not inherently the same thing. The similarity is that in all three studies, cultural capital can be used to express difference and to demarcate.

Since the 1990s, sociology has moved towards the study of human behaviour in the globalised context (Langman, 2012). As a result, there has been a trend in the past few years within sociology to consider cosmopolitanism as desirable cultural capital (Igarashi and Saito, 2014). In fact, sociological research has begun to draw on Bourdieu's concept to examine how cosmopolitanism is implicated in stratification on a global scale (Igarashi and Saito, 2014). Cosmopolitanism refers to the worldview that embraces diversity, defined as an 'orientation of openness to foreign others and cultures' (Igarashi and Saito, 2014). The desirability of cosmopolitanism is most succinctly expressed in the institutionalised form of cultural capital, namely through educational qualifications, issued by educational systems which demand

such an outlook as demonstration of competence (Igarashi and Saito, 2014). Thus such a cosmopolitan outlook which does not prioritise Chinese-medium education over English-medium education would be considered ideal in today's existing educational institutions of repute. This fact is relevant in view of the way Confucian values and Western liberal democratic values have been attributed to Chinese-medium and English-medium education. This also forms an important angle in which to view the phenomenology of *habitus* among respondents.

As my study locates itself in the globalised context, described by Waters (2001) as beginning in the 1970s, and acknowledged as a local process in Malaysia similarly in the same era (Nelson, 2008), I discuss the issue of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital.

In terms of interpretation, most aspects of all three survey questionnaires reviewed above had focused on cultural capital's objectified form – consumption habits. These could be described cardinally, denoting quantity. Only Noble and Davies (2009) had included a phenomenological aspect into their research, which were 'common conversation topics' in their questionnaire, relating to the *habitus*. This could not be described in the same way as the cardinal method above.

van de Werfhorst (2010) argues that most operationalisations of cultural capital have almost exclusively focused on the objectified aspect of cultural capital. While the embodied aspect is considered most crucial in Bourdieu's work, it is difficult, if not impossible, to operationalise a person's habitus (Sullivan 2002, in van de Werfhorst 2010). Some 'domesticated' scholars of Bourdieu have operationalised *habitus* by

looking at schooling ambitions (Dumais 2002, in van de Werfhorst 2010). However, van de Werfhorst takes issue with the fact that schooling ambitions, in the general sense, can be and has been used to assess attractiveness of education options based on cost and benefit (Need and De Jong 2000; Breen and Goldthorpe 1997; in van de Werfhorst 2010). This does not relate specifically to the *habitus*, because values cannot and should not be measured cardinally. There is a need to devise a way of capturing people's ambitions in a way that allows for comparison between education-medium background, but without assigning a quantitative value.

In addition, van de Werfhorst also calls for switching away from a uni-dimensional focus on children's schooling outcomes which entails academic performance, to attributes such as subject of choice or desired field of study (van de Werfhorst 2010).

Having discussed Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, we must now come to the inevitable discussion of 'how to measure it'. With the critiques levelled at those who have attempted to do so, it appears there is no agreeable final way to perform such a task. Yet how does one even begin to operationalise on such an intangible concept without a single starting point?

Similarities and differences exist between all three landmark studies. Cultural capital possession was found to have links to levels of cultural participation; participation in higher education; and specific occupational, educational, and geographical profiles. Thus cultural capital was found to influence people's life-chances. However, while Savage et al (2013) prioritised social class, Noble and Davies (2009) found its influence declining, and Bennett and Silva (2006) had not prioritised it. Arguably,

social class might not be directly related to cultural capital, though it might influence the attainment of cultural capital. Bourdieu had not included social class as an aspect of cultural capital, nor does it translate into objectified, institutionalised, or embodied form. However, an individual may attain a high ability to consume, a high level of education, and lofty ambitions if their material possessions allowed it. As social class indicates a person's socio-economic background, it includes a material base. Although in most instances it is not directly separable from culture, it is not inherently the same thing. The similarity is that in all three studies, cultural capital can be used to express difference and to demarcate.

In terms of interpretation, only Noble and Davies (2009) had included a phenomenological aspect, which were 'common conversation topics' in their questionnaire, relating to the embodied form of cultural capital. Most aspects of all three questionnaires focused on objectified forms. Indeed, van de Werfhorst (2010) notes the difficulty of operationalising the embodied form of cultural capital into a survey. He cites the case of some scholars within the 'domesticated' paradigm who have attempted to operationalise 'ambition'. While 'ambition' is indeed a phenomenological concept, it has been measured empirically elsewhere. van de Werfhorst thus criticises the lack of acknowledgement that scholars give to the fact that 'ambition' has multiple dimensions. This brings us again to the argument that the embodied form of cultural capital, which includes things like 'ambition', has no meaningful scalar measurement.

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As my study locates itself in the globalised context, described by Waters (2001) as beginning in the 1970s, and acknowledged as a local process in Malaysia similarly in the same era (Nelson, 2008), I discuss the issue of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. My survey is designed in a way that probes this issue among respondents.

My position in contributing to the study of cultural capital among Malaysian Chinese youth concurs with the 'wild' interpretation of Bourdieu. Thus I have incorporated both the abstract and the empirical elements of measurement. With attention to the issue of *beaux arts* as mentioned earlier, the researcher especially attempts to localize it in relation to Malaysian society. *Beaux arts*, itself being a French term, connotes that it exists mainly as an originally European pursuit. In Malaysian society and most of Asia, cultural participation is not limited to visiting museums, attending art exhibitions, or attending the opera. This provides a methodological problem in attempting to measure such a definition of cultural capital. *Beaux arts* here may well be considered 'domesticated' or 'wild', depending on whether one looks at number of times an individual participates, or their mere interest and general knowledge of things. Another issue is the availability of information on a wide variety of things through the Internet, another symptom of cultural globalization. This can erode boundaries in obtaining cultural capital, making it less socially exclusive.

For the purpose of addressing both the 'domesticated' and 'wild' aspects of cultural capital, I have included questions on values or lived dispositions, which is an embodied aspect of cultural capital. For the 'objectified' aspect I included questions on consumption preferences and for the 'institutionalised' aspect the researcher included questions on educational attainment.

Malaysian Chinese youth are selected because out of other age groups, they are at the most liberty to fashion their autonomous identities. They are at the intersection between freedom and discovery. They have been at the receiving end of socialisation

from childhood till the present, and particularly among the subset of Malaysian Chinese university students (at undergraduate level), they are most prone to explore, accept, and discard aspects of identity formation. They are at a most malleable stage of socialisation, and are most exposed and adventurous. To further increase the level of exposure to various socialisation agents, the population is chosen from the capital city, Kuala Lumpur, within specific representative educational institutions of each linguistic grouping.

Sociolinguistic groups here refer to two groupings of Malaysian Chinese university students. They are defined according to their language of identification, namely Chinese or English. This is decided according to their identification with socialisation agents, in this case education. Education here plays the primary structural role in segregating Malaysian Chinese into their linguistic social groups. However, the choice of enrolling young children in schools is usually up to the parents, and thus family becomes an integral socialisation agent as well. Parents would choose a type of education congruent to values practiced at home. They would prepare their children for a system of schooling that has been chosen. When children have entered school, they are encouraged to socialise with their peers. The values and norms of their peers rub off on them, and often they are compelled to live up to peer pressure. These social forces come hand-in-hand to act upon the identity formation of the individual. My larger theoretical framework is a Marxist one, for two reasons. First, the researcher acknowledges that social inequality exists and globalisation is its present catalyst. Second, Bourdieu himself is widely cited as a Marxist theorist. Following the researcher's sociological perspective, these structural

factors are assumed to play a dominant part in determining the allocation of cultural capital which proceeds.

Thus individuals are assumed to be affected by the structure of society of which they are a part. While some agency is assumed to also exist, given that the researcher has decided to include a phenomenological aspect, the effect of social structure must also be accounted for. Thus this thesis seeks to provide both a materialist and idealist approach. Individuals can never be assumed to be mere automatons; neither are they completely at the pinnacle of own free will.

In the previous sections, I have acknowledged the issues and challenges in operationalising cultural capital as a theoretical framework, aiming to address them realistically in my study. The backbone of my study is based on a survey questionnaire which I designed, which is complemented by an in-depth interview regarding respondents' attitudes towards their acquired norms and values.

My survey questionnaire included 64 close-ended questions in total. The questions were grouped into institutional cultural capital, which includes dialect group, age, language spoken at home and outside, language of literacy, type of school attended at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, level of education, and type of studies interested in. Objectified cultural capital includes fashion style, leisurely activities, favourite locales, and mass media consumption including movies, television programmes, music, books, newspapers, and websites. For the *habitus*, I compare the set of values acquired through Chinese-language education against that obtained from English-language education. Then I compare respondents' ambitions also along

these lines. I examine if there continues to exist a Confucian-Western liberal democratic value dichotomy within these two types of education system, in the globalised context. Alternatively, I explore if cultural globalisation has resulted in the formation of a global *habitus*, which is cosmopolitan and unifies both groups. This is the crux of my contribution to the field of cultural capital in Malaysian Chinese identity studies.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   CHINESE IDENTITY IN MALAYSIA

In this chapter, the background to Chinese-language and English-language education in Malaysia will be explained, both historically and in the context of globalisation. The importance of language and education in maintaining Chinese identity is elaborated. The difference between Confucian and Western values found in both schooling systems is highlighted. In general, this chapter reviews the literature on the field of Malaysian Chinese identity.

Having discussed the theoretical framework of cultural capital, I now apply it to the context of my study which is Malaysian Chinese identity. Identity is defined as 'our understanding of who we are and of who other people are' (Jenkins, 1996 in Giddens, 2013). All human identities are social identities, and identifying oneself or others is a matter of meanings, which in turn involves interaction. This interaction includes agreement, disagreement, convention, innovation, communication and negotiation (Jenkins, 1996 in Giddens, 2013). This implies a symbolic arrangement in the interaction between humans. Identity can only be understood as a process of 'being' or 'becoming', and one's identity or identities is always multidimensional, singular, and plural (Jenkins, 1996 in Giddens, 2013). It is always in a state of flux and is never final. Jenkins' definition of identity implies that it is symbolic and

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dynamic. People may express their collective identity through sharing a common narrative and symbols, manifesting these in cultural tastes, clothing, appearance, body language and gait - in which the individual aims to self-actualise (Langman, 2012). Having introduced the issue of identity, we now discusses the facets of social identity and personal identity that relate to individuals of Chinese ethnicity in Malaysia.

The Malaysian Chinese originally migrated to Malaya during the 1800s, at the height of Malaya's British colonial era, due to opportunities in tin mining. Even so, they maintained strong socio-cultural and economic ties with their kin in south China, their place of origin (Cheong, Lee and Lee, 2013). The aspect of imagined community was considered central to Chinese identity in Southeast Asia (Wang Gungwu, in Hirschman, 1988). 'Older' and 'modern' Chinese identities were separated, where the 'older' identities referred to nationalist identification with mainland China, and 'modern' identities referred to localised national identities (Wang Gungwu, in Hirschman, 1988). While some Chinese prioritised class identity, it did not override 'Chinese' identity (Wang, in Hirschman, 1988). Carstens (2014) echoed this argument, saying that Malaysian Chinese identity is reflexive and subjective. Intergenerational socialisation was responsible for transmitting language, religion, values and beliefs (Hirschman, 1988).

The question of 'what does being Chinese mean' has long been asked, by scholars over the years, culminating in a significant breadth of studies. According to Lee (2014), many scholars have conducted research on this area, varying in their units of

analysis, ontologies and epistemologies. He classified the bulk of existing studies on Malaysian Chinese identity formation into emic and etic interpretations, terming them as 'actor-oriented' and 'author-oriented'. In Lee (2014)'s classification, he compared the authority-defined and everyday-defined explanations of 'Chineseness'. He found that scholars' ontologies remained largely similar while their epistemologies varied, in their interpretation of what constitutes 'Chineseness'. For the author-oriented scholars, who take an etic approach to defining identity, many of them acknowledged that Malaysian Chinese identity is fluid and dynamic, such as Tan (1982), Loh (1988, 2000), Chui (1990) and Hou (2002). For the actor-oriented scholars, who take the emic approach to defining identity, such as Carstens (1983) and Nonini (1997), they too acknowledged the malleability of Malaysian Chinese identities. The most apparent difference between the various studies of Malaysian Chinese identity has been in their epistemologies.

The locations in which scholars conducted their research varied, as with their indicators. Some studies had been conducted in specific locations such as Chinese New Villages (Carstens, 1983 and Loh, 1988). Indicators were also divided between primary data sources and secondary ones. Among the primary source indicators that were used to represent identity included clothing, hairstyles, cuisine, rituals and dialects (Tan, 1983); culture, education and politics (Hou, 2002); and village demographics and access to resources such as land, education, housing, services and government aid (Loh, 1988, 2000). Secondary source indicators included Chinese-language newspapers, magazines, and yearbooks (Chui, 1990; Hara, 2003 and Ku, 2003); historical records and government reports (Chui, 1990 and Ku, 2003). Loh

(1988, 2000), Hou (2002) and Ku (2003) prioritised education as one element of their epistemology in defining Malaysian Chinese identity. Loh and Hou acknowledged the fluidity of Malaysian Chinese identity, while Ku has examined Chinese-medium education as a socialisation agent transmitting ethnic identity values to the Malaysian Chinese. Many of these indicators are contained within elements of cultural capital. For example, clothing, hairstyles, cuisine, and newspapers can be considered objectified cultural capital. These studies, however, tended to focus more on material tastes and institutions, and less on phenomenology.

In contrast to the above, Lee (2014) explored the construction of identity based on 'Chineseness' from a subjective, actor-oriented perspective, arguing that identity based on 'Chineseness' is 'everyday-defined'. In his phenomenological study, Lee found that his interview respondents defined 'Chineseness' based on several factors, namely language, culture, connection to mainland China, and notions of ethnicity (which included the physical). As Cohen acknowledged, communities are symbolically constructed, based on imagery, boundary-making processes, customs, habits, rituals, and the communication of all these attributes, similarly seen in the case of the Malaysian Chinese. Lee concluded that respondents defined their identities in dynamic and subjective ways, according to the social actors' own interpretations.

These differing research orientations resulted in a divide between an emphasis on material resources versus an emphasis on idealist factors. Between the primary source and secondary source material, both categories rely on the use of material

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possessions to signify identity. For example, within the category of primary sources, Tan (1983) focuses on self-presentation including clothing and hairstyles, while Loh (1988, 2000) focuses on ownership of property. Meanwhile within the secondary source category, Chui (1990), Hara (2003) and Ku (2003) examined records such as yearbooks and government reports, thereby ignoring the subject's active ability in providing meaning to their reported activity. This materialist versus idealist debate is reminiscent of the debate regarding social change within the field of sociology. If at all social change within the Malaysian Chinese community were to be observed, one would have to choose between looking solely at possession of material resources, or at the ideas held by individuals. The materialist approach corresponds to a measure of objectified cultural capital, while the idealist approach corresponds to a focus on embodied cultural capital.

It is worth noting that Lee (2014) does acknowledge the importance of adopting the emic perspective, whereby he notes that Malaysian Chinese identity is subjective, malleable, and 'everyday-defined'. Still, I contend that a separation of objective factors from subjective factors totally would be problematic in painting a complete picture of Malaysian Chinese identity. Thus, my study has combined the materialist factors such as outlined above, with an emphasis also on phenomenological factors, as I believe the relation between the infrastructure and superstructure (after Marx) is

reflexive. This means that while ideas shape taste in material objects, consumption of material objects too can shape ideas.

Furthermore, while institutionalized cultural capital is mentioned, there is a lack of comparison done to acknowledge different value systems which may exist within families, schools, peer groups, or mass media. Hence the role of socialization agents in shaping Malaysian Chinese identity has not been sufficiently fleshed out. The lack of comparative studies within subsets of Malaysian Chinese, especially according to the socialization process, also indicates a monocultural assumption. Ultimately, the position of Malaysian Chinese in relation to the existence of global value systems, revolving around mainland China and the West, has not been sufficiently contrasted. Law and Lee (2006, 2009) highlight that this issue, particularly concerning Malaysian Chinese, is an important topic to be explored. To address this issue, my framework combines an analysis of both materialist and idealist aspects, in addition to institutionalized cultural capital.

Indeed, there is reason to compare identity formation among the Malaysian Chinese. Given the available variety of meaningful symbols such as language, identity formation among the Malaysian Chinese is not homogeneous. According to Shamsul Amri Baharuddin (2002), the reason for intra-ethnic diversity in Malaysia may be traced to the institutionalisation of the vernacular school system, a system in which the pupil undergoes education conducted in a medium which is their mother tongue,

for example in Mandarin Chinese. 'English and Chinese schools established at the turn of the century (1900) were soon followed by 'Malay' vernacular schools', and that 'teaching was in English, Mandarin, and Malay respectively' (Shamsul, 2002). This shows that in Malaysia, pupils in schools continued to be separated by language. Language itself is one of the main elements in symbolically defining one's identity, and when there exists such a division by language, it follows that there would be intra-ethnic diversity. Within the case of the Malaysian Chinese, those who attended Chinese-language medium schools and those who attended English-language medium school experienced this intra-ethnic identity difference. As Lee (2014) stated, Malaysian Chinese identity subjectivity is a 'stimulated subjectivity' because of its members' awareness of their surroundings, and their reflexive reaction to stimuli such as language, other people's behaviour, graphics, and others.

Having arrived at this point, I finally adopts a position in relation to the existing studies of Malaysian Chinese identity. It must be noted that while my study contributes to the existing literature on Malaysian Chinese identity, it is in no way limited to only exploring 'Chineseness'. Rather, it is a comparative study of identity expression among Chinese-medium educated and English-medium educated Malaysian Chinese in a culturally globalised context. As this study is based on the concept of cultural capital, which will be elaborated in the last section of this chapter, the approach taken may be classified as author-oriented. This is because cultural capital is classified into certain attributes that will be taken as indicators of identity, and has thus been fixed. Since cultural capital largely centres on the question of individual taste, I have conducted this study using indicators that are

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related to cultural tastes. These include languages of intimacy and literacy (Tan, 1988); education; and elements of self-presentation such as fashion, style, and leisurely activities (Hebdige, 1988 in Barker, 2012:429). Any further explanation on how these elements translate into cultural capital is provided in the third and final section of this chapter. In the following section, I review existing studies on the selected identity indicators.

3.1.1 'CHINESENESS' AND LANGUAGE

The centrality of Chinese language to the formation of Malaysian Chinese identities indicates that Chinese language socialisation is of paramount importance (Tan 1997). Tan (1997) states that 'language is undoubtedly an important indicator of ethnic identity'. He examined the relationship between literacy, ethnicity, and national identity. Literacy in Chinese makes one a different kind of Chinese – a Chinese that can read Chinese and have direct access to the Chinese literary heritage with the opportunity to learn more about Chinese history, philosophy, and civilisation in general. The Chinese-educated Malaysians are interested in Chinese music and songs which are produced locally as well as those produced in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, and elsewhere. The Chinese-educated Chinese see Chinese identity in terms of the ability to speak Chinese. In his analysis of Chinese language usage among Malaysian Chinese, Tan found that there are four groups that may be classified according to fluency in Mandarin Chinese as either a 'language of literacy'

or a 'language of intimacy'. The former is the language used in official business while the latter is the language spoken in informal settings.

Carstens also focused on Chinese language, culture, and identity in defining 'what it means to be Chinese'. She argues that based on identity formations, Malaysian Chinese identities are multiple, diverse, and constantly shifting – both in official discourse and in the daily experiences of particular individuals. There are four levels of identity construction identified – political constructions of ethnic identity at the national level, the influence of transnational and global messages and discourse on local identities, identity constructions at more experiential levels where the processes of 'habitus' (Bourdieu) and practice shape and inform personal identities, and multiple and complex individual responses to identity issues.

Social class analysis, according to Carstens (2014), was not such a relevant concept for Malaysian Chinese identity, as they did not identify themselves so strongly on this basis[2]. Most were not aware of its implications. This was particularly so with the advent of the 1990s when global influences spread. The subject became decentered and identified with different levels or subject positions. In her study, Carstens examined identity construction at four different locations – discovering four different processes. These were with Chinese educated students at Chung Ling High School; while having lunch and later a movie with an English educated friend; while conducting fieldwork in a village in Pulai; and while attending local thespian

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[2] In a speech given at the invitation of University of Malaya's Malaysian Chinese Research Center in March 2014, Carstens again presented her case study.

Krishen Jit's play. In all instances, the Chinese people she met identified as Chinese, albeit in very different ways.

Within the Chinese language, whose official form is Mandarin, there are also dialects. The four major Chinese dialects spoken in Malaysia are Hokkien, Khek, Cantonese, and Teochew[3]. Although most Chinese continue to speak their original southern Chinese dialects as a first language, use of Mandarin is increasing. It is now perceived to be the Chinese lingua franca, both in Malaysia and worldwide. Its growth in Malaysia may partly be attributed to the influence of Chinese schools, where it is used as the medium of instruction[4].

Despite the fact that Chinese language is considered one of the most important indicators of 'Chineseness', there is linguistic division between Chinese-educated and non Chinese-educated Malaysian Chinese. A consultant for Sin Chew Media Group, Rita Sim studied the gap in the Chinese community between the Chinese-literate and English-literate. In her study it was highlighted that according to the Nielsen Media Research report, 90 percent of Malaysian Chinese are Chinese-literate, although only the other 10 percent who are English-literate are visible as the voice of the others. This 10 percent is referred to in common slang as 'bananas', 'yellow on the outside and white inside'.

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[3] 'Language diversity: Origins of Chinese dialects', in *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia: Languages and Literature,* ed Asmah Haji Omar 2005, Editions Didier Millet, pp. 52

[4] ibid, pp. 51

To explain the phenomenon above, Sim (2011) conducted an extensive study on media consumption among the Malaysian Chinese, dividing them into three clusters based on sociolinguistics. The first group (G1) is made up of Malaysian Chinese who hold traditional values, support Chinese language media and education, and use Chinese language as an identity marker. Group 2 (G2) is made up of the non-Chinese educated Malaysian Chinese, who use English as a primary language, and are mostly unable to read Chinese or speak dialects. These two groups belong to Generation X and represent the parental generation for much of today's youth. The third group, Group 3 (G3) is an overlap of G1 and G2. They consist of members from either G1 or G2 who have been obliged to adapt to new environments whether due to work or other reasons, thus embracing the language of the other group. This group is made up mostly of Generation Y. Generation Y is defined by Sim as being those born between 1981 to 2000 (making them between the ages of 10 to 29 at the time of this study). In terms of the community of Malaysian Chinese in general, 89% are Chinese literate and 7% are completely non-Chinese literate but literate in English. Clearly, there is a division between linguistic preference, which appears to be changing as we wade deeper into the globalised world.

3.1.2 'CHINESENESS' AND EDUCATION

Given the importance of Chinese language and its education as a means to acquiring a Chinese identity, I now explain the history of Chinese-language education in Malaysia. I then compare it to the development of English-language, and later on Malay-language education.

Some scholars have attempted to define the formation of Chinese identity in Malaya through the dissemination of Chinese language education. As 'Chineseness' depends so heavily on one's ability to converse and achieve literacy in Chinese language, its association with education mediums cannot be separated from an analysis of 'Chineseness'. Education acts as a socialisation agent in transmitting the norms and values of 'Chineseness'.

A noted Chinese educationist in the history of Malaya, Lim Lian Geok wrote that in the 1950s, the Chinese ranked education only after the emperor and parents, thus respecting it greatly. Education thus has long been inculcated among the Chinese, leading to the primacy of schools as institutions for developing virtues and talents.

In the early 1900s, the Malaysian Chinese had two education options which were Chinese-medium education and English-medium education (Purcell, 1948). English-medium schools were introduced by the British during the colonial period in Malaya, while Chinese-medium schools were formed by the migrant Chinese community in Malaya, inheriting the syllabus from nationalist China (Purcell, 1946). Tan and Santhiram (2010) chronicled the conditions of the Chinese-medium schools and

English-medium schools. Chinese-medium schools were originally clan-based and private. They were formed based on the ideology of the triumphant nationalist party in China. The schools were small, containing twenty to thirty pupils, with one teacher who was usually a master of many other trades and considered a village elder. The syllabus was obtained from nationalist China, with the ruling party occasionally sending teachers over to Malaya to garner overseas Chinese support. It emphasised Confucian teachings, the knowledge of classical Chinese texts, calligraphy, skill with the abacus, and the ideology of Sun Yat-sen. Students were the children of Chinese migrants who believed strongly in the Kuomintang nationalist belief, and when they completed their education they regarded themselves purely as 'Chinese'. In the beginning, the British were content to leave them alone until their political activism threatened to overthrow the colonial law and order.

English-medium schools, on the other hand were established by missionary bodies with grants obtained from the British Government. They placed an emphasis on literary aspects – focusing strongly on a strong humanities education. Students were groomed to enter local civil service. Although students were charged a fee, scholarships were provided. Students were prepared to sit for the Cambridge examinations, which then enabled them to either pursue clerical employment in the civil service, private firms, or even attend Raffles College to study medicine. This education system, according to Purcell (1948), 'did not touch the bulk of the Chinese' because migrant children were too old to enter the system. Also, the nationalist sentiment the Chinese possessed, ensured they opted for Chinese education rather than consider this alternative. Because they were prepared for civil

service in Malaya, graduating pupils considered themselves as citizens of Malaya rather identifying with mainland China (Purcell 1948). In short, the graduates of Chinese schools viewed themselves as an extension of their counterparts in China, while graduates of the English schools viewed themselves as part of Malaya (Tan and Santhiram, 2010).

According to Carstens, ethnic Chinese culture in Malaysia during the 1950s and 1960s was supported primarily through Chinese schools (Carstens 2011). However, apart from this, it was also backed up by Malaysian Chinese newspapers; Chinese clan, dialect and district associations; and Chinese temples and religious practices (Carstens 2011). These show that while education was the main socialisation agent responsible for transmitting the values of 'Chineseness', other socialisation agents such as mass media and social networks or peers also helped.

At that time, many English-educated Malaysian Chinese continued to speak Chinese dialects such as Hokkien or Cantonese at home. While they maintained connection with their dialect group identity, this prevented them from accessing certain areas of Chinese culture, due to their inability to read Chinese (Carstens 2011).

After Malaysia achieved its Independence in 1957, the demarcation between Chinese-medium schools and English-medium schools shifted slightly, because of reforms in the overall national education policy.

Tan and Teoh (2014) chronicle the development of Chinese education in Malaysia from 1952 to 1975. This period begins with the British transformation of vernacular schools into English-Malay bilingual ones, and ends with the gradual replacement of the English medium with the Malay medium in national schools.

In 1952, the British enacted the Education Ordinance with the publication of the Barnes Report. This established English-Malay bilingual primary schools, also known as national schools, to replace Chinese and Tamil vernacular schools, which the British colonial officers initially supported but later viewed negatively in terms of achieving national unity. Many Chinese vernacular schools elected to switch to the national medium as well, in order to receive state funding. These were called National-Type Chinese Schools, or Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKC). SJKC schools initially used the English-language medium of instruction, but switched to Malay ten years after Malaysia's Independence. Some Chinese vernacular schools however did not switch, and thus did not receive state funding. These were known as Chinese Independent High Schools (CIHS).

Chinese Independent High Schools are unique in their attributes. They are not considered part of the common education curriculum, but are private schools established by the Chinese community and are fundraised (Low 2015). Thus they charge tuition fees. Low (2015) studied the case of the Confucian Private Secondary School (CPSS) in Kuala Lumpur, noting the school's special characteristics. Aside from its obvious affiliation with Confucian values in its name, the school is known for being strict with its discipline, lacking issues of delinquency, having especially

committed teachers (who would organise extra classes for weak students), efficient in administration, and enabling cultural activities such as practicing calligraphy, painting, or performing musical instruments (Low 2015). Thus parents are keen to send their children there due to an affiliation with the Chinese language, a sense of cultural pride, influence from family and friends, as well as a belief that they will gain better future prospects in the job market (Low 2015). Parents also believe that the CIHS differs from the National Type Chinese Secondary School, or SMJK (C) and the National Secondary School, or SMK. For example, students of the CIHS use textbooks imported directly from mainland China, which chronicle its history from the ancient day to present[5].

Chinese educationists in Malaysia had all throughout, intended to uphold the Chinese language as the medium of instruction, together with an internal Chinese school culture. Helen Ting (2013) differentiated the remaining 'Chinese schools' from schools that were formerly 'English schools'. From between 1970 to 1982, the English-medium schools experienced a gradual transition into becoming Malay medium schools (Ting, 2013). Schools which had converted from the Mandarin medium were known as 'Chinese-conforming schools', while those which had converted from the English medium were called 'English-conforming schools' (Ting, 2013). Thus, a demarcation continues to exist between the two types of education systems, providing an opportunity for socialisation into different sets of values (Tan and Teoh, 2014).

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[5] Based on interviews with student respondents.

Before the Malaysian Independence, primary schools were segregated by the British colonial authorities according to language and ethnicity. These included English schools, Malay schools, Mandarin schools, and Tamil schools. English schools were found mainly in urban areas, though interestingly most of their students were ethnic Chinese. Secondary education was only available either in English or Malay, and tertiary education only in English (Nuffic 2015)[6]. Within the post-Independence period, Malaysian primary and secondary education consisted of the following:

Table 3.1 - Types of Primary Schools and Secondary Schools in Malaysia (adapted from Nuffic, 2015)

Primary School(s)	National Secondary School	Chinese Independent High School
1. National Schools 2. National Type Chinese Schools 3. National Type Tamil Schools	Junior Secondary (3 years) Senior Secondary (3 years) Pre-University (1 year)	6 years
Final Exam: Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR)	Final Exam: Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR)/Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga (PT3) Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)	Final Exam: Unified Examination Certificate (UEC) *Not regarded as part of national education system*

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[6] The Malaysian education system described and compared with the Dutch system. Available from: https://www.epnuffic.nl/en/publications/find-a-publication/education-system-malaysia.pdf [Accessed 2 September 2016].

Tertiary education was limited to the University of Malaya until 1970, as the number of state-controlled universities began to expand up to 1990, followed by the introduction of foreign university branch campuses as well as private universities and colleges in Malaysia between 1990 to 2000 (Arokiasamy 2010).

In 1983, the Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah[7] (KBSR) was introduced, followed by the Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Menengah[8] (KBSM) in 1989. These two education policies stressed the infusion of "moral and spiritual values" through the teaching of English (Saadiyah Darus 2009). The following table summarises the difference in the teaching of English in Malay-medium and Chinese-medium schools.

Table 3.2 - Comparison of English-language teaching in Malay-medium and Chinese-medium schools
(adapted from Saadiyah Darus 2009)

Subject Duration/School Type	National Primary School (Malay medium, replacing former English schools)	National Type Chinese School
English Language	Year 1 to 3 240 minutes per week	Year 3 onwards 60 minutes per week
	Year 4 to 6 210 minutes per week	Year 4 to 6 90 minutes per week
Total of Malaysian students (2009)	Over 2 000 000	Over 500 000

The English language is a compulsory subject in Malaysian primary and secondary schools (Nuffic 2015). While the Malay language had replaced the English language as the official medium of instruction since 1969 (Dato' Haji Abdul Rahman

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[7] New Primary School Curriculum
[8] New Secondary School Curriculum

Ya'akub, in Saadiyah Darus 2009), usage of the latter continues to be emphasised. Thus it is taught in both Malay-medium schools and Chinese-medium schools. It is clear from the comparison above however, that the teaching of English language is more greatly emphasised in the Malay-medium schools. Based on this demarcation, given the history of English schools and its replacement by the Malay medium, I categorise 'English schools' as schools which inherited the education system introduced by the colonial British. This view has also been highlighted by Saadiyah Darus (2009) who notes that the Malaysian education system has inherited the English school system despite a change in the language of instruction.

The relationship between English and Malay as linguistic mediums of instruction continues to be complicated. Despite the switch from English to Malay as a medium of instruction, in 2002 the English medium was reintroduced, together with a bilingual option for the subjects Science and Mathematics (Saadiyah Darus 2009). However, by 2012 the English medium was once again brought to a possible (Saadiyah Darus 2009).

Meanwhile, international schools using English as a medium of instruction based on an American or British syllabus continue to flourish in Malaysia. According to Bailey (2013), in 2012 there were a total of 12 200 Malaysian students in a total of 112 international schools in this country. Notably, Bailey (2013) states that

international schools are a means for students to acquire cultural capital[9]. These are also classified as 'English schools' in my study.

Given this scenario, Ting (2013) conducted a survey in a local public university to measure the reality and perceptions of Malaysian Chinese university students regarding various aspects of the linguistic dimension in education. This was done in acknowledgement of the fact that the majority of the present generation of Malaysian Chinese youth undergo Mandarin primary education and Malay-medium secondary schooling, in the Malaysian public education system. She found that the majority of respondents approved of vernacular education, regarding it as an institution that helped preserve cultural diversity as a 'national asset'. Chinese primary schools in fact, transmitted Chinese values and culture.

Ting also found a high proportion of Chinese youths who went to Malay medium schools, but regard their best spoken language as English instead. She attributes this to differences in their history, in which convent schools practice oral English despite lessons being taught in Malay. Meanwhile Chinese schools which were converted into National Type Schools (SMJK) and had embraced the Malay language, had also preserved a Chinese-speaking environment. She elaborates that there is a degree of correlation between pupils' socioeconomic background and family cultural orientation – and the type of school they enter. She remarked that her surveys from 2000 and 2002 uncovered that linguistic competence depends more critically on students' immediate linguistic environment – for example family, friends, and

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[9] Bailey, L. 2013. 'International School and Host County Nationals: A Case Study from Malaysia'. Available from: http://aiec.idp.com/uploads/pdf/2013-c-006-1-bailey-wednesday-11am-sutherland-c-006-1.pdf [Accessed 2 September 2016].

residential area, rather than simply the medium of instruction.[10] These point to the relevance of using cultural capital as a concept in identifying sources of linguistic preference. It also highlights the importance of socialisation agents such as family and peers aside from education.

3.2 CONFUCIAN VALUES AND WESTERN LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Confucian values have long been mentioned in numerous studies of ethnic Chinese. It has been used to denote the Chinese civilisation itself (Hu 1997). Behaviour and attitudes unique to the Chinese have been said to stem from the practice of this philosophy, which rooted itself in ancient China more than 2000 years ago. A recent study by Huang and Gove (2012) described Confucianism as practiced by Chinese families and the education process. Based on a study in the US, they noted several characteristics central to Confucianism that pertains specifically to the interdependence between family structure and education. According to Huang and Gove,

> "Confucianism is embedded in Chinese culture and places value on education at the societal, familial, and individual levels. Chinese cultures value the collectivist ideology which affects family functions and behaviours. Education is considered a family business and an interdependent process for

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[10] Ting, H.M.H., 2013. 'Language, Identity, and Mobility: Perspective of Malaysian Chinese Youth'. *Malaysian Journal of Chinese Studies, 2013, 2(1): 83-102.* Available from:<http://www.newera.edu.my/files/mces/MalaysianJournal/Malaysia%20Journal%20Vol%202_5.pdf> [15 March 2014].

many Chinese families. Filial piety is a very significant virtue in Chinese families. The Chinese education system is highly structured. Family hierarchy and harmony is highly valued."

From this collection of values, the Confucian individual is subservient to the family's wishes (especially the parents and elders), is collectivist and emphasizes group harmony, and places great importance on individual achievement through education, acknowledging the family's crucial role in the latter.

Collectivism has often been attributed to Confucian societies. Hofstede (1984) classified Chinese-majority societies such as China, Taiwan and Singapore as collectivist, and this was echoed by many others such as Leung and Bond (1984), Shenkar and Ronen (1987), and Lockett (1988) who found a strong group orientation particularly in China (Wong 2001). The influence of looking towards mainland China may have been pivotal in educating Malaysian ethnic Chinese towards embracing similar group orientations.

Confucian values have also been contrasted to the West, creating an East vs. West dialectic. Confucian values are often credited for the creation of 'Asian values', which was said by Lee Kuan Yew to be the reason why Asian nations differ in terms of orientation towards the Western concept of 'democracy' (Dalton and Ong 2005). Indeed, much of the literature has compared Confucian values (or its subset 'Asian values') against Western democratic principles. These studies claim that because of Confucian traditions, 'East Asian societies are paternalistic, accept hierarchic authority, and community-oriented characteristics that promote order and

consensus'. They claim that conversely, Western societies are 'rights-based and individualistic, which is congruent with the competitive elements of democratic competition' (Dalton and Ong 2005).

However, there are in fact several similarities and differences between Confucianism and Western liberal democracy (Hu 1997). In the table below we highlight these.

Table 3.3 - Similarities and differences between Confucian and Western liberal democratic values (Hu 1997)

Similarities	Differences	
	Confucianism	Western liberal democracy
Oppose despotism	Assumes that human beings are educatable and rational; disagrees with pessimistic assumption	Pessimistic assumption on the nature of human beings, e.g. selfishness and prone to conflict
Believe that the interests of rulers and the people to be closely related and mutually beneficial	Prioritises family as a basic social unit, and the value of filial piety over individualism. Believes in social hierarchy.	Prioritises equality as a goal
Confucianism defends people's rights, and bears similarity to Kantian deontology (Durkheim, in Giddens 1971)	Prefers ethics over law	Prefers rule of law
Advocate active participation in politics	Not concerned with selecting rulers; though it acknowledges that a commoner may become a ruler	Believes that in leadership, people should select and control rulers
Prioritises civic virtue, such as		

benevolence and propriety		

The main similarity between Confucianism and Western liberal democracy is that both believe in utilitarian goals. The major difference between the two value systems then, is that while Confucianism believes in social hierarchy, the importance of the family, ethics and the rationality of human beings; Western liberal democracy believes in equality, individualism, the rule of the people and the law, and has a pessimistic view of human nature.

However, I acknowledge that in real life, no value system can be practiced in such a clear-cut way. Over the course of human history, the practice of both value systems has diverged from the time they were first introduced. Confucianism, which stemmed from China, had diverged in the way it was practiced throughout the course of history. While its practice is now commonly associated with collectivism, most commonly caricatured as rote-learning, Confucius' own personal life was driven by a desire for lifelong learning through experience (Smits n.d.)[11]. Confucius advocated learning by first memorising and repeating the basics, then later progressing to mastery by experimenting with new techniques (Smits n.d.). However, this second part of Confucius' approach to learning was often ignored. In ancient China itself, other notable philosophers who studied Confucius' works had also challenged his assumptions or innovated upon his ideas, such as Mencius, Xunzi, and Han Feizi. Mencius innovated an argument style based on the appeal to emotion, while Xunzi

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[11] Gregory James Smith is a scholar of Confucianism and writes extensively on the topic. This citation is from an undated book chapter. Available from: < http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/g/j/gjs4/>

adopted a pessimistic view of human nature. Han Feizi meanwhile introduced Legalism which contrasted with Confucianism as the former advocated the strict rule of law over the latter's focus on benevolence. In modern China, significant events such as the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 led towards the clamping down of cultural practices which originated from the 'Four Olds'– old customs, old habits, old culture, and old thinking – inspired by Confucianism (Spence 2001). This transformed the education system in China (Spence 2001). However, the outcome of this development was not absorbed by Malaysian Chinese-language schools.

Where liberal democracy is concerned, it has also been practiced with differing results. According to Held (1993), due to events of the Second World War, some philosophers considered the European Enlightenment as the origin of domination and totalitarianism in the West (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972). Meanwhile, as of today, superpowers such as the United States which were founded on the principles of liberal democracy such as individual freedom and equality, face challenges from the economic ideology of neoliberalism. Economic neoliberalism advocates a free market on the surface but essentially threatens individual liberty by reducing the power of nation-states to support individuals' welfare, and instead making individuals responsible for themselves (Payne 2006). Under such a condition, individuals are encouraged to become more competitive, instead of focusing on utilitarian good. Fukuyama (1989) claimed that the West had triumphed precisely because of its adherence to free trade policies, giving rise to a 'consumerist Western culture'. In fact, this ideology became so widespread that it was later transmitted to China as well, according to Fukuyama (1989). Also, theorists such as Mukand and

Rodrik (2015) claim that most of today's democracies are not strictly liberal democracies but are actually electoral ones.

To this extent, the current practice of value systems may change. However, it is assumed that in terms of cultural capital, individuals aim to live up to the ideals of each value system. It is thus better to conceptualise each value set as a Weberian ideal type. Hence, one can also refer to the Confucian value set as 'collectivist values' and the Western liberal democratic value set as 'individualist' values.

3.3   THE GLOBALISED CONTEXT

After many transformations in Malaysian national education, not least after the formation of the nation-state of Malaysia, we have arrived at the present – the era defined by capitalist globalisation. Today, social class is not as prevalent, especially so among the Malaysian Chinese (as Carstens writes). The degree of affluence has increased among Malaysian citizens and the divide between supporters of Chinese as opposed to non-Chinese education according to socioeconomic background is no longer so clear cut. Moreover, English-medium education has been replaced by Malay-medium education. Nonetheless, the Chinese schools still remain, changed somewhat in time, but still retaining its major norms and values. It is this difference that still remains, that continues to separate the Chinese-educated from the non-Chinese educated, be that the latter may no longer have undergone pure English-language education.

The two systems of education are viewed here as social institutions with the function of transmitting social norms and values to the young. The assumption is of course that there is institutional dependence – from a holistic viewpoint education does not stand alone but is affected by wider social concerns, reflecting society's issues in general. Whether or not this has changed as of today, in the globalised environment we are living in, is my research question.

Thus, the cut-off point for my comparison is not the Malaysian Independence but the globalisation period. Regarding globalisation, the researcher uses the definition provided by Malcolm Waters that pins it to the period of the 1970s. Waters' definition of globalisation encompasses materialist as well as idealist factors, thus culminating in the following description of globalisation[12]:

> "A social process in which the constraints of geography on social and
> cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly
> aware that they are receding."

Materialist factors here, in the Marxian sense of resources includes the constraints of geography, while idealist factors refers to the awareness of people affected by the

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[12] Waters, M. 2001, *Globalisation.*,Routledge: New York.

geographical process. With regards to the start of the globalising process in Malaysia, the researcher refers to Nelson (2008)'s account of the following[13]:

> "Despite Malaysia's rapid and extensive integration into the world economy after 1970, thus far pressures of economic globalisation have not severely constrained the government's freedom to establish and pursue preferred objectives."

Nelson also argues elsewhere in the book, that Malaysia's unusually stable political history also enhances its value as a case study in globalisation and autonomy - referring to local political processes[14]. Thus, we shall take the 1970s as the starting point in which the globalisation process has started to occur in Malaysia.

As cited earlier, Waters (2001) wrote about three aspects of globalisation – economic, political, and cultural. He stated that in order for globalisation to be fulfilled, not only do the world's boundaries of space and time need be shortened, its inhabitants need also to be aware of this process[15]. Thus he stresses both the materialist (mode of production) and idealist (phenomenological) aspects of social change in his analysis. For Waters, consumption-based cultural globalisation actually began in the 19th century, particularly in the arena of elite or bourgeois culture. He elaborates that by the end of the 19th century, a global but mainly European cultural

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[13] Nelson, J.M. 2008, 'Conclusions'. *Globalization and National Autonomy: The Experience of Malaysia.* IKMAS: Kuala Lumpur.

[14] ibid

[15] Waters, M. 2001, *Globalisation*. Routledge: London

tradition had been established, in which the same music, art, literature, and science were equally highly regarded across the globe. In the beginning, popular culture remained nation-state specific until the development of cinematographic and electronic mass mediation. The fact that such mass media finally existed enabled culture to become democratised, because the media did not accord 'specialness or auratic quality' to 'high cultural products'. As a consumer society emerged, the availability of cultural products was not limited to the upper social classes anymore. From a Marxist materialist standpoint, mass media technology is the material basis driving the process of globalisation. Media theorists have been deeply concerned with what they call 'global media culture', given that the mass media is the communication device of the neoliberal capitalist machinery itself.

The importance of the mass media as a socialisation agent must be stressed. The mass media, the researcher argues, plays a pertinent part in that it supersedes the other socialisation agents by imbuing the latter with direction. The *mass media* contains the rules and protocol of wider society which is then passed on to *education*, and then the *family* – who both socialises us and our *peers* (as they too come from families). Thus a content analysis of mass media found within a specific community would contain much of its mainstream values. This is particularly so with the issue of cultural capital, which is central to this thesis. Cultural capital is also an expression of the ways in which mass media content is consumed. For example, the primordial discourse of highbrow versus lowbrow culture also takes the form of different preferences for content. It is only then that education promotes

certain types of content over others; family and peers encourage or discourage the use of a certain type of content.

Sklair (2002) writes about the transnational capitalist class, which represents today in Marx's terms, the global bourgeoisie. These elites control the majority of the means of production, and as a global social class, are divided into four fractions. These are the corporate fraction, state fraction, technical fraction, and consumerist fraction. It is the latter that we are going to discuss. Sklair outlines how the global elite retains control on the infrastructure as well as the superstructure by the use of ideology. Much like in the Industrial Revolution, ideology here is employed to generate commodity fetishism. This is called the 'culture-ideology of consumerism', and today it takes the shape of advertisements (its explicit form) and advertorials (its tacit form).

The 'culture-ideology of consumerism' is the slogan enforced through the use of mass media. Mass media exists not only to inform, but its original rational productive meaning has been subverted into a consumerist-driven one. It creates a need for goods and services which promise to fill a void – in identity. The same alienation faced by workers in the Industrial Revolution is experienced in a more complicated way. Instead of being directly separated from the products of their labour, the now-affluent participants of the global capitalist system are told that monetary values overrides all other kinds of life meaning. Thus the zeitgeist of the globalised era has largely become a need to acquire more and more resources, be they economic or socio-cultural capital.

Within the context of globalisation, the researcher's theoretical orientation lies with Sklair's conception of hegemonic consumerism (Langman, 2003). Langman writes that the current sociological interests in identity reflect the increasingly problematic nature of subjectivity, enhanced by the process of rationalisation. Identities are today becoming increasingly fluid, especially through channels of consumption, lifestyle (and possibly even fandom) which provide a movable feast. This concurs with the globalization-enabled availability of cultural products. Langman explains that contemporary globalisation, with its time-space compression and pluralisation of life-worlds, has again impacted the social, cultural, and subjective, to foster transformations of identity. Furthermore, she writes, the socialisation agents such as parents, teachers, religious leaders, and the mass media – attempt to colonise desire, consciousness, and identity. Clothes, adornment, and appearance have thus become statements of cultural capital as well as cultural resistance and opposition to values and norms of the dominant society. This study embraces this line of thinking with regards to globalisation and its impact upon identities.

One way in which identity can manifest itself is in one's choice of language. With regards to language, Yoshino (2002) writes that globalisation in the form of Englishisation, or the spread of English, will surely continue to mark further gains in the time ahead. English has been the lingua franca of the world since the height of the British Empire and its use has become more widespread than ever as a result of globalisation. He cites the debate where the English-language expansion is referred to as 'linguistic imperialism' by the core nations to maintain dominance over peripheral nations (Chew, 1999, in Yoshino, 2002). If we posit the world as a world-

system, the core countries are Anglo-American countries which are by default English speaking. This language becomes the natural medium of instruction not only for education but for economic, political, social and cultural uses. The cultural spread extends from the core to the periphery, and that includes developing countries like Malaysia.

The core nations also exhibit a relationship with semi-periphery and periphery nations where it controls the economic resources and the asset and market oriented growth. English can be the medium of spreading this ideology to other nations to subsume them under a working core-periphery model. So when exactly did the profit motive – the interests of global capitalism – make its way into the realm of individual cultural capital? By the spreading of these mass consumer products, the democratisation of formerly highbrow values can infuse the cycle of consumption practiced by the majority, regardless of class or status. Thus this process resulted in what Jürgen Habermas termed the 'colonisation of the life world'[16]. An individual's private sphere of conceptualisation and interaction becomes suffused with an interest in accumulation of, at its very fundamental level, material wealth. This interest in material wants manifests in the social actor's display of cultural capital, which in this study the researcher measures according to elements of self-presentation.

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[16] 'Jürgen Habermas'. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/habermas/> [Accessed 5 February 2014]

In the larger frame of things, this thesis adopts a Marxist standpoint in relation to explaining the dynamics of cultural capital. Bourdieu was a Marxist theorist who sought to improve the Marxist framework by the addition of the phenomenological aspect. Marx has so often be accused of material determinism that it was necessary to include an idealist dimension. It is also to the researcher's belief that there is a wealth of intangible aspects that create social differences, and often social inequality. These have largely been ignored in more empirical studies, and thus the researcher seeks to provide a systematic and heuristic operationalisation of a very subjective concept. These are discussed in the succeeding chapter on methodology.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1   RESEARCH DESIGN

This study measures values and lifestyles among the Malaysian Chinese using cultural capital as an indicator. Thus the research design was designed to capture data that demonstrates respondents' cultural tastes and preferences. As the study also intended to capture the meaning behind respondent's tastes, data on this aspect was also collected. In the following sections, the researcher discusses the steps in operationalising the research process, beginning with ontology (definition of knowledge), epistemology (type of proof accepted to confirm knowledge), and methodology and method.

4.1.1   ONTOLOGY

This study makes the assumption that respondents form their identity by accumulating values and beliefs from socialisation agents. They then manifest their acceptance or rejection of these values as cultural preferences, which in this case is indicated by possession of cultural capital. The meaning behind cultural tastes is also important as it demonstrates acceptance or rejection of the values from socialisation agents. Individuals within the study have the agency to re-socialise themselves if

needed. They are able to act reflexively with regards to values obtained from the socialisation agents.

4.1.2 EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology is the study of knowledge and justified belief[17]. The philosophy of science the researcher adopts in this study is a realist epistemology. The three main epistemologies within sociology are positivism, interpretivism, and realism. Positivism assumes that individual behaviour can be studied empirically and deterministically resulting in general laws, and that individual behaviour is completely governed by social structure. Interpretivism was developed as a response to the former; it challenged the assumption that individual behaviour is completely dictated by social structure, arguing instead that for everyone every social action has different meanings. Realism was developed to synthesise the two epistemologies – by arguing that while social structure needs to be taken into account, individual agency also matters; and that for every 'law' created explaining social behaviour, an underlying explanation of meaning needs to be provided. It also believes that science progresses through refutation of theories; thus it relies more on testing theory rather than making observations, as no researcher could observe every single phenomenon in the universe.

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[17] 'Epistemology'. *Stanford Encylopedia of Philosophy*. Available from: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology/ [Accessed 2 January 2015]

In this study, the researcher takes into account socialisation agents such as family, peers, mass media, and education as social institutions making up the social structure. The researcher assesses the impact of these institutions upon the identity formation of the individual. However, the researcher also takes into account the respondents' attachment of meaning to their individual preferences and actions. This study is thus based on the realist philosophy of science, which describes the effect of the social structure upon the individual as well as the underlying explanation of the process of creation of meaning.

While the basic exploratory device of the sociologist is the concept (Abell, 1971), it has to be broken down to a basic unit of analysis. The concept explored in this study is the concept of cultural capital, while the basic unit of analysis used here is the individual.

4.1.3   METHOD

The research design in this study is a mixed-method one comprising a survey and ethnography, with the research method being a close-ended questionnaire and interviews. Mixed-method research involves integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches (Stange et al, 2006). The research design is also explanatory, and therefore it starts with the quantitative aspect, which is the survey questionnaire, and is followed by the qualitative aspect which is the ethnographic interview (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Quantitative approaches include surveys and qualitative ones

include ethnographic observation or interviews. The research design was selected to fit the aim of the epistemology which is a realist one, focusing on respondents' cultural preferences and also the mechanism, or reason behind these. Traditionally, cultural capital has been measured using surveys, due to the operationalisation of many attributes, such as the objectified and institutionalised aspects. The quantitative nature of surveys also allows for easy comparison between two groups.

4.1.3.1 Survey

The survey is a research design that aims to collect data from a large range of people over a short period of time.   Two main research tools that are used under this design is the questionnaire, which is a list of questions, and the interview, which is interaction between the researcher and participant. Questionnaires may be open-ended, which allows participants to fill in the blanks, or close-ended, which allows participants to select from a list of predetermined options. Interviews can be done through many platforms, such as face-to-face, telephone, mail, email, and through websites. The benefits of administering survey questionnaires are that it allows researchers to amass a large amount of data over a wide range of respondents in a short time, usually with low cost, and the results are easy to tabulate. The limitations are that data may be superficial, particularly if questionnaires are close-ended; rate of response may be lower than expected; and respondents may not tell the truth. With interviews, the benefit is that respondents are given the opportunity to elaborate further on their responses, providing a richer insight into phenomenon. The limitation is that data may be hard to tabulate; respondents may not be co-operative

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in providing information; and the interviewer effect may occur where respondents adjust their behaviour according to their perceptions of the researcher[18].

4.1.3.2   Sampling

Ellis (2010) writes that the term survey is applied to any research study that examines some empirical phenomenon without fundamentally disturbing it, and aims to determine the prevalence of some phenomenon within a designated population and time frame. As the population is large, a sample needs to be selected from the population. Ellis (2010) defines a sample as a subset of some population. There can be representative and non-representative samples. Ellis writes that this depends on the objective of the study. Representative sampling is also known as probability sampling, and includes random sampling and cluster sampling. Non-representative sampling is also known as non-probability sampling, and includes purposive sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling, grab sampling, convenience sampling, and event sampling (Elis, 2010). In this study, non-probability sampling is used, specifically purposive sampling and convenience sampling. The reason for using non-probability sampling is the difficulty in obtaining a perfect probability sample, such as a random sample, due to the issue of willingness of participants. Ellis explains that a common issue in social science surveys is sample attrition, where the obtained sample (participants who actually participated) does not match the chosen sample (targeted number of participants). Furthermore, as this study is

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[18] Taylor, S. and Gosling, R. (2011). 'Sociological Research'. *Principles of Sociology.*

specific, it does not aim to generalise the explanation of this phenomenon across other groups. Thus probability sampling such as random sampling is unsuitable.

4.1.3.3   Purposive Sampling

The population to be studied was that of Malaysian Chinese youth, aged between 18 to 25, studying at the tertiary level in education institutions within Kuala Lumpur. This age cohort was chosen due to its position within Erikson's stage of psychosocial development relevant to identity formation. Individuals of this age group who were currently enrolled in tertiary education would also have completed both primary and secondary education for the socialisation process to be complete. The urban population was selected because of its proximity to global cultural influences such as through high-speed internet, local and international transportation, and because Kuala Lumpur has higher multicultural diversity.

For comparison purposes, the population needed to include one Chinese-medium institution and one English-medium institution. This population itself is a sample within larger Malaysian Chinese society. In this stage, purposive sampling was used to define the population. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling technique, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, which relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units to be

studied[19]. Within the selected institutions, convenience sampling was used to identify individual respondents.

Two institutions of higher education were therefore selected, situated within the scope of Kuala Lumpur. As the researcher wanted to measure the differences in cultural capital among the Chinese-educated and non Chinese-educated tertiary students, the study required an institution of higher education that practiced a Chinese-language syllabus and one that practiced an English-language syllabus. For comparative purposes, the researcher also wanted to include one instance of an institution that had a mixed medium.

The researcher's choice of higher education institutions were as follows: For the Chinese-medium institution New Era College was chosen and for the English-medium institution HELP University was chosen. New Era College was chosen for its representativeness of Chinese education in Malaysia[20] – it being the product of Dongjiaozong, the leading Chinese education activist organisation in the nation-state (Ang 2009). This association upholds Chinese education in Malaysia strongly, and is concerned with the operation of Chinese-language schools. Thus its own in-house college would be the epitome of its ideals, and would provide the largest source for cultural norms and values as originally proposed by Chinese-language education. Students who choose to attend New Era College would have a preference to obtain a qualification steeped in the traditional values of Chinese language education. They

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[19] 'Purposive Sampling'. Available from: http://dissertation.laerd.com/purposive-sampling.php#homogenous [Accessed 8 Jan 2015].

[20] 'History of NEC'. NewEra.edu.my. Available from: <http://www.newera.edu.my/aboutUs.php?id=113> [Accessed 21 January 2015].

would also need to have attended at least Chinese-medium primary school, if not also Chinese-medium secondary school to become literate in Mandarin Chinese. To maintain literacy in the Chinese script, the student would have to attend National Type Chinese Primary School, followed by either National Type Chinese Secondary School or Chinese Independent High School.

HELP University was chosen due to its reputation of being the first private institution in Malaysia to offer the University of London External Programme, a British distance learning programme established in 1858[21]. Apart from this programme, it offers many UK and US transfer programmes conducted in English, as well as other in-house programmes also conducted in English. Students who choose to attend this university would have a preference for obtaining English-medium qualifications, whether it be in-house degrees from HELP; or foreign university degrees earned through twinning. They are not required to have undergone Chinese-medium schooling at either primary or secondary levels. The population of students may come from Chinese-medium or English-medium backgrounds. Thus the researcher included questions in the survey which asked respondents about the type of primary and secondary school they attended.

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[21] 'Admissions Pathway and Requirements for BSc Degree'. *University of London Programme Book*. pp. 13. Available from: <http://www.help.edu.my/admission/brochure.html?download=31:brochure-uol> [Accessed 21 January 2015].

4.1.3.4   Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling is a kind of non-probability or non-random sampling, in which members of the target population are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria such as the willingness to volunteer (Farrokhi, 2012). One issue with convenience sampling is the problem of reliability, because neither biases nor their probabilities are quantified (Leiner, 2014). The researcher also does not know how well it will represent the population (Leiner, 2014). However, often social science researchers cannot afford satisfying the requirement of randomising, as this is considered an impossible line of action in qualitative and descriptive studies which involve human beings (Farrokhi, 2012). In some cases a convenience sample is the best possible sample to research a phenomenon especially in exploratory studies (Leiner, 2014). In this case study, the researcher does not intend to generalise the findings to represent the entire population, but only to offer a specific case study of globalisation's influence on cultural capital. One way to remove misinterpretation is to describe the conditions in which the research was carried out (Farrokhi, 2012).

In the two tertiary education institutions selected, data was collected in the following ways. In the Chinese-medium and English-medium institutions, hard copy questionnaires were handed out to at least one respondent from each faculty or department. This was done by the researcher going to each faculty building to approach students who were willing to participate in the survey. In total,

approximately 60 hard copy filled questionnaires were obtained from each institution, totalling approximately 120 hard copy filled questionnaires.

4.1.3.5   Survey Questionnaires

Survey research methodology consists of two research methods – questionnaires, and face-to-face interviews[22]. The first part of this study involved a questionnaire which the researcher designed. The researcher designed this questionnaire with influence from other landmark cultural capital surveys, such as those by Bennett and Silva (2006), Noble and Davies (2009), and Savage et al (2013). Bennett and Silva (2006) composed survey questions on eight cultural subfields to assess taste, participation, and knowledge – including questions on TV, film, music, reading, visual arts, eating out, and personal style embodiment. Noble and Davies (2009) designed their questionnaire to include items such as leisurely activities; regularly watched TV programmes; book preferences; family members lived with, parents' occupation, education levels, reading habits, common conversation topics and leisurely activities. Savage et al (2013) meanwhile, designed the Great British Class Survey (GBCS) to include questions on people's leisure interests, musical tastes, use of the media, and food preferences. Although there exists debate within the evolution of the cultural capital theoretical framework, particularly whether cultural capital should be measured in the 'wild' (abstract) or 'domesticated' (quantified) sense, many of the attributes developed in these landmark surveys are useful for data categorisation. The indicators provide a picture of the overall social structure with regards to social

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[22] Taylor, S. and Gosling, R. (2011). 'Sociological Research'. *Principles of Sociology.*

institutions that act as socialisation agents. The difference in this survey is that the researcher has included questions on the reasons why respondents claim to have a certain preference. As opposed to Noble and Davies, the researcher has opted for a close-ended questionnaire, which provides a limited list of answer options respondents can choose from. A close-ended questionnaire has benefits and limitations. The benefit is that the data can be tabulated easily and uniformly, while the limitation is that it does not allow for further elaboration and options beyond those provided. For this reason the researcher included a structured interview with some of the survey respondents.

4.1.3.6　　　Survey Interviews

An interview is another research method within the survey research design. An interview consists of the researcher interacting directly with the respondent to probe or ask follow-up questions regarding opinions[23]. There are two types of interviews which are the structured interview and unstructured interview. In the structured interview, or questionnaire, interviewees are asked a set of identical questions in exactly the same way. They are usually asked to select their answers from a limited range of options, and these are known as 'closed' questions[24]. Unstructured interviews are more like ordinary conversations; there is no set interview structure and interviewees answer in their own words. Unstructured interviews are sometimes

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[23] 'Types of Surveys'. *Research Methods Knowledge Base*. Available from:
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/survtype.php> [Accessed 2 Jan 2015].
[24] Taylor, S. and Gosling, R. (2011). 'Sociological Research'. *Principles of Sociology.*

used in survey designs, but they are most frequently used in ethnographic research[25]. In the unstructured interview, an interview protocol is used to guide the direction of the questions, to ensure the researcher and respondent remain on topic[26]. While the form resembles a conversation and cannot be forced lest it appear unnatural, the interview protocol serves loosely as a general guide. There are also benefits and limitations to using unstructured interviews. The benefit is that it provides respondents an opportunity to elaborate further on their responses, especially with regards to studies exploring the creation of meaning. The limitation is that data may be unstandardised.

4.1.3.7   Instrumentation

In creating the questions for the survey questionnaire, the researcher drew influence from the cultural capital questionnaires by Bennett and Silva, Noble and Davies, and Savage et al. The main elements these questionnaires shared was that they assessed respondents' cultural tastes through mass media choices (TV, film, books, etc.), and the values of socialisation agents such as family (family members lived with, parents' education level, etc). This questionnaire differs from these in that the researcher has included peers as a socialisation agent, apart from education, family, and mass media. The researcher also divided the types of questions into the 'source' and 'outcome'. The 'source' refers to socialisation agents and their values and norms, such as family, peers, education, and mass media. The 'outcome' refers to the

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[25] ibid

[26] 'Sample Interview Protocol Form'. *National Center for Postsecondary Improvement*. Available from:
http://web.stanford.edu/group/ncpi/unspecified/student_assess_toolkit/sampleInterviewProtocol.html

respondents' actual cultural tastes – expressed in this study as 'elements of self-presentation', such as mass media preference (TV, film, music, books, etc); fashion and personal adornment choices; ambition or aspiration; and leisurely activities. Non-identifiable personal information was also obtained to provide a demographic picture, though not to identify them individually for ethical concerns.

The questions were grouped into categories such as:

1. Non-identifiable personal information (dialect group, age, language spoken at home and outside, language of literacy, type of school attended at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, level of education, type of studies interested in)

2. Elements of self-presentation

   a. Fashion (favourite type of clothes, fashion trends, source of fashion ideas, reasons for choosing each source of fashion ideas)

   b. Hobbies (activities in spare time, reasons for choosing specific activities, common conversation topics, reasons for choosing conversation topics)

   c. Favourite locales (choice of shopping mall for leisure time, reason for choice of shopping mall)

   d. Mass Media (movie choice, television choice, music choice, magazine choice, book choice, print newspaper and online newspaper choice, website choice, aspiration/ambition)

3. Socialisation agents

a. Education (type of primary school, type of secondary school, type of tertiary institution, norms and values obtained from each)

b. Peers (language most commonly spoken by peers, ethnic group composition of peers, way in which respondent got to know peers, common conversation topic, peer hobbies)

c. Family (language spoken at home, father's and mother's education levels, common conversation topic)

d. Mass media (type of website, type of Facebook newsfeed, language of preferred magazine, reason for movie choice, reason for music choice, reason for television choice, reason for magazine choice, reason for print and online newspaper choice, reason for book choice, reason for website choice)

Where the item denotes 'reason for choice', it is a question that explains the respondent's attitude towards that socialisation agent.

4.1.3.8 Survey Tool

Online (Internet) surveys are becoming an essential research tool for a variety of research fields, including marketing, social and official statistics research[27]. Online surveys are feasible due to the widespread influence of the Web on people's lives today. Respondents are able to respond at their leisure, free of constraining effects.

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[27] Vehovar, V. and Manfreda, K.L (2008) 'Overview: Online Surveys'. Available from: http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/the-sage-handbook-of-online-research-methods/n10.xml [Accessed 8 Jan 2015].

The 2013 BBC Great British Survey, which is a recent landmark study of cultural capital conducted by sociologists in the UK, was also performed online[28].

I used the online survey design platform, eSurveysPro.com. The reason for choosing this survey platform is because it enables users to create surveys completely for free, without limiting the number of responses the user could gather[29]. This minimised the research cost. It was also user friendly and easy to understand to use, both for myself and for the respondents who participated in an early pre-test. I wanted a template that was easy to understand as a non-software expert, and that was also easy for respondents to understand and fill in without a lot of confusion or hassle. Certain questions required only one response while certain questions enabled respondents to choose more than one response. This was possible to set using this survey template. The survey was then printed out, retaining the online format, and distributed to respondents from HELP University and New Era College.

4.1.3.9   Interview

The survey questionnaire was followed up with a survey interview. Respondents were chosen based on the same convenience sample used for the questionnaire. Respondents who participated in the questionnaire were asked if they were willing to spare some time for the unstructured interview. Only those who were willing to do

[28] Savage, M. et. al. 'A New Model of Social Class? Findings from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment'. *Sociology 0(0) 1–32*. Available from: http://soc.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/03/12/0038038513481128.full.pdf [Accessed 8 Jan 2015]
[29] 'Free online survey'. *eSurveysPro.com*. Available from: <http://www.esurveyspro.com/free-online-survey.aspx> [Accessed 14 Jan 2015].

so were interviewed. Snowball sampling was also applied here as the respondents also acted as informants by introducing other potential interviewees of the same age cohort. Although not in the original questionnaire sample, they were also included in the unstructured interview in the manner of a focus group discussion. A focus group here refers to a group of people brought together to intensely discuss some topic (Ellis, 2010). Some respondents also wished to be interviewed online through email due to time constraint. In this case, an email with a list of questions following the interview protocol was sent to them. The researcher then interacted with the respondent both online and face-to-face. The following is the interview protocol, or list of questions used as a general guideline. In most of the cases, this interview protocol was closely adhered to, except for a few in which the respondents were introduced by the informants because of their membership in Malaysian Chinese subcultures. In these cases the direction of the questions was changed slightly to include the subcultural experience.

Question 1

Did you attend a Chinese medium or non-Chinese medium primary school? Please describe the type of school. What were the main values and norms that you picked up here?

Question 2

Did you attend a Chinese-medium or non-Chinese medium secondary school? Please describe the type of school. What were the main values and norms that you picked up here?

Question 3

As for tertiary education, what was the main medium of instruction used in your institution? Please describe the type of institution. What were the main values and norms that you picked up here?

Question 4

Which of these schools (from 1, 2, and 3) do you identify most strongly with? Why?

Question 5

Within your family, what is the main language spoken, and what are the topics usually discussed? What topics do your family members discuss with you and with each other most often?

Question 6

How importantly do you view career ambitions and making money?

Question 7

In terms of your identity formation, which of the following influences on your personal values was/is the strongest?

Please elaborate more about your current individual identity, your inspirations and aspirations, how you view the world, and where you view your place within it.

The primary research questions that guided the interview protocol were: the differences in cultural capital accumulated by respondents as a result of the socialisation process; and how cultural homogenisation occurred and respondent attitudes towards it.

4.1.3.10 Demographic

The general demographic of the study is urban Malaysian Chinese youth between the ages of 18 to 25. Specifically, they were chosen among Malaysian Chinese youth who were undertaking undergraduate study in three tertiary education institutions in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city. The institutions comprised a Chinese-medium, an English-medium, and a mixed-medium institution. This will be further elaborated in detail in the findings.

A pilot study was originally carried out in which the survey questionnaire was designed closely to that of Noble and Davies'. However, the open-ended questions proved difficult to tabulate in a standard manner and respondents complained that it was difficult to fill in compared to an online survey. This influenced the second

version of the survey questionnaire design (close-ended) and the decision to include the interview (open-ended).

4.2   DATA ANALYSIS

After the survey questionnaire and interview had been administered, the data was tabulated and prepared for analysis. This data was tabulated by the researcher into Excel worksheets and presented as pie charts, demonstrating trends for responses to each question. The survey responses were analysed by comparing the preferences of the Chinese-educated and English-educated groups for every aspect of institutional, objectified, and embodied cultural capital. In the findings chapters, each response option to all sixty-four survey questions is explained and justified. A comparison by percentage of every aspect is given, where the top preference is noted, followed by the explanation for secondary preferences. Trends were then explained in relation to other studies. Ten individuals were interviewed in each institution. Following which, the content analysis of the interview responses reveals respondents' attitudes towards socialisation agents, material tastes, and worldview. These are then discussed in the findings.

4.3   VALIDITY

In assessing the quality of research, there are three factors to be considered. These are standardisation factors - reliability, representativeness, and validity. Reliability refers to the ability to replicate the research process. Representativeness refers to whether the chosen unit of analysis reflects the population of interest. Validity refers

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to the correspondence between a piece of data and the conclusions that are drawn from it[30], and includes two kinds – internal and external validity. Internal validity is concerned with whether the conclusion that is drawn about the relationship between two or more different things is justified. External validity is concerned with whether the results of social scientific research are actually applicable to the reality of people's everyday lives[31].

In this study, the aim is to describe and explain the process of identity formation among a specific group of Malaysian Chinese – urban undergraduates – from Chinese-medium and English-medium educational institutions within a globalised context. The aim is not to replicate such a study as historical contexts may change in the future. The assumption is that social structures change. No two historical epochs can be exactly alike as people are capable of changing their attitudes.

In terms of representativeness, the chosen demographic has been selected to directly represent the social group of interest. In this case Malaysian Chinese are the focus of the study. Youth between the ages of 18 to 25 have been chosen because of the importance of identity formation at this developmental process, as outlined in Erikson (1950)'s stages of psychosocial development. This period of their lives also allows them a certain amount of liberty to own personal possessions that shape their lifestyles and to make life-defining choices, as they may live away from home near the university and may be partially employed. At the same time they are not completely free of influence from socialisation agents, because their parents may still

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[30] Taylor, S. and Gosling, R. (2011). 'Sociological Research'. *Principles of Sociology.*
[31] ibid

be bearing the cost of their education and they are still subjected to educational regulations. At this stage the influence of peers and mass media may also be strong due to their autonomy of choice.

The internal validity of this study concerns the relationship between the variables examined in the research design. Here socialisation agents have been assumed to result in elements of self-presentation. This study however does not attempt to make causal statements regarding the relationship between the variables. Internal validity is achieved when the right constructs are chosen to describe the phenomenon. The constructs or variables chosen here derive from previous studies assessing cultural capital.

The external validity of this study concerns the generalisability of the findings to the larger population. This however is not the intent of the study. The researcher's aim in this study is to illustrate the specific case of the Malaysian Chinese youth (Generation Y) who attend Chinese and English medium institutions and the differences in identity formation among the two. The researcher did not aim to generalise these findings across all Malaysian Chinese of other generations, other ethnic groups in Malaysia, nor other members of the Chinese Diaspora worldwide.

Similarly, the researcher acknowledges that other social facts such as gender and social class are equally important, in identity formation and expression. However, the issue of gender was not prioritised in this study as it was intended to measure educational outcomes based on sociolinguistic environment. Social class was also

not prioritised because Malaysians do not possess a strong identification with social class, unlike in Britain. This has been outlined also in the literature review.

To recap, this study examines the different lifestyles and beliefs among Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese between the ages of 18 to 25 situated in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city. This location is at the forefront of cultural globalisation in this country due to technological advancements in information, travel and education. Different lifestyles and beliefs result in different identities which are indicated by different types of cultural capital. This study is based on a survey research design which incorporates a questionnaire and interviews. Data is analysed using descriptive statistics. The overall study has three main aims, which are to explain the differences among Malaysian Chinese who have undergone Chinese education and those who have not, using a sociological framework; to contribute to the field of cultural sociology by demonstrating how the concept of cultural capital can be applied to the study of identity among the Malaysian Chinese; and to contribute to the cultural globalisation debate by demonstrating how this specific case confirms the argument that there is cultural homogenisation. These are expressed in the following three chapters, which cover the institutionalised, objectified, and embodied forms of cultural capital among the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese.

CHAPTER 5

INSTITUTIONALISED CULTURAL CAPITAL AMONG THE MALAYSIAN

CHINESE

5.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from my survey in the three forms of cultural capital, which are the objectified, institutionalised and embodied. The objectified form of cultural capital refers to consumption of commodities, the institutionalised refers to practices legitimised by social institutions, and the embodied refers to lived dispositions. The findings are classified according to each category and its significance discussed. The chapter ends with a summary of the main trends and a brief contextualisation, which will be further explored in the final chapter.

5.1   INSTITUTIONALISED CULTURAL CAPITAL

This first section refers to the form of cultural capital which refers to an indavidual's' set of practices that are legitimised by social institutions. Social institutions include the family, peers, and education, which are also socialisation agents. They imbue the individual with norms and values and continue reinforcing them as long as the individual remains in contact with. I have put this at the forefront because this thesis explores the influence of education mediums on the accumulation of other forms of

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cultural capital. In this study, I have compared respondents from Chinese-medium education and English-medium education. I have traced the norms and values accumulated from these two mediums. I will begin by displaying the education mediums my respondents have attended, followed by their family, dialect group, and choice of peers.

The research question answered in this section is whether there is a clear dichotomy of Confucian versus Western liberal democratic values inherent in the respondents' socialisation process.

5.1.1　　　FAMILY

5.1.1.1　　　DIALECT GROUP
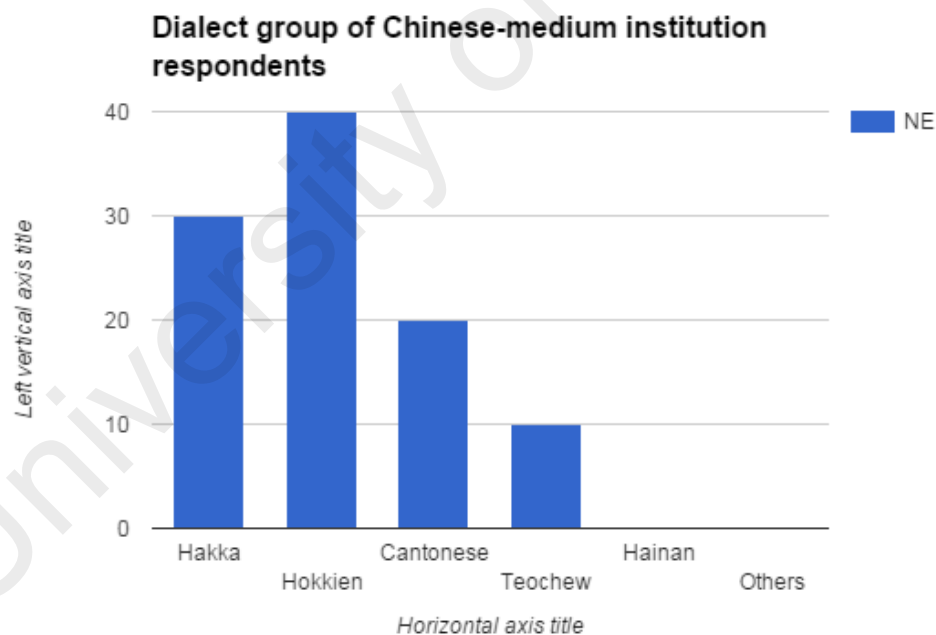
Figure 5.1 - Dialect group of Chinese-medium institution respondents

Dialect group of English-medium institution respondents
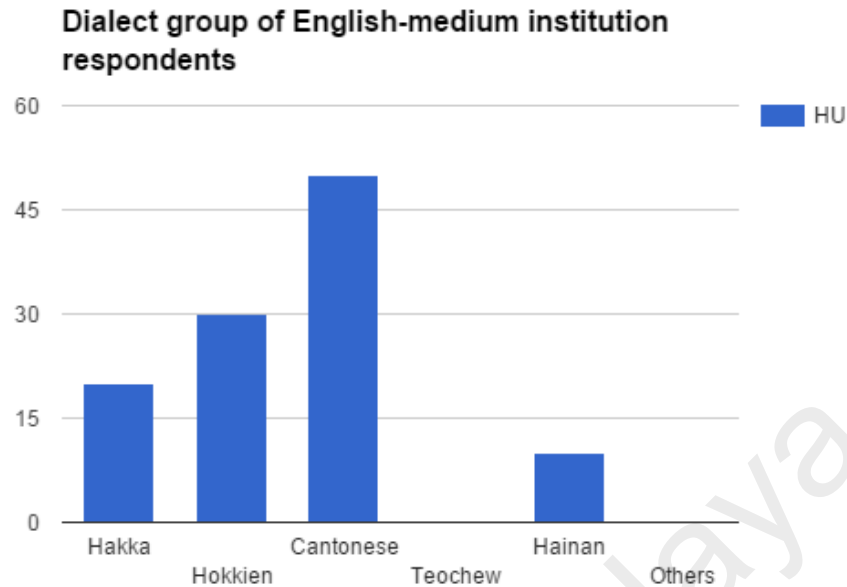
Figure 5.2 - Dialect group of English-medium institution respondents

As documented in the previous chapter, the Malaysian Chinese were originally from South China. In the early 1900s these included dialect groups such as the Cantonese, Hokkien, Hainan, Khek, Straits-born, Teochew, Kwong Hai and others, which the British classified as 'Chinese'(Hirschman 1987). While this study does not focus on dialect groups as a marker of identity, it does capture the question of whether respondents prefer to speak in dialects rather than in Mandarin or English. The Hokkien is the largest dialect group among respondents of the Chinese-language education institution. The Hokkien dialect is the largest Chinese dialect spoken among Chinese groups in Malaysia (Teh and Lim 2014). In Penang in particular, where many Hokkien are based, they are capable of speaking formal British English alongside the Hokkien dialect, which they have vowed to preserve as cultural

heritage (Teh and Lim 2014). Cantonese is the second largest Chinese dialect spoken in Malaysia (Asiaharvest). In Kuala Lumpur, the top three dialects are Hokkien, followed by Hakka and Cantonese.

In this survey, Cantonese is found to be the largest dialect group among the English-educated respondents. Due to mainland China's rise in global importance however, the use of Mandarin is overtaking the use of Chinese dialects (Teh and Lim 2014). With that said, linguistic research has pointed out that the variant of Mandarin spoken by Malaysian Chinese differs to that of Mandarin spoken in mainland China, also known as Standard Mandarin Chinese (Phoon 2010).

5.1.1.2   LANGUAGE OF INTIMACY IN THE FAMILY
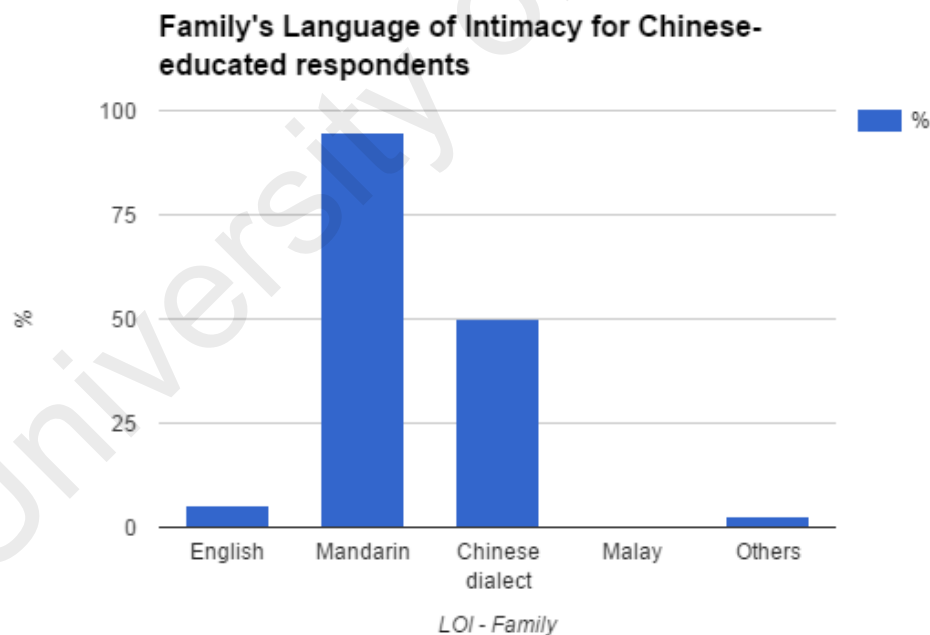
Figure 5.3 - Family's language of intimacy for Chinese-educated respondents
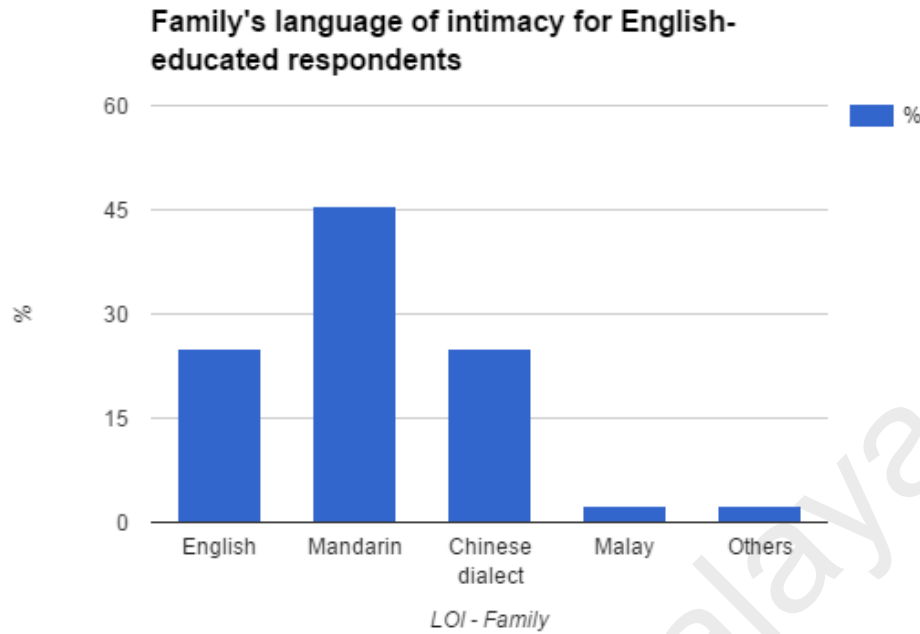
Figure 5.4 - Family's language of intimacy for English-educated respondents

This question asked respondents 'what language do you speak most often at home?''
It is about the language of intimacy, or language of choice the respondent's family
speaks at home, including with but not limited to the respondent. The terms
'language of intimacy' and 'language of literacy' were coined by Tan Chee Beng
(1997) to denote the difference between language spoken in informal settings,
usually with family or peers; and language used in formal settings, such as in school
or at work. This language is believed to influence the respondent because of
exposure to their surroundings. In addition, if the family converses in this language
with the respondent, it increases the chances of the respondent identifying with this
language, and thinking in this language first and foremost. There are five options
provided for the response, which are 'English', 'Mandarin', 'Chinese dialect',
'Malay', and 'others'. The analysis for the options is given below.

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5.1.1.2.1   English

English is the world's leading international language. It was first introduced to Malaya in 1786 during British colonisation (Phoon 2010). Seidlhofer (2005) writes that despite being welcomed by some and deplored by others, it cannot be denied that English functions as a global lingua franca. In the Chinese-medium institution, 5 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in English at home. In the English-medium institution, 25 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in English at home. This shows that among both groups, the English-educated are the ones whose families most frequently converse in English at home. The Chinese-educated families are least likely to converse in English at home.

The relationship between Malaysian Chinese and the use of English is undulating. Ridge (2015) writes that Malaysia's post-Independence measures to boost the status of Malay by switching the language medium in schools to Malay had an immediate effect on English-medium schools, but the same measure was not carried through to Chinese or Tamil schools. This process was carried out in the 1970s. Ridge explained that Chinese and Tamil schools still had to demonstrate competence in Malay, thus evolving an effective bilingualism for non-Malays. However in these vernacular schools, the use of English was not heavily emphasised either. Ridge explains that by the 1990s however, Malaysia sought to reintroduce English language competence via its schools and tertiary education to keep up with the globalising world. Once again, the use of English has been given importance because

of its position as the mouthpiece of the globalised world. The use of English language thus becomes an attribute of cultural capital. However, this may not immediately affect families to start conversing in English, as they have their own cultural norms to uphold. Perhaps education has an effect however, as families whose children, the respondents, have attended English-language education are also more likely to converse in English at home.

5.1.1.2.2 Mandarin

In the past decade, the importance of the Chinese language has been increasing throughout the world alongside China's rise to importance. Martinez (2014) writes that it is however, difficult for Mandarin or any Chinese dialect to overtake English as an international language, because of linguistic, economic, cultural, and political reasons. In the Chinese-medium institution, 95 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in Mandarin at home. In the English-medium institution, 45 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in Mandarin at home. This shows that the English-educated respondents are the ones whose families are most likely to converse in English at home. However, the Chinese-educated are not the ones whose families are least likely to converse in English at home, but the mixed-medium group. This shows that among the Chinese-educated respondents' families, there is an awareness of the importance of the English language.

However, sometimes Chinese-educated learners of the English language may feel the need to uphold their Chineseness. In an ethnographic study, Feng (2011) found that

Chinese learners of the English language in Britain, tended to affirm and display their membership with respect to China and the Chinese national imagination. These contributed to a heightened sense of Chinese national identity and increased patriotism. Thus the Chinese-educated individuals are willing to embrace the English language in order to be competitive job seekers, but are not willing to let this eclipse their Chinese language-based identity.

5.1.1.2.3   **Chinese Dialects**

Chinese dialects are composed of varieties of the language that is common to the ethnic Chinese. According to Sim (2011), the four major Chinese dialects spoken in Malaysia are Hokkien, Khek, Cantonese, and Teochew. These have been included in one category in this response option, because the intention is to assess whether Malaysian Chinese youth prefer to converse in Mandarin, which is the official Chinese language, or in these varieties of language unique to the region of their ancestral homeland. In the Chinese-medium institution, 50 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in a Chinese dialect at home. In the English-medium institution, 25 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in a Chinese dialect at home. This shows that the Chinese-educated respondents are the ones whose families are most likely to converse in a Chinese dialect at home. The English-educated respondents are the ones whose families are least likely to converse in a Chinese dialect at home.

5.1.1.2.4   Malay

The Malay language is the official language of Malaysia. It is taught in both Chinese and non-Chinese schools, and is the official medium of the former English schools. Pupils of Chinese-medium schools as well as Malay-medium schools are required to sit for an examination for this subject at the end of primary and secondary schooling, and a pass in this subject is required to enter university. In the Chinese-medium institution, no respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in Malay at home. In the English-medium institution, 2 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that their families mainly conversed in Malay at home. Notably, in general regardless of education medium, very few respondents claimed their families converse in Malay at home. As Ting (2013) claims, a surprising revelation is that even among those who attended Malay primary and secondary schools, only a tenth claimed that Malay was their best spoken language. It is possible that this happened because very few Malaysian Chinese youth come from families who speak Malay frequently at home.

In some instances, ethnic Chinese who speak Malay can achieve solidarity with Malaysian of other ethnicities. Mala Rajo Sathian and Yeok Meng Ngeow (2014) examined how the ethnic Chinese minority in Kelantan, Malaysia, which is ruled by Malay-majority, Islamic political party PAS, sustained their identity in a politically changing context. Because they are born in Kelantan and are fluent in Kelantanese Malay dialect, their identity as 'orghe Kelantan' (Kelantan folk) has been strengthened. Because they strategise linguistically to maintain their exclusive 'orghe

Kelantan' identity, they have achieved solidarity with other Kelantanese beyond ethnic and religious boundaries.

5.1.1.2.5   Others

An additional option, 'others', was provided to address the possibility that respondents families may have conversed in other languages at home. While the actual language is not known, the purpose of this option is to discover if respondents' families converse in other languages apart from what has already been provided in the existing options. This may help with further or future research. However only between none to 2 percent from each group chose this option, which shows that the researcher's close-ended survey options correctly estimated the respondents' families language of intimacy.

Ting (2013) and the University of Malaya Chinese Language Society (CLS) conducted several surveys on Malaysian Chinese youth perceptions of language, identity, and mobility in 2000, 2002, and 2003. Their findings revealed that at the spoken level, the majority of the respondents' best spoken language was Mandarin, followed by a Chinese dialect, and finally English. This indicates that there is influence by socialisation agents on the respondents which causes all of them to be fluent in Mandarin. As they are second best fluent in Chinese dialects, which is not an official Chinese language taught in Chinese schools, this must either be the result of influence by family members or peers. English may be their third best language due to family or education. However, as English is only one of the subjects taught in school, it is unlikely that it would outweigh the school's official medium if

instruction in importance. This could therefore be the influence of family members, peers outside of school, or the mass media such as television programmes on mainstream channels such as cartoons, which are mostly in English. This study concurs with Ting (2013)'s findings in her surveys.

5.1.1.3   MOST COMMON CONVERSATION TOPIC IN THE RESPONDENT'S FAMILY
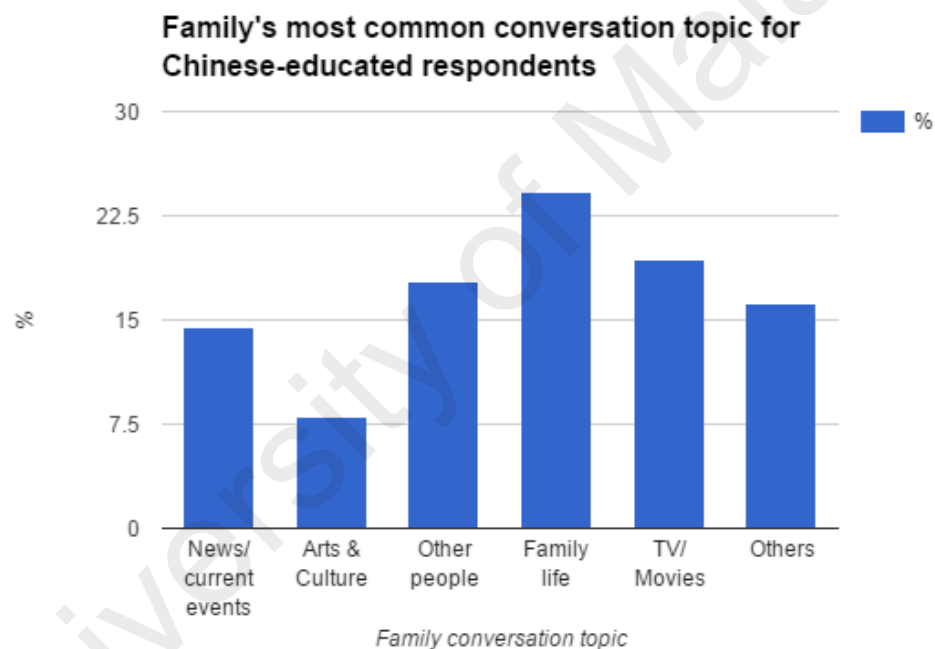
Figure 5.5 - Family's most common conversation topic for Chinese-educated respondents
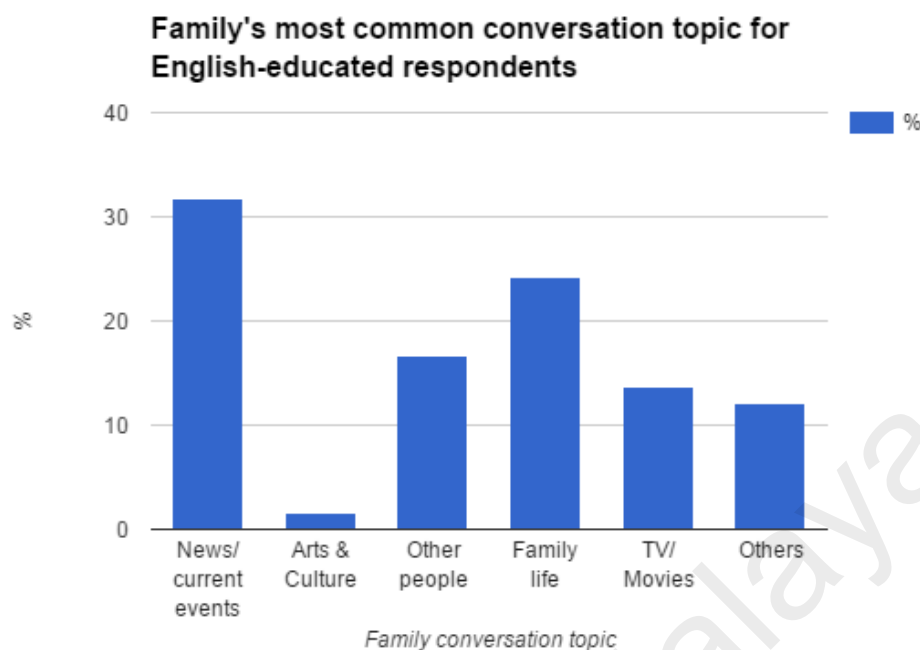
Figure 5.6 - Family's most common conversation topic for English-educated respondents

This question asked respondents "when getting together, what is the most common topic your family members talk about?" It is about the most common topic of conversation in the family, which implies that respondents and their family members think of this topic often and hold strong values over it. There are six options provided for the response, which are 'news/current events', arts and culture', 'other people', 'family life', 'TV/ movies', and 'others'. The analysis for each option is given below. These six options can be classified into pragmatic and non-pragmatic options. Non-pragmatic options represent a more philosophical outlook, such as 'arts and culture', 'news/current events' and 'TV/movies'; while pragmatic options represent a more communal and survival-based outlook, such as 'family life' and 'other people'.

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5.1.1.3.1   News/Current Events

In the Chinese-medium institution, 14 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In the English-medium institution, 32 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. This shows that among both groups, the English educated group favours discussing news and current events more strongly than the Chinese-educated group. The English-educated possess a non-pragmatic interest while the Chinese-educated possess a pragmatic outlook.

As written by Ting (2013), Bock (1970) found that the Chinese students from English-medium secondary schools were more "national" (or less "communal") in orientation than their counterparts in Chinese-medium schools. The researcher's own finding demonstrates that the Chinese-educated respondents were more communal, because they preferred to discuss issues of higher practicality related to survival and of immediate individual concern, such as family and people they know. The English-educated were more curious about news and current affairs, which may involve places and people they do not know. In 1970, the world was beginning to globalise, and in Malaysia the education policy had been changed to include Malay medium schools to replace English medium schools. However, in 2013 the pattern observed by Bock still remains. This shows that socialisation agents apart from the school still play an important part in providing respondents with their identity values.

5.1.1.3.2   Arts and Culture

In the Chinese-medium institution, 7 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In the English-medium institution, 2 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In both cases not many respondents claimed to be interested in arts and culture as a conversation topic, reflecting more pragmatic interests. Interestingly in this aspect, the English-educated were the least interested in discussing non-pragmatic topics. This could be due to the fact that arts and culture is not viewed importantly in Malaysia. There is a belief that pursuing a performing arts career in Malaysia is not a stable career with income hard to come by. Because of the interest in gaining s stable job, many parents do not encourage their children to pursue arts and culture as a career. There is also a belief that smarter students pursue sciences, while arts or art as a subject is considered inferior. As shown in the mass media preferences in Chapter 5, many respondents also do not favour locally made movies. Thus there is no interest to discuss arts and culture.

5.1.1.3.3   Other People

In the Chinese-medium institution, 18 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In the English-medium institution, 17 percent claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In both cases respondents were equally interested to discuss other people in their conversations, reflecting more pragmatic interests. This may be a universal need to socialise with other people and

thus the need to discuss each other's friends arises. Gossip is also commonly used as a bonding platform and a way of keeping up with current happenings, especially for those who do not prefer to read. Thus regardless of whether one is communal or adventurous, there is no difference in one's interest in knowing about other people.

5.1.1.3.4   Family Life

In the Chinese-medium institution, 19 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In the English-medium institution, 24 percent out of 60 respondents also claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. This shows that the Chinese-educated are slightly less interested in discussing family life and are interestingly not pragmatic. However, the English-educated are slightly more interested in discussing this pragmatic topic. In most studies, Confucian values are strongly linked to Chinese-language education. This would imply that students of Chinese-medium schools would display Confucian values such as filial piety and communal attachment to family more strongly than other groups. However, the reverse is observed with the English-educated displaying higher family attachment. Perhaps the hold of Confucian values on Chinese-medium respondents is no longer as strong as it was in the past, before the age of globalisation. Likewise, the ability of those who did not attend Chinese school to pick up on Confucian values is no longer limited. Globalisation has enabled respondents to access information on the World Wide Web and the exchange of values has taken place. One's identity is no longer confined to the values one receives in Chinese or non-Chinese school.

5.1.1.3.5   TV/Movies

In the Chinese-medium institution, 19 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. In the English-medium institution, 14 percent out of 60 respondents claimed to choose this as a conversation topic. This shows that the Chinese-educated are more interested in discussing TV and movies which is a non-pragmatic topic compared to the English-educated group. Once again, this shows that the influence of socialisation agents and their values is not confined to the Chinese or non-Chinese schools anymore. The Chinese educated may become less pragmatic than even the non-Chinese educated, in terms of conversation topic. In this instance, Bock (1970)'s findings are no longer relevant. However, this question is relegated to only the family's conversation topics. It is important to also compare this with the peer conversation topic, and other elements of identity formation within the respondent.

5.1.1.3.6   Others

An additional option, 'others', was provided to address the possibility that respondents may have had other common conversation topics with their family. While the actual topic is not known, the purpose of this option is to discover if respondents actually possess other conversational interests apart from what has already been provided in the existing options. This may help with further or future research. However only between 1 to 2 percent from each group chose this option,

which shows that the researcher's close-ended survey options correctly estimated the respondents' main interests.

Chinese-educated respondents were then interviewed about their attitudes towards their most common family conversation topics. When asked to elaborate, most respondents mentioned that their families actually liked to talk about food. One respondent explained that her family often discusses the topic of nutrition regarding 'healthy foods for us', while another said their family discussed food together with current issues. Two other respondents said their families often discussed 'food and what to eat for dinner' and 'how's life and also food (where to have dinner)'. One way in which the Chinese greet each other is by asking 'Have you eaten yet?' (Qi Journal 2001), and this seems to be an indicator of well-being. These respondents' families choose to discuss food regularly, most likely because good or sufficient food is considered an indicator of well-being.

On the other hand, family conversations are not just limited to food, but also other topics as 'each other's life', 'financial and emotional conflicts in the family', 'current affairs, education and work', and 'current issues or news that is happening around the world'. This shows that Chinese-educated respondents' families are in touch with interpersonal issues as well as national and global issues.

English-educated respondents on the other hand, are more concerned with news and current affairs, both locally and globally. They cite topics such as 'religion and the Church (we are Catholic)', 'serious news, economics, politics, and history (but those topics mostly bore my family)', 'general news (such as celebrities, politics, major

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happenings around the world)', and 'current issue that is happening in Malaysia'. Food, although mentioned by one respondent, is not such a central issue. There is also more of a tendency to speak about abstract things like ideas and less immediate interest in interpersonal affairs. The dichotomy between collectivism and individualism is apparent in the conversation topics of respondents' families, with the Chinese-educated respondents' families displaying more collectivism and the English-educated respondents' families displaying more cosmopolitanism.

5.1.2 EDUCATION

5.1.2.1   TYPE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL
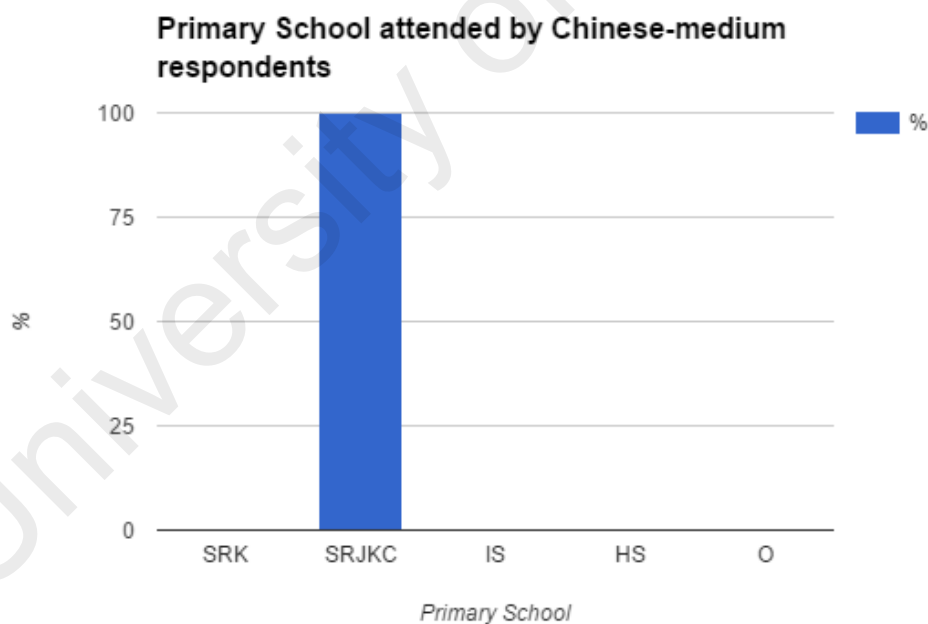
Figure 5.7 - Primary school attended by Chinese-medium institution respondents
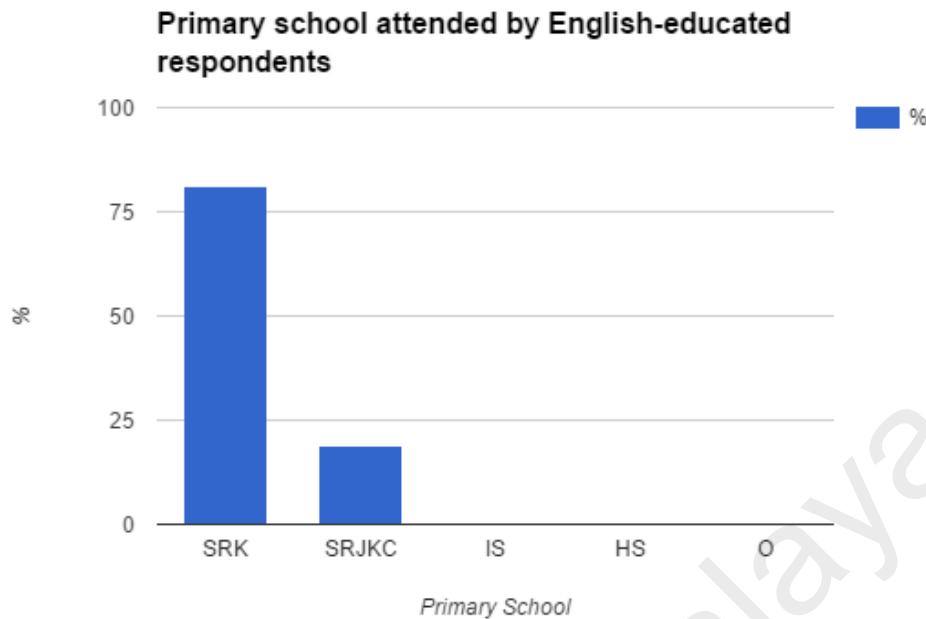
Figure 5.7 - Primary school attended by English-medium institution respondents

As expected, all Chinese-medium tertiary institution respondents had attended Chinese-medium primary school, or National-Type Primary School (SRJKC). This is because in order to proceed with further Chinese-medium education, respondents need to master the basics of literacy in the Chinese language. I have encountered students who struggle to read the Chinese script despite having attended Chinese primary school, after having switched to the English medium at secondary and tertiary levels. Meanwhile, the majority of English-medium tertiary institution respondents had attended National Primary School (SRK), in which the medium of instruction is in the Malay language and English language is widely spoken. A few have also attended Chinese-medium SRJK school, possibly due to family cultural

heritage association. However, they will still be able to pursue a further education in the English-language at their own effort.

What my study finds is that despite popular assumption that Chinese-educated students tend to go on mainly to Chinese medium tertiary education and are monocultural, the converse is true. From my conversation with respondents, I find there are in fact some "English-educated" pupils who have undergone Chinese medium primary education but who could not fit in with the system. They do not identify strongly with the environment in Chinese medium primary schools, which tends to be strict regarding homework and discipline, and have found that they thrive better academically and socially after having changed to English medium international schools. This also means that no individual is exempt from the influence of other agents of socialisation, as their parents could be educated in a different medium, though they send their children to another.

5.1.2.2   TYPE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
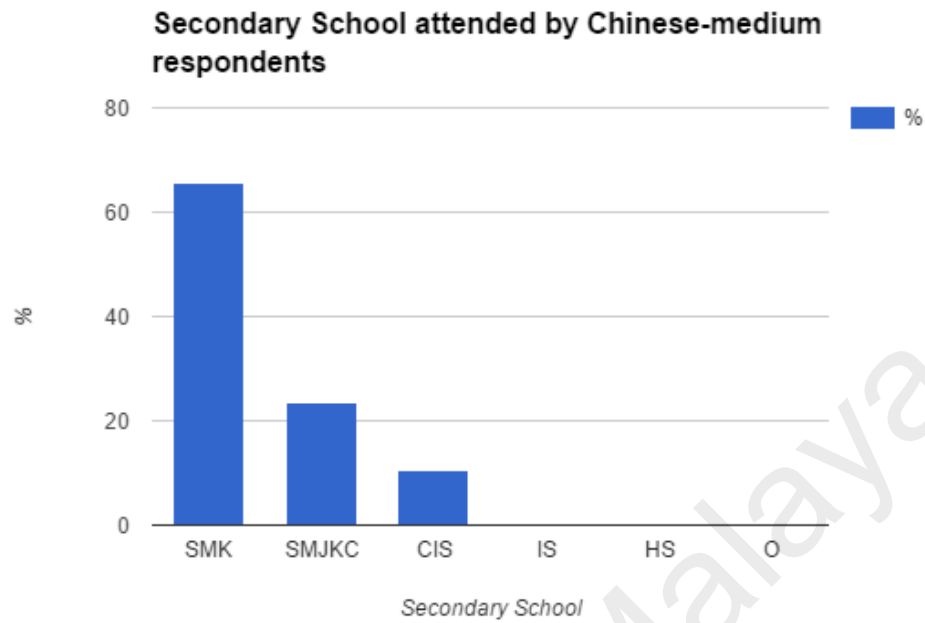
Figure 5.9 - Secondary school attended by Chinese-medium institution respondents
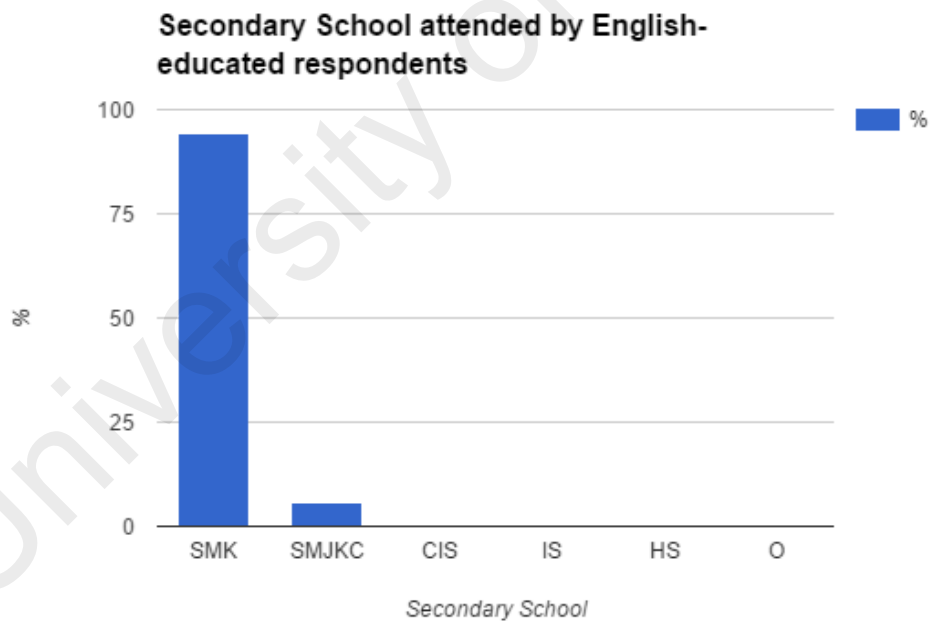
Figure 5.10 - Secondary school attended by English-medium institution respondents

More English-medium tertiary institution respondents had attended National Secondary School (SMK) compared to Chinese-medium respondents. There are some respondents who initially underwent Chinese-medium schooling at the primary or secondary levels, possibly due to family association with linguistic heritage. However, they switched to English-medium tertiary education later on. On the other hand, despite all having attended Chinese-medium primary school, most Chinese-medium tertiary institution respondents went on to attend National Secondary School (SMK). Some continued to attend the Chinese-medium National-Type Secondary School (SMJKC) and Chinese Independent High Schools. This is likely due to an interest in preparing for the school-leaving examination, the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM).

5.1.2.3   EDUCATION LEVEL
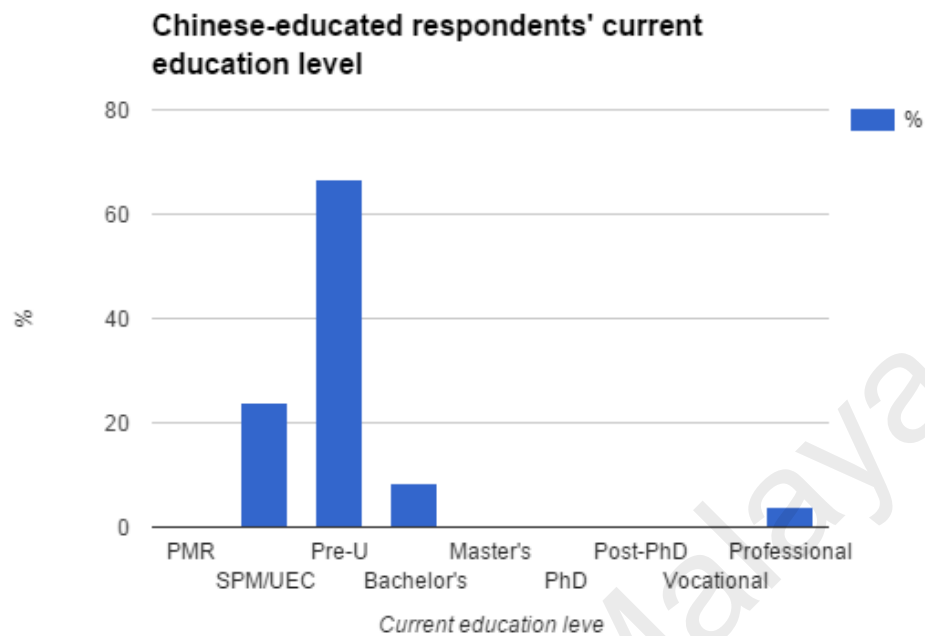
Figure 5.11 - Chinese-educated respondents' current education level

The majority of respondents claimed that their highest qualification obtained up to that point was the Pre-University qualification.
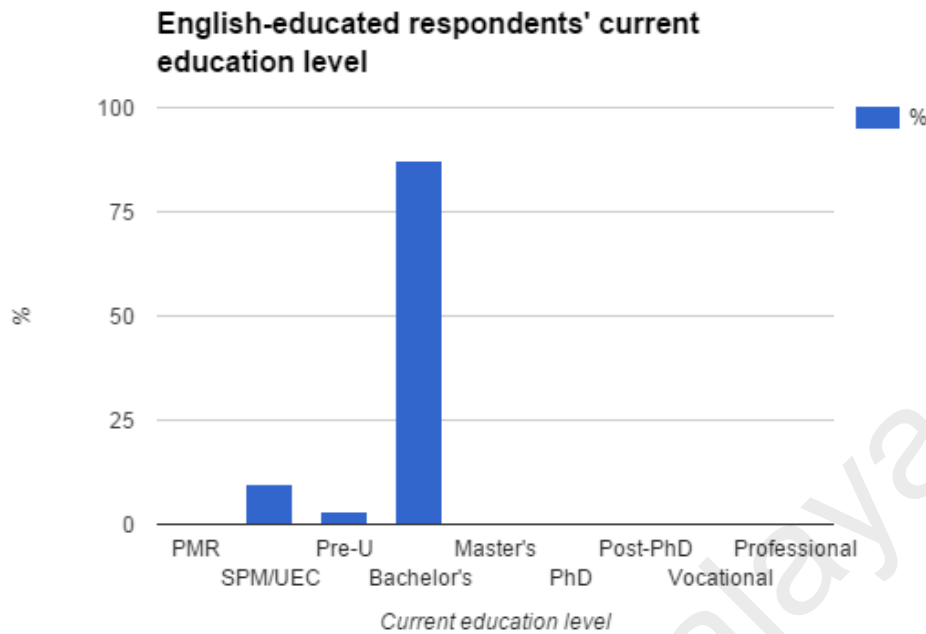
Figure 5.12 - English-educated respondents' current education level

The majority claimed that the Bachelor's degree was their highest level of education, as they were currently pursuing it at the time of the survey. As intended, this fulfilled the target of the survey, which was tertiary education students at the pre-degree level. While this aspect was already decided beforehand, data was collected to increase accuracy.

This question asked respondents 'what is your current level of education?' It is about the level of education the respondent had attained as of the time of the study, which was in 2013. Although the researcher had already selected three tertiary education institutions for this study, this question was included as part of the researcher's specially designed survey questionnaire for measuring cultural capital. The researcher intends to use this questionnaire again as a research tool in future research

projects which might include different ethnic or sociolinguistic groups. Furthermore, while belonging to the 18 to 25 age cohort, respondents could be undergoing pre-university, degree level, or postgraduate courses in their respective institutions. Thus the distinction needs to be made. The different levels of education provided in the response options is discussed below.

5.1.2.3.1 Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR)

Also known as the Lower Secondary Assessment, this examination is a national examination for students of secondary school who have completed Third Form. In 2014 the PMR was substituted with the Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PTS) or Form Three Assessment exams[32]; however as of the time the survey was conducted in 2013, the PMR was still in effect.

5.1.2.3.2 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)

The SPM functions as a school-leaving qualification for students of secondary school who have completed Fifth Form. Results from this examination are required for entry into tertiary education. According to the MQA, the SPM is taken by Fifth Form students in National Schools, Government-Assisted Schools, Religious Government-Assisted Schools, Schools under other Government Agencies; State Religious Secondary Schools; Private Schools registered with the Education

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[32] 'PT3 replaces PMR, says Muhyiddin'. *The Star Online*. Available from: http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/03/18/Muhyiddin-PT3-PMR/ [Accessed 13 Jan 2015]

Ministry; and People's Religious Secondary School. The students must be 16 on the First of January of the year of the SPM[33].

5.1.2.3.3　　　　　　United Examination Certificate (UEC)

The UEC is a school-leaving exam conducted in Chinese Independent High Schools throughout Malaysia, after completing their Senior Middle 3. It is recognised as an entry qualification for tertiary education in many developed countries, including China, but not recognised by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA).

5.1.2.3.4　　　　　　Pre-University Courses

A pre-University course is a gateway into tertiary education at the degree level, and is itself considered tertiary education. These courses are taken after the SPM and include Sixth Form (with the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) exam); A-Levels; Foundation Programmes for specific universities; International Baccalaureate; matriculation programmes, and others. According to the MQA, Foundation Courses or Pre-University Courses include the Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM), Matriculation Certificate, and Basic Certificate. In general, these certificates are awarded to individuals who can demonstrate knowledge and comprehension in the field of study which continues from the secondary school level and is found in advanced textbooks; apply knowledge and comprehension to identify and use data to provide a clear response to concrete and complex problems;

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[33] 'Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia'. *Portal Rasmi Lembaga Peperiksaan*. Available from:
<http://apps2.moe.gov.my/lponline/v1/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41:maklumat-am-spm-2014&catid=22&Itemid=118&lang=en> [Accessed 13 Jan 2015]

communicate and explain comprehension and skill to peers and supervisors; and demonstrate ability to advance at further study.

5.1.2.3.5   Bachelor's Degree

The MQA[34] defines the Bachelor's Degree as general preparation for a career, postgraduate or research courses, or highly skilled professional work. It also allows individuals to combine responsibilities which require a high level of autonomy in making professional decisions. It is awarded to individuals who demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of basic principles of the field of study from an advanced textbook; is able to use knowledge and comprehension in a way that displays career professionalism; able to debate and solve problems within their field of study; have technique and ability to search for and use data to make decisions with consideration for relevant social, scientific, and ethical issues; communicate effectively to a specialist and non-specialist audience; master teamwork and interpersonal skills relevant to chosen careers; and master self-learning abilities that enables autonomous further study.

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[34] *Kerangka Kelayakan Malaysia: Titik Rujukan dan Persefahaman Bersama Tentang Kelayakan Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia*. Available from:
http://www.mqa.gov.my/portalMQA/dokumen/KERANGKA%20KELAYAKAN%20MALAYSIA_2011.pdf
[Accessed 13 January 2015].

5.1.2.3.6   **Master's Degree**

The MQA[35] defines the Master's degree as providing continuity to knowledge, skills, and ability achieved at the Bachelor's degree level. Entry to master's degree programmes is usually based on proven ability to undergo postgraduate study in a chosen field. It is awarded to individuals who are able to display advanced knowledge and comprehension beyond the Bachelor's degree level and is able to develop or use ideas in the research context; is able to use knowledge and comprehension to solve problems related to their field of study in new and multidisciplinary contexts; able to integrate knowledge and manage complex things; able to evaluate and decide in situations with little or no information; taking into account related social responsibility and ethics; present summary, knowledge, and rationale to specialist and non-specialist audiences; and master the ability to learn to advance with high autonomy.

5.1.2.3.7   **Doctoral Degree**

The MQA[36] defines the doctorate as strengthening knowledge, skills, and ability that is achieved at the Master's degree level. It generally provides graduates the ability to conduct independent research and is awarded to individuals who are able to

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[35] *Kerangka Kelayakan Malaysia: Titik Rujukan dan Persefahaman Bersama Tentang Kelayakan Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia*. Available from: http://www.mqa.gov.my/portalMQA/dokumen/KERANGKA%20KELAYAKAN%20MALAYSIA_2011.pdf [Accessed 13 January 2015].

[36] *Kerangka Kelayakan Malaysia: Titik Rujukan dan Persefahaman Bersama Tentang Kelayakan Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia*. Available from: http://www.mqa.gov.my/portalMQA/dokumen/KERANGKA%20KELAYAKAN%20MALAYSIA_2011.pdf. [Accessed 13 January 2015].

demonstrate systematic and in-depth comprehension of a discipline of study and the mastery of research skill and method in that field; able to generate, design, execute, and modify a large part of the research process with scholarly integrity; contribute to original research in a way that broadens the boundary of knowledge through in-depth dissertations which have been presented and defended by international standards, including publications in international refereed journals, conduct critical analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of new and complex ideas, communicate about their field of specialisation with peers, the scholarly community, and the general public, and encourage the advancement of technology, society, and culture through knowledge in an academic and professional context.

5.1.2.3.8 Postdoctoral Study

The Oxford Dictionary defines postdoctoral study as relating to or denoting research undertaken after the completion of doctoral research.

5.1.2.3.9 Vocational Certificate

The MQA[37] defines a Vocational Certificate as preparing students for certain technical tasks, and is the beginning of further training in the chosen field. In general, the programme includes practical training in the institution and comprises at least 25 percent of vocational or technical content. The certificate is awarded to

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[37] *Kerangka Kelayakan Malaysia: Titik Rujukan dan Persefahaman Bersama Tentang Kelayakan Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia*. Available from:
http://www.mqa.gov.my/portalMQA/dokumen/KERANGKA%20KELAYAKAN%20MALAYSIA_2011.pdf
[Accessed 13 January 2015].

individuals who can interpret and utilise technical information; assist and use the scientific process and design; identify the effects of rules, regulations, and contracts on the work process; prepare an estimate of the cost of workflow and operation; use the technique and ability to search for and use information to make decisions with regards to relevant social, scientific, and ethical issues; communicate effectively and disperse information, ideas, problems and solutions to specialist and non-specialist audiences; master teamwork and interpersonal skills suitable for the chosen field; become a socially responsible individual; and use self-learning skills in order to proceed with further study.

5.1.2.3.10   Professional Diploma

The MQA[38] defines the Diploma in Skills, Higher Education, Vocational and Technical Training as providing a wide range of ability and responsibility focusing towards a career. These careers may be found in various fields, such as business and management, social services, health, sports and recreation, information technology and communication, art and design, engineering, construction, science and technology, hospitality and tourism, estate management, agriculture and forestry. The diploma level of education balances theory and practice/practical and emphasises the inculcation of values and ethics in order for the individual to use knowledge, comprehension, and practical skill at work; evaluate and make decisions

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[38] *Kerangka Kelayakan Malaysia: Titik Rujukan dan Persefahaman Bersama Tentang Kelayakan Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia*. Available from:
http://www.mqa.gov.my/portalMQA/dokumen/KERANGKA%20KELAYAKAN%20MALAYSIA_2011.pdf
[Accessed 13 January 2015].

taking into account social, scientific and ethical issues with medium level of autonomy; have self-confidence and entrepreneurship to generate their own jobs; become responsible individuals in society; master the ability to learn to adapt to ideas, process and new procedures for career development; master the ability of teamwork and interpersonal skills relevant to career; and communicate effectively in dispersing information, ideas, problems and solution clearly and convincingly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

The majority of respondents from both institutions were, as targeted, undergraduates, with some pursuing their pre-university course and some pursuing their bachelor's degree.

5.1.2.4 EDUCATION MEDIUMS AND THEIR VALUES
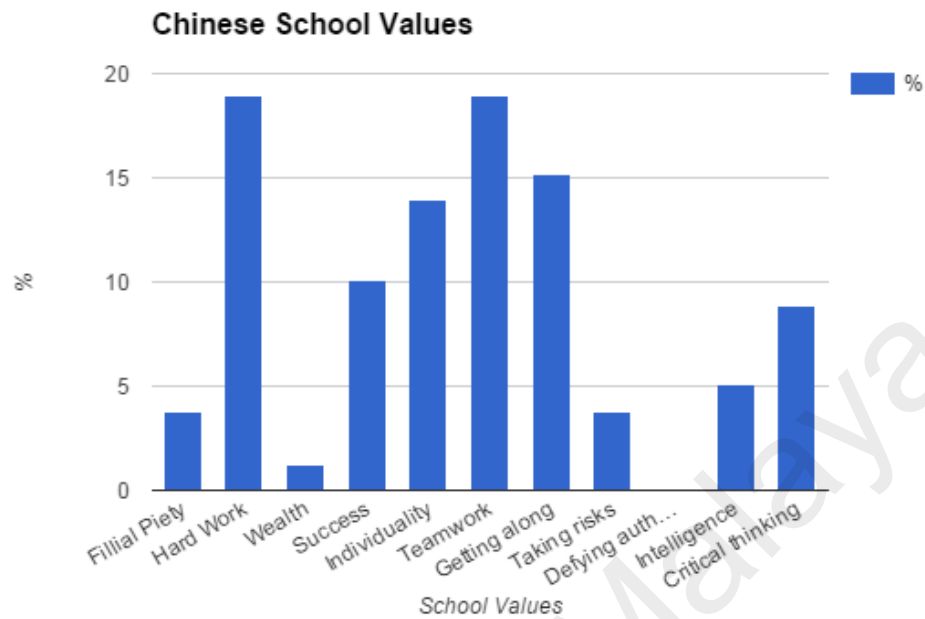
Figure 5.13 - Chinese-medium school values
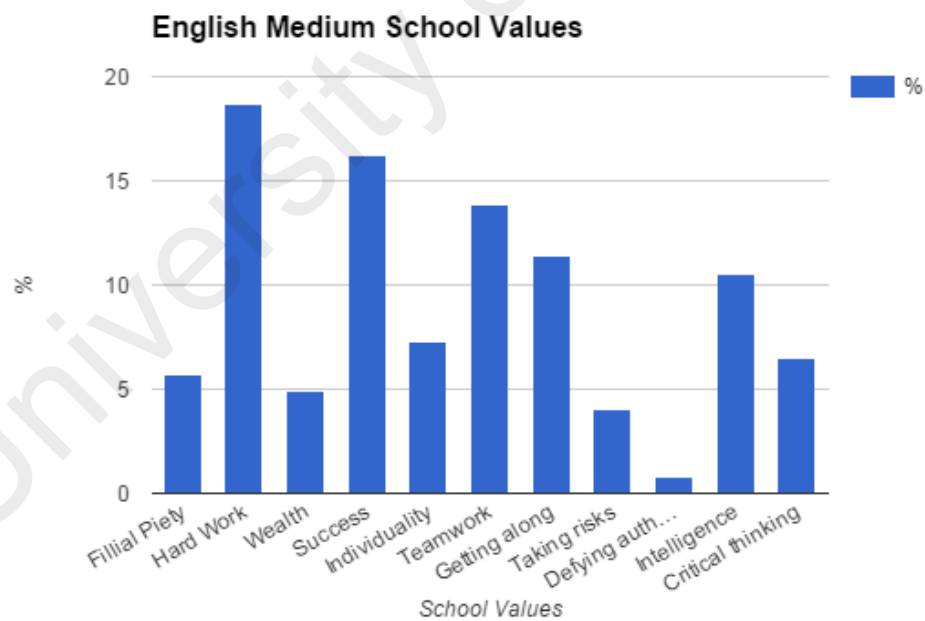
Figure 5.14 - English-medium school values

This question asked respondents 'Throughout your years in school, which of the following values were you most exposed to? (includes values from teachers, peers, school social activities, and textbooks)' It is about the guiding norms and values which respondents acquired during their primary and secondary school years, whether officially from the education syllabus (teachers and textbooks), or from the environment in school. (peers and school social activities). This is an attribute of institutionalised cultural capital.

Respondents were allowed to choose more than one response option. The response options included 'filial piety', 'hard work', 'wealth', 'success', 'individuality', 'teamwork', 'getting along', 'taking risks', 'defying authority', 'intelligence', and 'critical thinking'. The analysis for the options is given below.

I mapped these values along the dichotomy of Confucianism versus Western liberal democratic values, as outlined by Hu Shaohua (1997) in a comprehensive comparison of the two value systems. This is because there are two education mediums; of which Chinese schools are linked to Confucianism and English schools are linked to Western liberal democratic values.

Under the Confucian versus Western liberal democracy rubric, I classify the values as such:

Table 5.1 - Classification of values

Confucian Values	Western liberal democratic values
Filial piety	Individuality
Hard work	Taking risks
Team work	Defying authority
Getting along	Critical thinking
	Wealth
	Success

5.1.2.4.1   Filial Piety

According to Qin (2013), filial piety is one of the founding pillars of Confucianism that shapes Chinese people's mindset and lifestyle, which emphasizes the affection and duty of the children in parent-child relationships, where children are obliged to obey, support, and honour their parents. Hu (1997) states that Confucianism places a premium on families. As a Confucian value, filial piety has been heavily emphasised in Chinese education. This value can be acquired through Chinese education from teachers and textbooks and can also be practiced at home, and witnessed among peers. Thus it is a value which can be acquired and reinforced through more than one socialisation agent. In the Chinese-medium institution, 4 percent out of 60

respondents claimed that filial piety was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. In the English-medium institution, 6 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that filial piety was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. This shows that both groups are not that strongly committed to filial piety. This is an interesting observation because the belief that Chinese schools transmit the value of filial piety is disproved. Instead they are outdone by the English-educated group. Perhaps in the globalised era, with conflicting values transmitted in the mass media, such a value does not possess a strong influence on students from Chinese schools anymore. Generation Y in particular have been brought up to believe that they can achieve the best in life, contrary to their parents' generation who believed in working hard to earn a living. One syndrome of Generation Y is that they believe they are entitled to a good life, free of obligations. In this case filial piety is not an attractive concept because it entails having to put others' interests, such as their parents' before theirs. Notably, filial piety is not widely practiced among all groups, as they all belong to Generation Y.

5.1.2.4.2   Hard Work

Being hardworking is also another Confucian value, which means putting in the necessary amount of effort without taking shortcuts, to reach one's goal. According to Rainey (2010), Confucius used the analogy of a hardworking government official

in ancient China to inspire the people to be hardworking[39]. It is also a value which is heavily emphasised in Chinese education. In the Chinese-medium institution, 19 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'hard work' was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. In the English-medium institution, 19 percent also claimed' hard work' was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. There is not much difference in both groups, as this is also the most highly claimed value among all the values provided in the response options. Regardless of education medium, all respondents have adhered to being hardworking. While being hardworking is a noted Confucian value, it is not exempt from other cultural dimensions and continues to be a respected virtue.

5.1.2.4.3   Wealth

Wealth originally referred to "the condition of well-being" in Old English (Anielski 2003). In conventional modern-day economics, it is indicated by things such as gross domestic product, stock market indices and other financial indicators (Anielski 2003). Investment website Investopedia defines wealth as a measure of the value of all of the assets of worth owned by a person, community, company or country. In this study, the concept 'of 'wealth' is treated as a desire to accumulate more assets. Hu (1997) states that Confucianism has strong egalitarian tendencies, especially in socioeconomic terms. Thus the drive to acquire more wealth is not distinctly a Confucian value. The respondent's attitude of viewing this desire positively is the

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[39] Rainey, L.D. (2010) *Confucius and Confucianism: The Essentials.* John Wiley & Sons. pp.50

value discussed here. Wealth is not a Confucian value but may be considered an individualistic pursuit to better oneself. In the Chinese-medium institution, 1 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'wealth' was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. In the English-medium institution, 5 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'wealth' was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. Interestingly in both groups, most respondents did not appear to possess the value of desiring to accumulate wealth. This may be the result of socialisation agents who do not prioritise the individualistic pursuit of wealth as a value.

5.1.2.4.4   Success

Success is defined as the accomplishment of an aim or purpose by the Oxford Dictionary. Audit firm Accenture (2013) defines success as a desire to balance a successful career with a full life outside work, rather than possession of money. Hu (1997) states that individual liberty is one of the principles of democracy, and that Western democracy places an emphasis on political and civil equality, where enhancing economic and social equality has recently received more and more attention. Success in this instance here represents individual accomplishment. In the Chinese-medium institution, 10 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'success' was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. In the English-medium institution, 16 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'success' was their value acquired throughout their years in primary and secondary school. The English-educated respondents place more importance on success as a personal value.

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The Chinese-educated respondents place the second most importance on success as a personal value.

5.1.2.4.5 Individuality

The Western liberal democratic view of human beings is that they are egoistic (Hu 1997). Conversely, the Confucian assumption plays down this negative aspect (Hu 1997). Hofstede (1984, 1993) has shown that the national Chinese culture in China or Chinese-majority societies is 'collectivism' or 'low individualism' (Wong 2001). This would be a Western liberal democratic value instead of a Confucian one. An interesting reversal of expectations occurs here with 14 percent of the Chinese-educated respondents selecting this as a core value and only 7 percent of the English-educated respondents doing so. However, it is worth noting that even in Wong (2001)'s research on collectivism versus individualism at work in Chinese-majority countries, he challenged the stereotypical notion of this value dichotomy. It was acknowledged even then that the impact of industrialism had changed Chinese people's core values to some extent. In this case, it is likely that mass media values regarding individual success, such as those found in books, TV or movies may have affected Chinese-educated respondents' worldview.

5.1.2.4.6 Team work

Teamwork is defined by Scarnati (2001) as a cooperative process that allows ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results (Tarricone and Luca 2002). Teamwork also requires several sub-values to enable it to function smoothly, such as commitment to team success and shared goals, interdependence, interpersonal skills, and open communication (Tarricone and Luca 2002). 18 percent of the Chinese-educated respondents claimed this as their core value while 14 percent of the English-educated respondents did so. This mirrors the Confucian assumption of human beings' positive nature and the Western liberal democratic assumption of human beings' egoistic nature (Hu 1997).

5.1.2.4.7 Getting along with others

This value is a subset of the collection of values needed to make teamwork successful as defined above. In technical terms it is also known as interpersonal skills, which is defined as skills which one needs in order to communicate effectively with another person or a group of people (Rungapadiachy 1999, in Shepherd, Braham and Elston 2010). Hu (1997) states that in Confucianism, civic virtue is given premium importance, and that in social life it manifested as self-discipline and mutual respect. 15 percent of the Chinese-educated respondents claimed this value and 11 percent of the English-educated respondents did so. It is expected that the former would prioritise this value more given their education background.

5.1.2.4.8   Taking risks/Risk-loving

According to Beck (2006), modern society has become a risk society, as it is increasingly occupied with debating, preventing and managing risks. Economic theory assumes that human beings are naturally risk averse, though psychological studies have shown that people differ in their motivations towards risk (Zaleskiewicz 2001). Risk is integral to innovation and to advanced, complex societies and is a skill of enterprise (Rolfe 2010). Organisations today need employees who are capable in formulating good solutions to risk (Rolfe 2010). This implies individual achievement and is thus aligned towards Western liberal democratic values. Interestingly, both Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents do not claim this as a core value, with only 4 percent from each group doing so. Given Confucianism's acceptance and glorification of hierarchy (Hu 1997), this is an expected outcome for the Chinese-educated respondents.

5.1.2.4.9   Defying authority

As explained above, Confucianism prioritises hierarchy to maintain social order. Defiance of authority would therefore be counterproductive to maintaining a stable Confucian social system. This value is more suited to the Western liberal democratic paradigm, which preaches equality as a goal worth pursuing. Because it does not prioritise hierarchy, Western liberal democracy believes that in the pursuit of equality, it is possible for someone to defy the existing barriers. After all, according to Hu (1997), the essence of democracy is to select and control rulers. Expectedly,

none of the Chinese-educated respondents selected this value while only 1 percent of the English-educated respondents did so.

5.1.2.4.10   Intelligence

The classic Confucian view of a gentleman is to be a 'great scholar, an artist, and a very cultured person, knowledgeable about Chinese history, literature, philosophy, traditions, customs and the arts' (Han 2011). The emphasis on self-cultivation with regards to intelligence and education is evident, though not to the exclusion of other aspects of admirable character. Meanwhile Dewey (1935) noted that the originator of Western liberal democracy, ancient Greece, practiced the concept of 'free play of intelligence', which included freedom of thought, conscience, expression and communication (Thayer-Bacon 2006). In both value systems, intelligence is highly prized. However, it is measured differently where Confucianism's conception of intelligence is based on the mastery of symbols of 'Chineseness', denoting a reverence for the social system; while Western democracy's conception is based on realising the individual's full potential where the primacy of the individual lies over the state (Thayer-Bacon 2006). 5 percent of the Chinese-educated respondents claimed this core value while 11 percent of the English-educated respondents did so. Because 'intelligence' in modern-day parlance is commonly measured individually through intelligence quotient (IQ) tests such as the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, it is interpreted as an individualistic concept. This may be the reason why the English-educated respondents have a better affinity for this value.

5.1.2.4.11   Critical thinking

This value is also closely related to the one above, on intelligence. Critical thinking is a product of the freedom of thought championed by liberalists (Dewey 1935, in Thayer-Bacon 2006). Thus it cleanly fits the Western liberal democratic value paradigm. Interestingly 9 percent of the Chinese-educated respondents chose this value over only 6 percent of the English-educated respondents. However, this may be due to the Malaysian education system's emphasis on introducing critical thinking as an aspect of the national curriculum. The teaching of critical thinking in Malaysia started in the early 1990s with the introduction of critical and creative thinking skills into the integrated curriculum of primary and secondary schools, as well as higher education institutions (Norshima Zainal Shah 2011). This may have resulted in both groups acquiring critical thinking skills irrespective of their education medium.

5.1.2.4.12   Interviews

Chinese-educated respondents were then interviewed about the norms and values they acquired during their time in primary school. Through their responses, they displayed a high degree of collectivism, using phrases such as 'needing to associate with a group to avoid bullies', 'group work', 'conform to values', 'follow the instruction', 'Good kids get rewards, bad kids got punished', 'respect the elder people', 'good morality', 'respect the teachers and among student itself', a 'sense of community', It is noteworthy that besides being instilled with a sense of community, which is reinforced by values of respecting elders, following instructions, displaying

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high morality, and a sense of justice in reward and punishment, there is also the implication that if one fails to conform to any social group, they will be bullied. This goes to show that a strong sense of community is viewed as crucial for one's wellbeing. At the same time, another respondent mentioned that they are inculcated with the 'importance of preservation of Chinese language', thus depicting a high level of identification with Chineseness based on language.

Confucianism has often been attributed to collectivist societies. Hofstede (1984) classified Chinese-majority societies such as China, Taiwan and Singapore as collectivist, and this was echoed by many others such as Leung and Bond (1984), Shenkar and Ronen (1987), and Lockett (1988) who found a strong group orientation particularly in China (Wong 2001). The influence of looking towards mainland China may have been pivotal in educating local ethnic Chinese towards embracing similar group orientations.

English-educated respondents were also interviewed about the norms and values acquired through primary school. Responses were more varied here, including such epithets as 'don't stand out, keep a low profile and yet find interesting (somewhat discreet) ways to rebel'. This respondent demonstrated that it was better for social survival to not draw attention to oneself, and this may allow them to get away with breaking the rules, or in this case the norms which they may not agree with. Clearly there is some distaste for 'following instructions' in the collectivist sense, and keeping a low profile helps them to maintain a conformist image in the face of school regulations without inwardly acquiescing with the norms. Another interesting

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excerpt offered by another respondent was regarding the use of language other than the international lingua franca, English, and the national language of Malaysia, Malay: 'Students were infamously fined 50 cents if they were caught speaking any language other than Malay or English'. This demonstrates the scenario in non-vernacular language schools, where if one were to speak a vernacular language such as Chinese, they would be fined. They are only allowed to speak the official languages used in the medium of instruction which are English and Malay. Such a rule would not be found in vernacular language schools, and neither would the use of English or Malay be outlawed. This certainly prevents students from speaking in the Chinese language and thus would not lead to a high level of identification with the Chinese language during school hours.

Another respondent described their school environment as having a 'very westernised culture, with a mix of tradition', while one participant who attended an American independent Christian school mentioned they experienced 'flexibility and experimental learning' and 'religious values instilled since it was a Protestant school as well'. Because they attended Western-style schools which were operating in Malaysia, they had acquired Western liberal democratic norms but at the same time were continuously exposed to local traditions. Thus they were socialised to identify with both Western (and in one case Protestant) values as well as local ones. They did not identify with mainland China nor with the Chinese language.

Respondents also displayed a lack of group orientation. A respondent explained 'I was quite distanced from society from school as a whole and stuck to 1-2 close friends, thus was generally unaffected by the usual student 'hierarchy' or cliques'. They indicated that they did not feel compelled to fit in with simply anyone just because others did, and chose friends based on common interests. There was no desire to be part of a group just to avoid bullies like in the Chinese primary school. One notable reason for this is likely because 'there was a fairly well-rounded selection of extra-curricular activities and it was a generally balanced public schooling environment', as one respondent claimed, which enabled them to form their own identities independent of peer groups which may be formed solely based on popularity. As respondents were able to find various outlets to express themselves given the wide range of extracurricular activities, they did not feel pressured to conform to only one set of values. They acquired a more omnivorous set of tastes.

5.1.3   PEERS

5.1.3.1   LANGUAGE OF INTIMACY AMONG PEERS
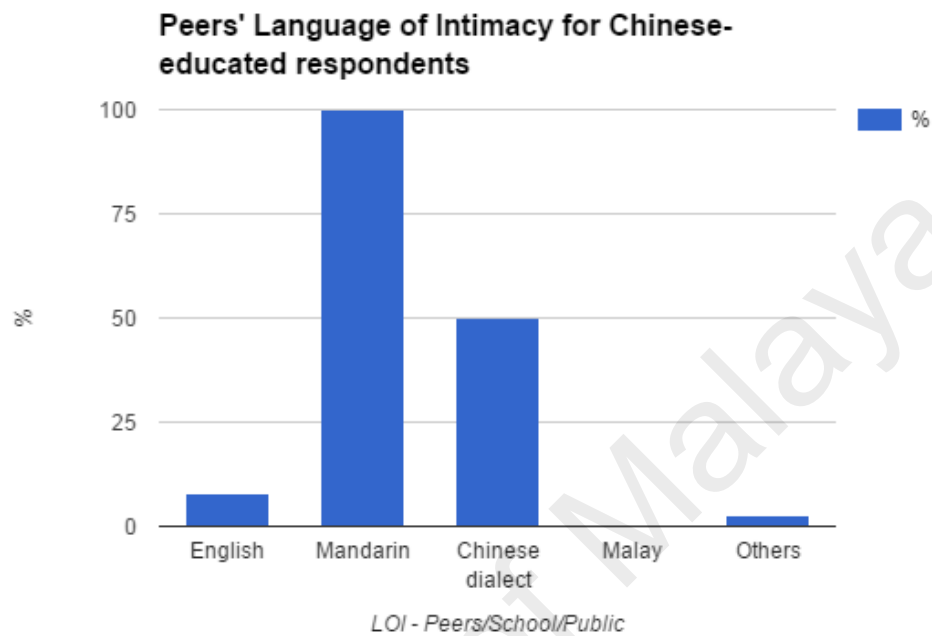
Figure 5.15 - Peers' Language of Intimacy for Chinese-educated respondents
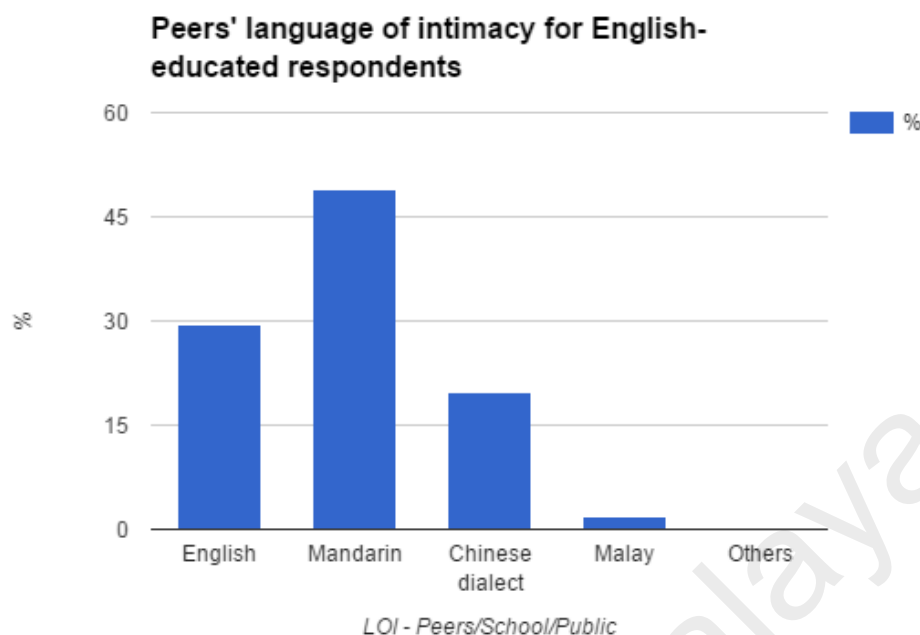
Figure 5.16 - Peers' language of intimacy for English-educated respondents

This question asked respondents 'What language do your peers speak (mostly)?' Respondents were allowed to choose more than one option. It is about the language of intimacy, or language of choice the respondents' peers speak at home, including but not limited to the respondent. The terms 'language of intimacy' and 'language of literacy' were coined by Tan Chee Beng (1997) to denote the difference between language spoken in informal settings, usually with family or peers; and language used in formal settings, such as in school or at work. This language is believed to have influenced the respondent because of exposure to their surroundings on a frequent basis. It increases the likelihood that the respondents will start identifying with this language and thinking in it. There are five options provided for this

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response, which are 'English', 'Mandarin', 'Chinese dialect', 'Malay', and 'others'. The analysis for the options is given below.

5.1.3.1.1   English

In the Chinese-medium institution, 2 percent out of 60 respondents claimed their peers spoke most commonly in English. In the English-medium institution, 29 percent out of 60 respondents claimed their peers spoke most commonly in English. In the English-medium institution, around half of the respondents claimed their peers spoke English most commonly. In the Chinese-medium institution, close to none of the respondents claimed their peers spoke English most commonly. This shows that Chinese-educated respondents tend to spend time with peers who do not speak English commonly. Among the English-educated group, only around half of the respondents spent time with English-speaking peers. They may have spent time with peers who commonly spoke other languages. The Chinese-educated appear to prefer the company of peers who speak the same language as their families do; while the non-Chinese educated do not appear to have such a strong preference. This is perhaps due to the reliance that the Chinese have on their language, as a factor which shapes their social identity. Particularly for the Chinese-educated, the mission to uphold the linguistic identification is strong. This is not inculcated so strongly among those who were not Chinese-educated, as the school they attended did not emphasise this identification. Thus they were not searching for peers who would reflexively engage in this process of upholding the Chinese language, but pursued other reasons for making friends.

5.1.3.1.2   **Mandarin**

In the Chinese-medium institution, 100 percent out of 60 respondents claimed their peers spoke most commonly in Mandarin. In the English-medium institution, 49 percent out of 60 respondents claimed their peers spoke most commonly in Mandarin. This shows that across the two groups, most Chinese-educated respondents have peers who speak most commonly in Mandarin, thus increasing the socialisation impact upon them, resulting in a greater frequency of using the Mandarin language. Meanwhile among the English-educated group about half of the respondents' peers spoke most commonly in Mandarin. Thus not all respondents spent time with Mandarin-speaking peers, instead spending time with peers who commonly spoke in other languages.

5.1.3.1.3   **Chinese Dialect**

In the Chinese-medium institution, 50 percent out of 60 respondents, which is half of the group, claimed their peers spoke most commonly in Chinese dialects. In the English-medium institution, 20 percent out of 60 respondents, which is one third of the group, claimed their peers spoke most commonly in Chinese dialects. This shows that across the two groups, most of the Chinese-educated respondents have peers who speak most commonly in Chinese dialects. Half of the Chinese-educated respondents' peers speak Chinese dialects often, and one third of the English-educated respondents' peers speak Chinese dialects often. There is strong indication that Chinese-educated respondents tend to spend time with Chinese dialect speaking

peers. This again may be due to their strong identification and desire to uphold the Chinese language, even if in this case it is with dialects, which are variations of the same language. Again, the need to identify with one's mother tongue is not so strongly observed among the non-Chinese educated respondents.

5.1.3.2.4 Malay

In the Chinese-medium institution, none of the respondents claimed their peers spoke commonly in the Malay language. In the English-medium institution, 2 percent out of the 60 respondents claimed their peers spoke commonly in the Malay language. As observed with the respondents' family language of intimacy, Chinese-educated respondents tend to spend time with peers who do not commonly speak the Malay language. Even in the case of the English-educated, only a very small number spend time with peers who commonly speak the Malay language. Again, in the case of the Chinese-educated, they appear to identify strongly with the Chinese language, whether Mandarin or Chinese dialects. They do not identify strongly with the national language. The same is observed with the English-educated, who do not identify strongly with the national language.

5.1.3.2.5 Others

An additional option, 'others', was provided to address the possibility that respondents' peers may have commonly conversed in other languages. While the actual language is not known, the purpose of this option is to discover if

respondents' peers converse in other languages apart from what has already been provided in the existing options. This may help with further or future research. However only between none to 3 percent from each group chose this option, which shows that the researcher's close-ended survey options correctly estimated the respondents' peers language of intimacy.

5.1.3.3 ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF PEER GROUP
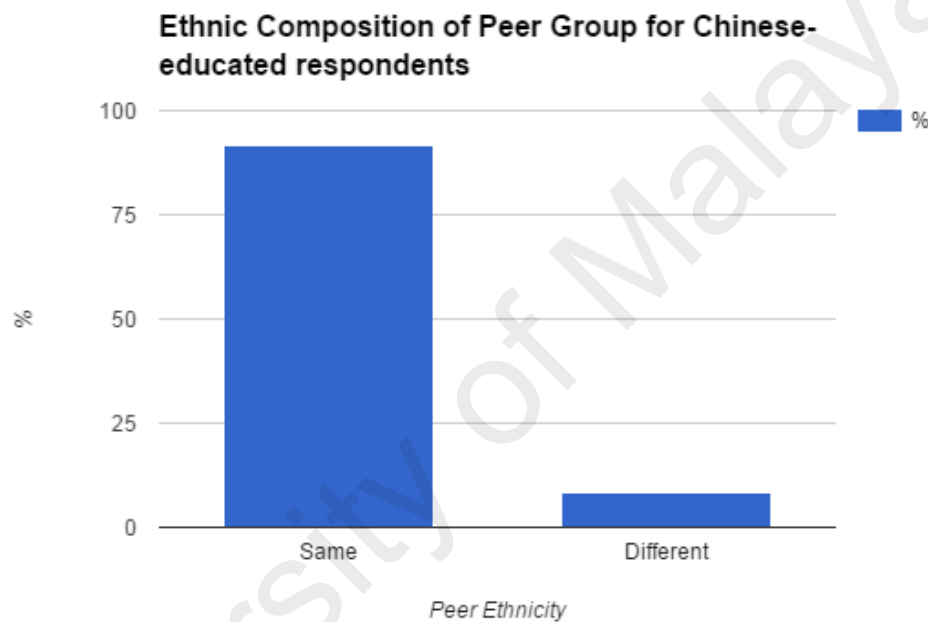
Figure 5.17 - Ethnic Composition of Peer Group for Chinese-educated respondents
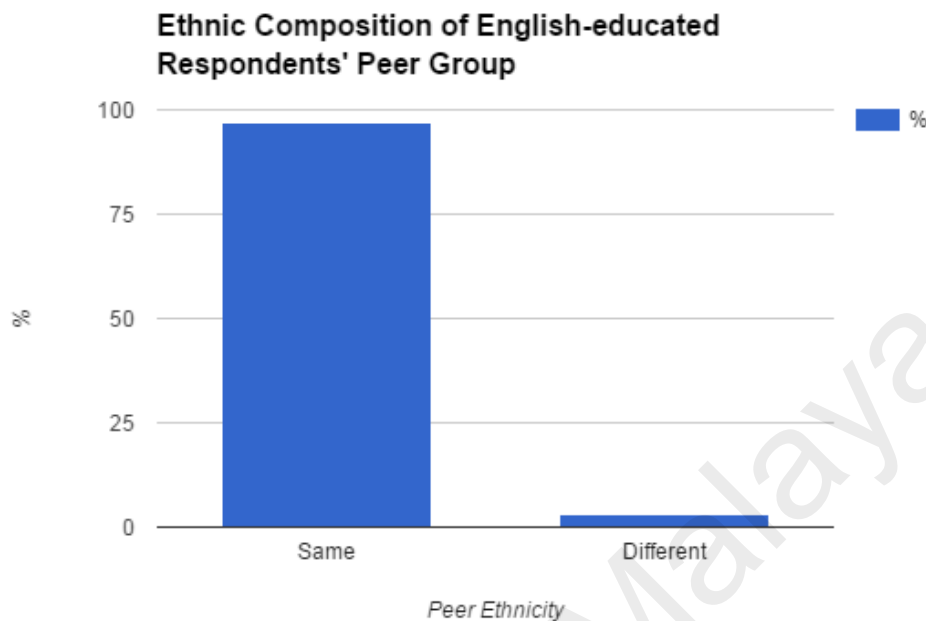
Figure 5.18 - Ethnic composition of peer group for English-educated respondents

Social capital is a concept originally identified by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, defined as the actual or potential resources accrued through one's network of more or less institutionalised relationships (Knudsen et. al.). Later on, the political scientist Robert Putnam re-examined the notion, redefining it as features of social organisation like norms and networks which improve society's efficiency through coordinated actions, also regarded as norms of reciprocity (Putnam, 2000 in Knudsen et. al.). Putnam differentiated two kinds of social capital, the bridging and the bonding social capital. Bridging social capital is defined as outward looking ties that encompass people across diverse social cleavages, while bonding social capital is defined as inward looking connections that promote in-group solidarity and reinforce

exclusive identities and homogeneous groups (Putnam, 2000 in Knudsen et.al). Individuals who are confined by bonding social capital may display a strong ethnic identification which leads them towards exclusivity to outsiders, thus giving themselves insular characteristics. Individuals who possess bridging social capital, on the other hand may be predisposed stronger towards cosmopolitanism and endeavour towards going beyond ethnic identification boundaries to experience a variety of cultures. My study thus assesses the type of social capital possessed by Chinese-medium and English-medium educated Malaysian Chinese, to note if the ethnic identification formerly present in Chinese-medium schools continue to provide bonding social capital, and likewise for the other.

Scholars like Knudsen, Florida and Rousseau have noted the difficulty of operationalising a measurement of social capital. As Putnam had provided a multidimensional breakdown of social capital made up of social ties, connections, networks, and norms, Knudsen et. al. conceived a multidimensional approach to operationalising social capital, in their Social Capital Benchmark Survey, which covered topics ranging from politics, religion, social involvement and engagement, attitudes towards contemporary social issues, and personal relationships.

In the case of the English-educated respondents, the importance of bonding social capital is also witnessed, because the third most common reason for using social media was peer influence, and impressing others. These 'peers' are the same 'offline peers' whose ethnicity is depicted in Figures 5 and 6, where the respondents' reply to the question, "Are more than fifty percent of your peers of the same ethnicity as

yourself?" This question revolves around the peers respondents spend their time with in day-to-day life.

Two options were provided for the response, which were 'Yes' and 'No'. Respondents either agreed or disagreed with the statement that more than 50 percent of their peers were from the same ethnic group. The following discusses their orientations towards making 'real-life', offline friends.

5.1.3.3.1   **'Same Ethnicity': My Peer Group is Ethnically Similar**

In the Chinese-medium institution, 91 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that more than 50 percent of their peers were from the same ethnic group. In the English-medium institution, 99 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that more than 50 percent of their peers were from the same ethnic group. In both cases, the respondents claimed that more than 50 percent of their peers were from the same ethnic group. This indicates that in general the Malaysian Chinese youth in this study have a high preference for mixing with peers of the same ethnicity. While this opens a possibility that they do have peers from other ethnic groups, it is less than half of their closest friends, and thus most of their socialised norms and values are received from peers of the same ethnic group. Thus, if respondents also came from a Chinese-educated background, with a family that speaks most commonly in Chinese, and they spend most of their time with peers who do the same, they are consistent in their lifelong values of embracing 'Chineseness'. This 'Chineseness' is expressed through ethnic group affiliation, language, and education, but not so strongly through

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Confucian values such as filial piety. However, in all groups, there is a small minority who claim that more than 50 percent of their friends are of a different ethnicity.

5.1.3.3.2   'Different Ethnicity': My Peer Group is Ethnically Diverse

In the Chinese-medium institution, 9 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that more than 50 percent of their peer group are of a different ethnicity. In the English-medium institution, 2 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that more than 50 percent of their peer group are of a different ethnicity. This shows that the English-educated respondents are interestingly the most insular in their choice of peers, preferring to stick to mixing with members of their own ethnic group. This is also surprising as this institution accepts foreign students from many world regions – including Southeast Asia, East Asia, West Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and parts of Europe. However, the Chinese-educated are slightly less insular, despite the usual stereotype of pragmatism attached to them. Their institution however, does not have such a global student mix as the English-medium institution, thus limiting their opportunity to choose peers of a different ethnicity.

The assumption was that in multicultural Malaysia, especially in the capital city, respondents would develop friendships with individuals of different ethnicities. As migrants from abroad intermingle with the local people, and the English language is spoken widely, there is no insurmountable barrier for this to happen.

We can thus see that the respondents' high expectations for seeing themselves as global citizens surprisingly do not match their social networking reality. While social media may enable people to build 'friendships' which are purely online, this does not translate into real-world interaction. Globalisation theorists advocate the existence of a global phenomenology in which citizens all over the world may be led to share the same frames of reference as a result of such social networking technologies. While this may indeed occur through the exchange of messages online, it can only be seen on a superficial basis. When faced with reality, the preferences of individuals return to what is familiar, thus identification with ethnicity.

It appears that primordial identification with ethnic markers continue to withhold Malaysian Chinese youth from attaining truly bridging social capital. Nonetheless, this is not a generalisation as it applies only to a very small subset of the population. The good news is that the respondents do possess an interest in embracing cosmopolitanism. This may due to messages promoting it as a global ideal, evidently regardless of education medium. Yet respondents remain conflicted between ethnic identification and these global ideals that are increasingly being sung through the mass media.

However, this generation may socialise their children or future generations into embracing these global ideals. With advanced technology, the influence of global phenomenologies may yet outweigh the influence of longstanding ethnic traditions. With more people across the world learning and speaking the Chinese language, language will not continue to separate identities. Alternatively, there may be

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hybridisation of phenomenologies which may also shift the relations of social capital. In such a climate, the acquisition of bridging social capital may well be inevitable.

5.1.3.4   PEERS' MOST COMMON CONVERSATION TOPIC
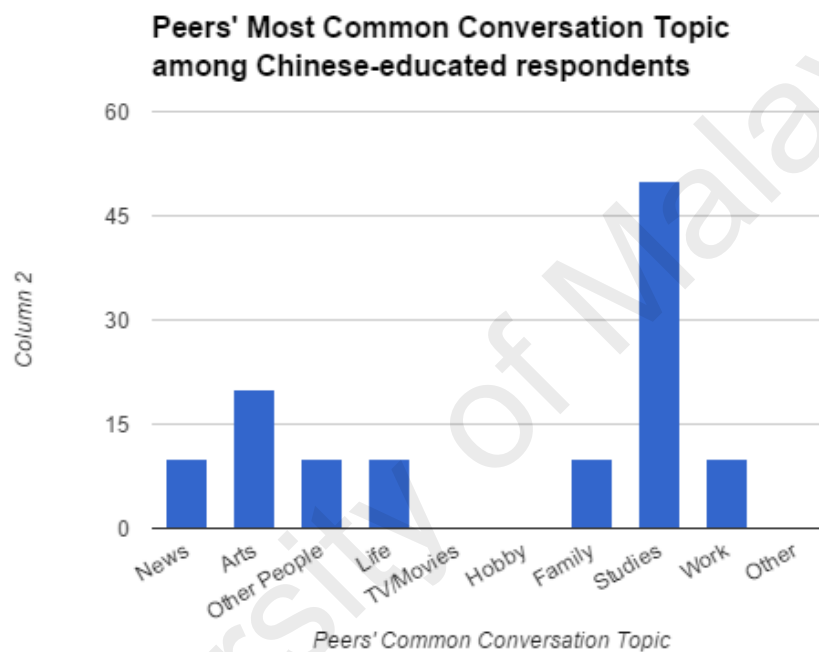
Figure 5.19 - Most common conversation topic among peers for Chinese-educated respondents
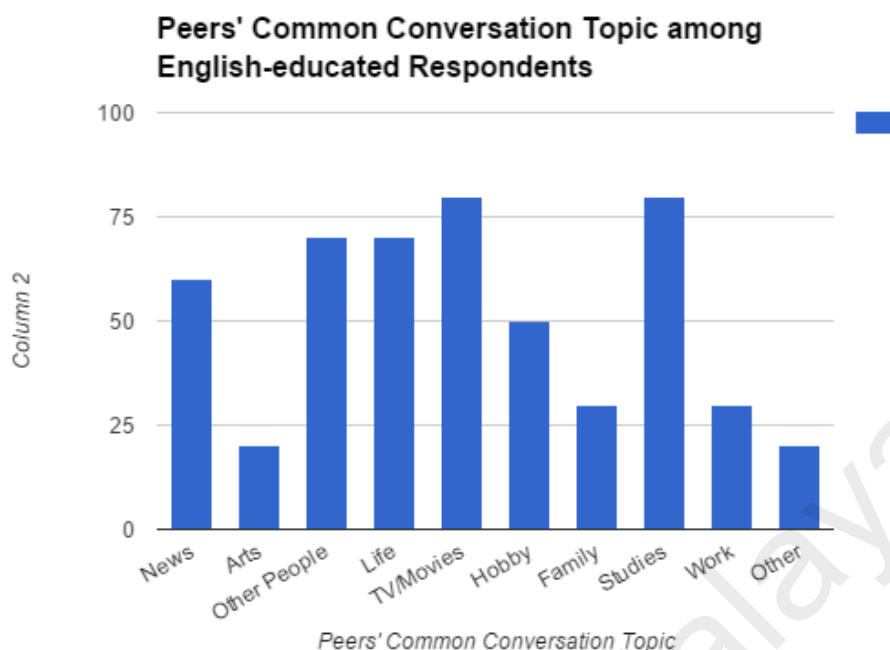
Figure 5.20 - Most common conversation topic among peers for English-educated respondents

Among both groups, the English-educated respondents possess a more diverse range of conversation topics compared to the Chinese-educated respondents. A priority for the Chinese-educated respondents' peers is conversing about studies, which is also shared by the English-educated respondents, showing that both groups highly value academic success. This may also indicate that education is a strong socialisation agent, as its influence seeps into peer socialisation as well. However, for the English-educated respondents' peers, they are also interested in many other topics, such as entertainment (TV, movies) and social life (other people, their own lives, and news/current events).

5.1.4   MASS MEDIA

5.1.4.1   SOURCE OF RESPONDENT'S FASHION IDEAS
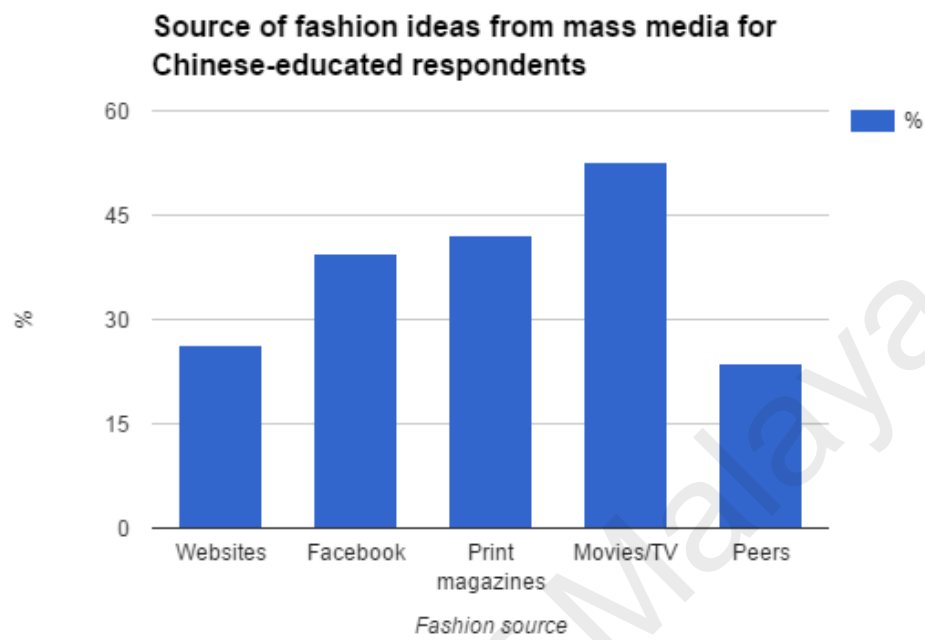
Figure 5.21 - Source of respondent's fashion ideas
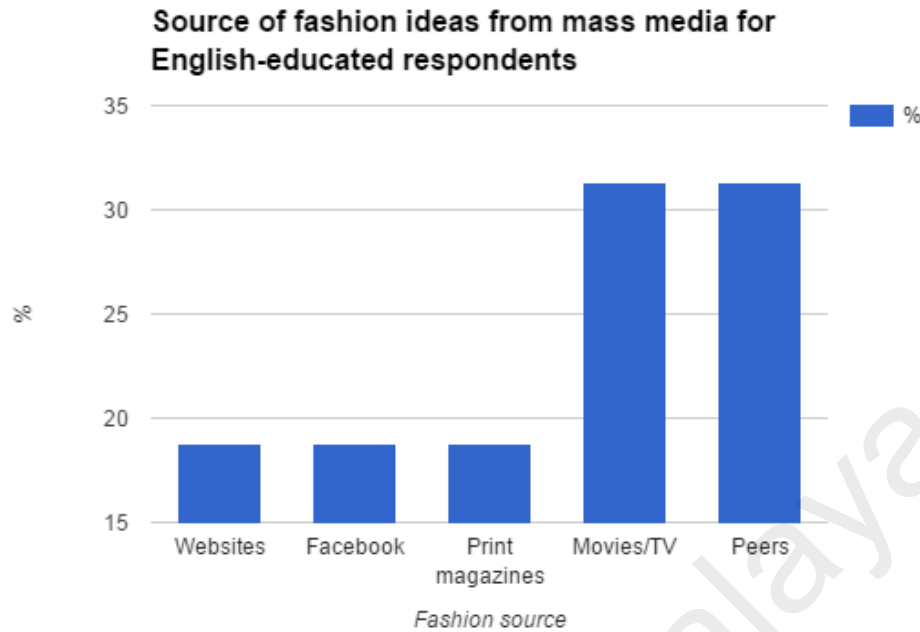
Figure 5.22 - Source of respondent's fashion ideas

This question asked respondents 'where do you get your fashion ideas?' It is about the source of values from socialisation agents which affects the respondent's fashion choice. Fashion style choice is a major indicator of the way the respondent wishes to present themselves and is used here as an example of the effect of socialisation values. The respondent's fashion taste will be discussed in Chapter 5 on cultural capital tastes. Among the response options, mass media options such as 'certain websites', 'Facebook', 'print magazines', 'movies/TV programmes and dramas', and 'peers'. All of the response options are on mass media, excluding the last option 'peers'. Only peers and mass media were included as response options because the cultural capital one obtains is usually displayed as self-presentation to impress one's

peers, while the mass media is responsible for communicating these trends and broadcasting one's tastes to the wider public. The options are explained below.

5.1.4.1.1 Websites

In the Chinese-medium institution, 25 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'websites' influenced their fashion ideas. In the English-medium institution, 18 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'websites' influenced their fashion ideas.

5.1.4.1.2 Facebook

In the Chinese-medium institution, 40 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'Facebook' influenced their fashion ideas. In the English-medium institution, 18 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'Facebook' influenced their fashion ideas.

5.1.4.1.3 Print Magazines

In the Chinese-medium institution, 41 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'print magazines' influenced their fashion ideas. In the English-medium institution, 19 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'print magazines' influenced their fashion ideas.

5.1.4.1.4 Movies/TV

In the Chinese-medium institution, 51 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'movies/TV' influenced their fashion ideas. In the English-medium institution, 31 percent claimed 'movies/TV' influenced their fashion ideas.

5.1.4.1.5   **Peers**

In the Chinese-medium institution, 22 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'peers' influenced their fashion ideas. In the English-medium institution, 31 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'peers' influenced their fashion ideas.
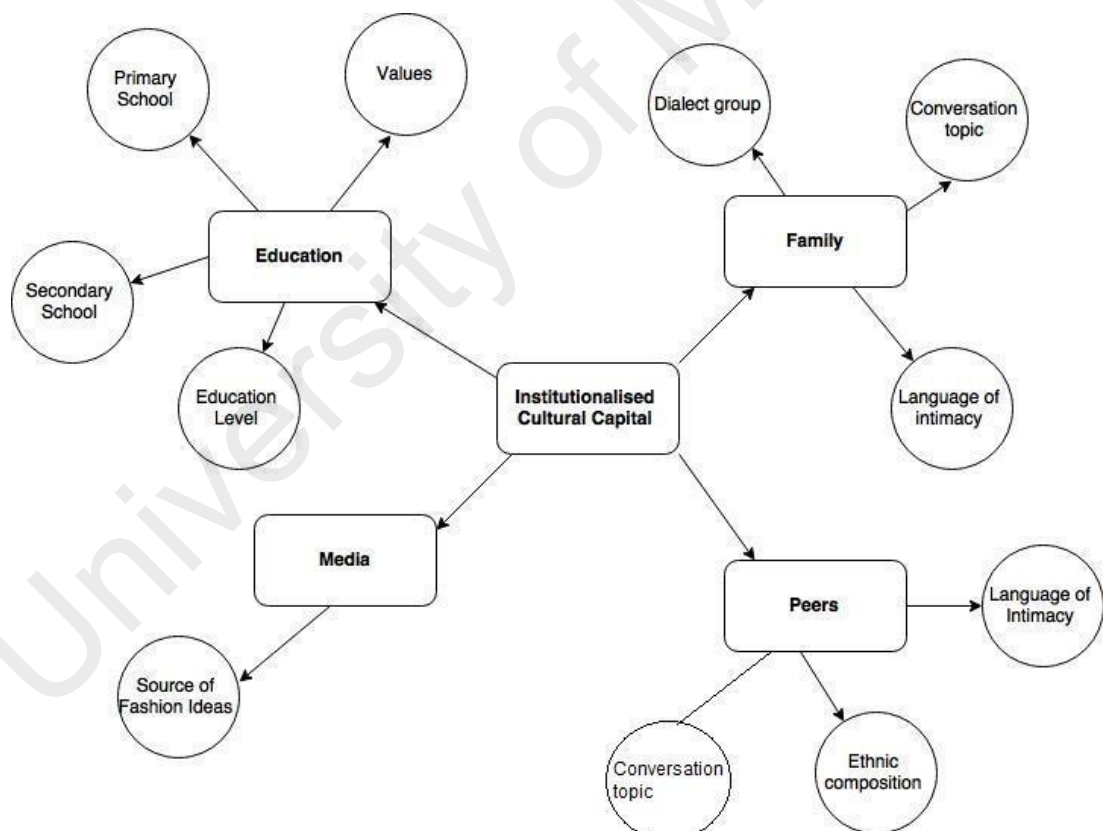
Figure 5.23 - Institutionalised Cultural Capital

In summary, there are four main social institutions which also function as socialisation agents, and these are indicated by the aspect of institutionalised cultural capital. These are the family, peers, education and mass media. Two groups were compared, which are the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese. The former were largely of the Hokkien dialect group, went to SRJKC and SMK, value teamwork strongly, speak Mandarin with family and peers, and mix largely with members of the same ethnic group, getting fashion inspiration from movies and TV. The latter were largely from the Cantonese dialect group, attended SRK and SMK, value hard work strongly, speak Mandarin with family and peers, mix with peers of the same ethnic group, and get fashion inspiration from movies, TV, and peers. Notably, both groups do speak Mandarin as a language of intimacy. The main difference is in terms of value orientation. The Chinese-educated view the value of 'teamwork' most strongly, indicating collectivism, whereas the English-educated view 'hard work' as the most important value, which in itself could refer to individualistic drive towards achievement. There is a slight dichotomy of Confucian versus Western liberal democratic values inherent in the respondents' socialisation process. It is worth noting however. that because a few respondents who attended Chinese-language primary school had later on switched to National Secondary School (which is non-Chinese), some influence of Chinese-education values still remain.

CHAPTER 6

OBJECTIFIED CULTURAL CAPITAL AMONG THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE

6.0   INTRODUCTION

There are four major tenets of subculture, which Hebdige (1979) identified as self-adornment or fashion, activity, locale, and type of music. For Hebdige (2012) any public presentation should ideally include 'sound, image, and performative gestures' as well. Because subculture is identified by the way its members present themselves differently in relation to the mainstream culture, its norms, values, tastes, and meanings behind social actions need to be studied. These are also similar to the three aspects of cultural capital.

This section outlines the respondents' objectified cultural capital, which is indicated as respondents' consumption of commodities. This is their taste in cultural objects or artefacts. The norms and values respondents receive from their institutionalised cultural capital will influence their consumption tastes. This section includes their fashion sense, leisurely pursuits, choice of hangout spot, and preference in mass media.

The research question answered in this section is whether there is any difference in consumption behaviour among respondents who attended Chinese-medium schools and English-medium schools.

6.1 MASS MEDIA

Mass media is a platform which broadcasts content to a massive audience. It is usually a secondary socialisation agent, complementing the family, peers, and in most cases, basic education. An individual needs to learn basic skills from all the latter three before they are able to understand mass media content. Mass media is one of the platforms through which their possession of cultural capital is expressed.

In the sociological literature, mass media is often cited as one of the agents of socialisation, alongside other agents such as family, peers, and education. The effect of mass media socialisation has in fact been said to be greater than other socialisation agents like the family or school (Chatee, et al., 1977; Niemi and Sobieszek, 1977; in Kononova et al, 2011). The socialisation of adolescents in particular, occurs through their mass media usage, which incorporates the functions of entertainment and identity formation among others (Arnett, 1995). Unlike the family or education, youth have greater autonomy in their use of mass media in self-socialisation (Arnett, 1995).

However, mass media is unique in that it functions both as socialising agent as well as site of cultural capital preference (Straubhaar, 2001). In terms of socialisation, Straubhaar notes the importance of economic resources in forming cultural capital

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tastes. Particularly in the case of mass media tastes, this argument posits that upper and middle class individuals would have a wider range of cultural capital choices due to their more generous possession of resources. One example of this is how higher education opens up a greater berth of cultural capital choices on a global scale (Straubhaar, 2001).

The reason for the choice of specific examples as response options in the questions on mass media is in order to avoid confusion. Asking respondents to choose between an English-language magazine about lifestyle and a Chinese-language magazine on the same topic may be confusing for the respondent's imagination, as opposed to recollecting actual experience. For this purpose I have used real-life examples instead. However, for the purpose of analysis, I have categorised them by language, genre, and content. Mayhap if I choose to conduct a similar study in the future, I would have to substitute the type of mass media according to a similar real-life example which fits the same language, genre, and content.

This section can be divided into a few mainstream forms of mass media, which are commonly accessed by most city-dwellers today. Youth are likely to consume content from these channels, which include – movies, television, music, online and print newspapers, websites, books, and magazines. In this age which is heavily governed by the use of social media, this element needs to be incorporated as well, for ecological validity.

6.1.1 MOVIES
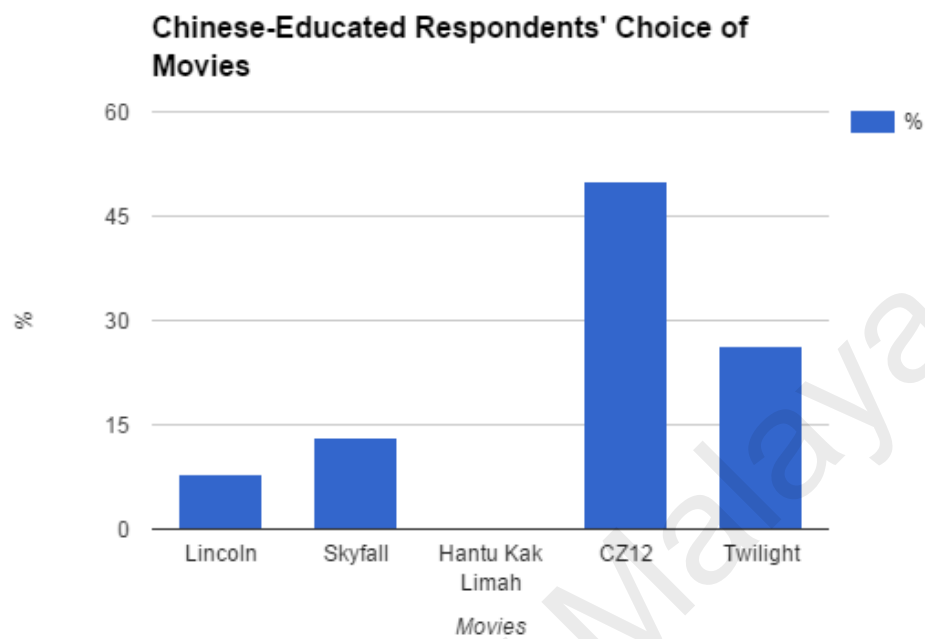
Figure 6.1 - Chinese-educated respondents' choice of movies
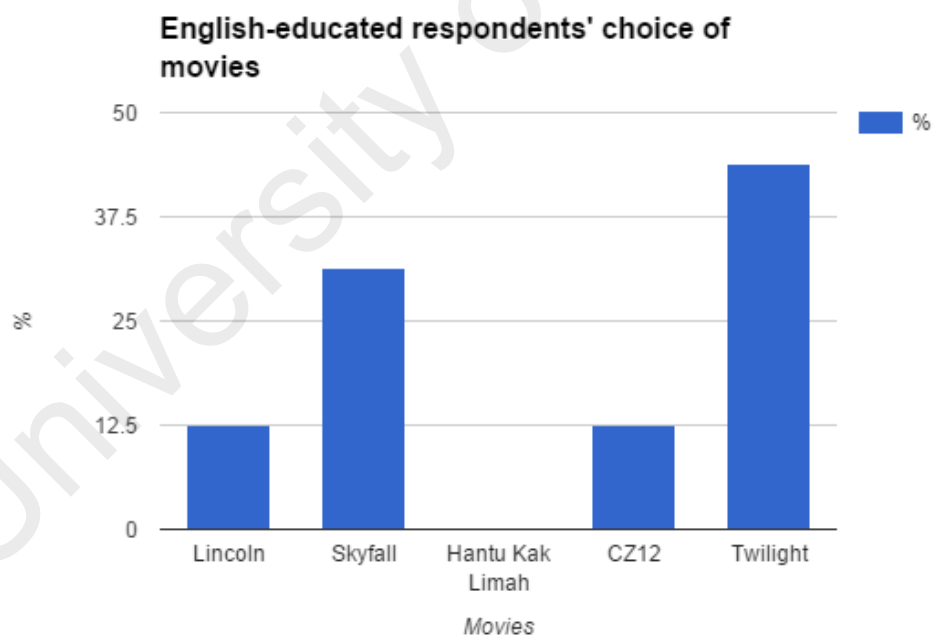
Figure 6.2 - English-educated respondents' choice of movies

Though Hebdige (1979) notably outlined music taste as one of the elements of subcultural style, I had extended my study to include tastes in mass media, after Hoggart (1957)'s Uses of Literacy, where tastes in reading material reflected one's social position. This question asked respondents 'if you were in the cinema and the following movies are the only available ones, which would you prefer to watch? (Please select ONE only)'. It is about the language, genre, and content of the movie respondents would choose to watch if they had a limited preference. I chose movies that were screened before the start of this study, which is September 2012 or before the administering of the survey, which was the first half of 2013, so that the maximum number of respondents would have been exposed to it by the time of the survey. This was to avoid the situation where people did not know what the movie was about and therefore unable to provide a choice of response. Thus the movies included in the response options were all broadcast throughout the year 2012. The response options are explained below.

Table 6.1 - Classification of Movies by Language, Genre, and Content

MOVIE	LANGUAGE	GENRE	CONTENT
1. Lincoln	English	Biopic	History, Political
2. Skyfall	English	Thriller, Action	Conspiracy, Political
3. Hantu Kak	Malay	Horror Comedy	Supernatural

Limah			
4. CZ12	Chinese	Action, Adventure	Fantasy, History, Treasure Hunt
5. Twilight	English	Romance	Vampires, Teenagers

6.1.1.1   Lincoln

Lincoln is an English-language biopic movie made in 2012 about the first American president, Abraham Lincoln. The Internet Movie Database (IMDB) provides the following synopsis:

> "As the Civil War continues to rage, America's president struggles with continuing carnage on the battlefield and as he fights with many inside his own cabinet on the decision to emancipate the slaves"[40].

The movie involves historical and political themes, and is likely to appeal to those who are interested in both topics, as well as those who prefer serious movies. The respondent who chooses this movie out of all options will be interested in American history and politics, leadership issues, and the biography of a great historical figure.

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[40] 'Lincoln'. *Internet Movie Database*. http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0443272/. Because of the variety of mass media forms, such as movies, television and music, in which there are no academic articles written on, Wiki sources are referenced.

They may also not be impulsive viewers as such a movie requires deep concentration and some prior historical knowledge. They also prefer to watch a movie in the English language. Slightly more English-educated respondents chose this film compared to Chinese-educated respondents, although in general not many chose it. Both groups did not appear to be interested in this film.

6.1.1.2   **Skyfall**

Skyfall is an English-language thriller movie made in 2012 about the exploits of British secret intelligence agent James Bond. The British secret intelligence is being terrorized by a cybercriminal whom Bond must hunt down across the globe. The Internet Movie Database (IMDB) provides the following synopsis:

> "Bond's loyalty to M is tested when her past comes back to haunt her. Whilst MI6 comes under attack, 007 must track down and destroy the threat, no matter how personal the cost"[41].

The movie involves conspiracy, politics, and action, and is likely to appeal to those who are interested in global politics, action and suspense. The respondent who chooses this movie out of all options will be interested in British politics, international relations, cybercrime (a plot device in this installation of the Bond series), and slickly choreographed action scenes, involving a lot of carnage. Respondents who choose this movie out of all options may be slightly impulsive

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[41] 'Skyfall'. *Internet Movie Database.* http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1074638/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

viewers, but also prone to some degree of deep concentration and some knowledge of global issues and cybercrime. They also prefer to watch a movie in the English language. More English-educated respondents chose this film compared to Chinese-educated respondents, showing a language preference.

6.1.1.3 Hantu Kak Limah

Hantu Kak Limah is a Malay-language horror comedy movie made in 2012 about a village terrorised by a ghost[42]. It is part of a series based on the ghost of Kak Limah, an old lady. The Malay version of Wikipedia, which is the only comprehensive resource on this movie, provides the following synopsis:

> "*Hantu Kak Limah Balik Rumah ialah sebuah filem komedi seram [...] berlatarbelakangkan suasana Kampung Pisang selepas kejadian Zombie. Tetapi filem ini bukan kesinambungan kepada filem Zombie Kampung Pisang, tetapi lebih terarah kepada kejadian yang berlaku di Kampung Pisang*".

My translation is as follows:

> "The film Hantu Kak Limah Balik Rumah (The Ghost of Kak Limah Returns Home) is a horror comedy film based on Kampung Pisang (Banana Village) after a zombie breakout. However this is not a continuation of the previous

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[42] 'Hantu Kak Limah Balik Rumah'. *Internet Movie Database.* http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1787073/

film Zombie Kampung Pisang (Banana Village Zombie), but is focused on events that happen in Kampung Pisang"[43].

The movie involves supernatural events such as ghosts and zombies, presented in a humorous rather than terrifying way. This is a staple of local horror films. This is likely to appeal to those who like supernatural movies and comedy. It may not appeal to hardcore fans of horror films such as the American film The Exorcist or the Japanese film Ringu, which are serious horror films intended to scare or to question reality. The respondent who chooses this movie out of all the options may be impulsive viewers who are seeking to entertain themselves by having a good laugh. They also prefer to watch a movie in the Malay language. From both groups, almost no one chose this film.

6.1.1.4   Chinese Zodiac 12 (CZ12)

CZ12 is a Chinese-language adventure movie about the quest to search for mystical artefacts from China. The Internet Movie Database (IMDB) provides the following synopsis:

"A man searches the world for a set of mystic artefacts - 12 bronze heads of the animals from the Chinese zodiac"[44].

[43] 'Hantu Kak Limah Balik Rumah (filem)'.
https://ms.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hantu_Kak_Limah_Balik_Rumah_(filem)
[44] 'Chinese Zodiac 12'. *Internet Movie Database*.
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1424310/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

The movie involves an action-adventure romp around the world by a team of relic hunters to search for and acquire 12 mystical artefacts based on the Chinese zodiac. This is likely to appeal to viewers who enjoy less serious plots with a higher concentration on special effects, action and adventure. Respondents who chose this movie out of all other options would be impulsive viewers who are seeking to entertain themselves by watching something exciting. They also prefer to watch a movie in the Chinese language. The majority of Chinese-educated respondents denoted a preference for this film, showing a language preference.

6.1.1.5   Twilight

Twilight: Breaking Dawn is an English-language fantasy movie made in 2012 about one teenager's involvement in the world of vampires and her romance with vampire Edward. The Internet Movie Database (IMDB) provides the following synopsis:

"A teenage girl risks everything when she falls in love with a vampire"[45].

The movie involves a romance amidst the battle between vampires and their enemies and their interaction with humans. It is based on a series of young adult novels and is targeted at young adult viewers, who are usually more concerned with romantic and less serious storylines. Respondents who choose this movie out of all other options would be impulsive viewers who are seeking to entertain themselves with romantic feelings and an escape into a fantasy world with more excitement from the ordinary world. They also prefer to watch a movie in the English language. The majority of

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[45] 'Twilight'. *Internet Movie Database*. http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1099212/?ref_=nv_sr_1

English-educated respondents chose to watch this movie, while Chinese-educated respondents also displayed a significant interest. This showed a content and not language preference.

Hoggart problematised the issue of mass-produced popular entertainment, such as American gangster films, claiming it resulted in a 'mass urban culture'. This implied a loss of depth in meaningful social action. Popular entertainment is created to fill up space and not to inform, echoed also in McLuhan (1964)'s call that during the advent of television, the 'medium had become the message'. Interestingly, respondents from both groups showed a preference for such a movie, which is Twilight. This shows that the power of the mass media influence is strong enough to transcend language preference. Instead, content preference for a global, highly marketed film starring hyped-up young stars such as Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson (as of the study) took over.

Choice of TV Programmes for Chinese-educated respondents
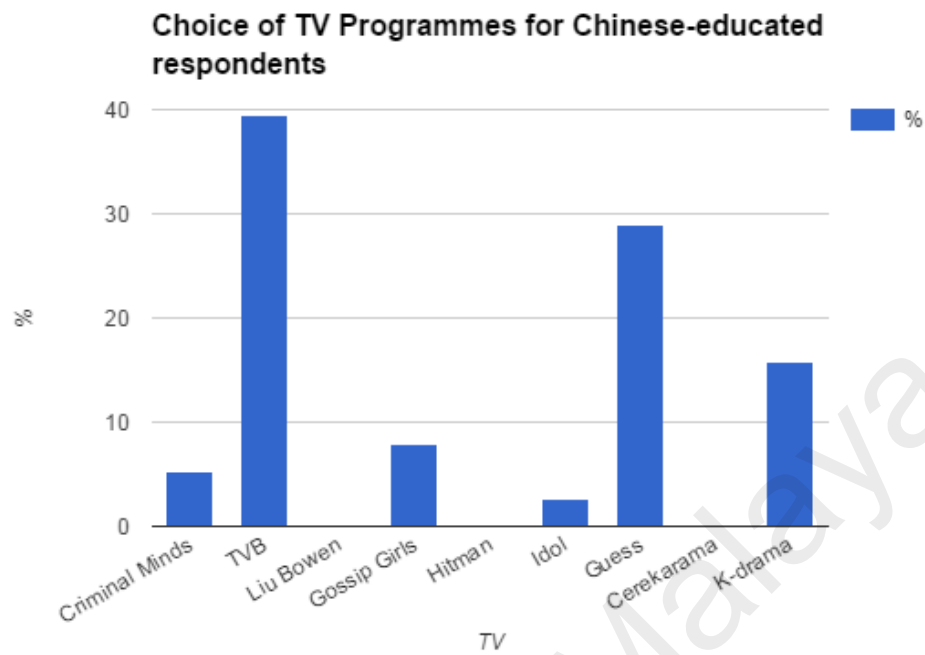
Figure 6.3 - Choice of TV programmes for Chinese-educated respondents

Choice of TV programme for English-educated respondents
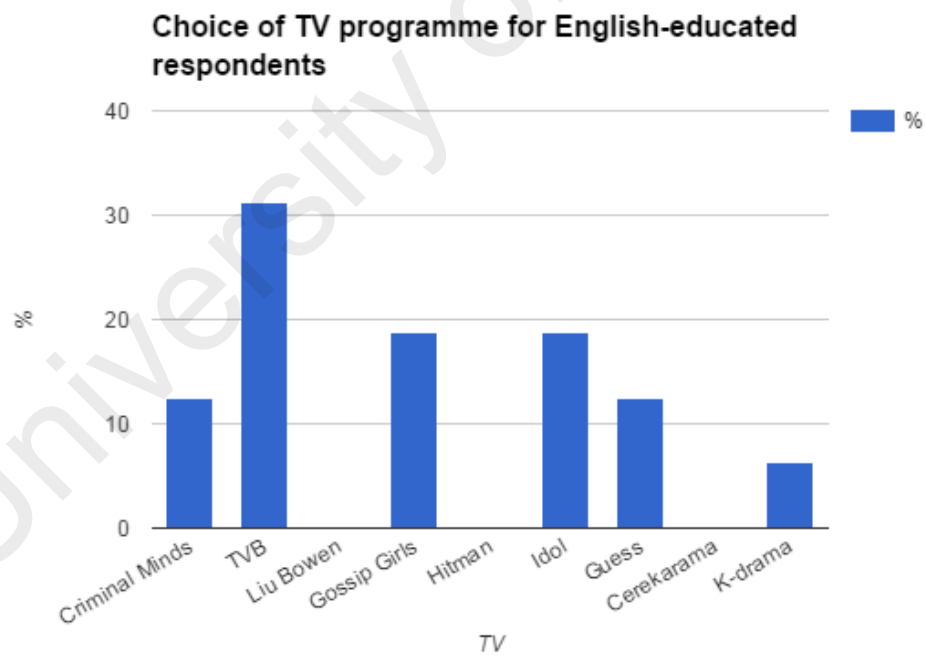
Figure 6.4 - Choice of TV programmes for English-educated respondents

This question asked the respondent 'if you were allowed to watch only one TV series, which one would you choose? Please choose ONE only)'. It is about the respondent's choice of one TV programme out of the limited range of response options. The researcher chose TV programmes that were broadcast at least six months to a year before administering the survey. This was so that the maximum number of respondents would be able to identify the TV programmes provided in the response options, so that they would be able to make an informed choice from the list of options. The TV programmes were also broadcast on Malaysian national TV channels which were free of charge and were accessible by all Malaysians who owned a functional TV. These channels included government channels RTM 1 and RTM 2; and private company Media Prima channels TV3, NTV7, 8TV, and TV9. Paid cable channels or Internet webcasts were not included because not everyone could access these. Although the TV programmes were broadcast at different times throughout the week, respondents would be able to know of their existence from TV advertisements (where sneak previews are often shown), newspaper TV schedules (where write-ups are often provided), or the Internet (where they can search for more information about a particular programme or watch repeats). The response options included 'Criminal Minds', 'TVB Ghetto Justice', 'The Amazing Strategist Liu Bowen', 'Gossip Girls', 'Hitman Reborn', 'American Idol', 'Guess Guess Guess', 'Cerekarama', and 'City Hunter'. The response options are explained below.

TV	LANGUAGE	GENRE	CONTENT
1. Criminal Minds	English	Crime procedural	Murder, Mystery, Gore, Investigation
2. TVB Ghetto Justice	Cantonese	Family	Law, justice, family issues, comedy
3. Liu Bowen	Mandarin	Epic	History, fantasy, martial arts, military strategy, folktales
4. Gossip Girls	English	Drama	School life, upper class lifestyle,
5. Hitman Reborn	Japanese (Chinese dub)	Anime	Fantasy, comedy, mafia, youth
6. American Idol	English	Reality	Singing talent
7. Guess Guess Guess	Mandarin	Variety	Games, talent show, jokes, celebrity appearances
8. Cerekarama	Malay	Drama	Family issues, slice of life, moral values

9. City Hunter	Korean (Chinese dub)	Drama	Conspiracy, revenge, investigation, action

6.1.2.1 Criminal Minds

The Criminal Minds TV series is a crime procedural based on a team of criminal investigators who specialise in catching serial killers through a combination of special skills. Each episode is 40 minutes long and the series spans several seasons. It was broadcast in Malaysia from 2006 up to the point of the study in early 2013. The show's producer's website, CBS provides the synopsis below:

> CRIMINAL MINDS revolves around an elite team of FBI profilers who analyze the country's most twisted criminal minds, anticipating their next moves before they strike again[46].

In the Chinese-medium institution, 5 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch 'Criminal Minds'. In the English-medium institution, 13 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch 'Criminal Minds'. This showed a language preference.

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[46] 'Criminal Minds'. *CBS.com*. http://www.cbs.com/shows/criminal_minds/. Because of the variety of mass media forms, such as movies, television and music, in which there are no academic articles written on, Wiki sources are referenced.

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6.1.2.2   TVB Ghetto Justice

TVB is a Hong Kong-based TV channel which produces its own in-house drama series. These include costume dramas and modern dramas of various genres. These are widely broadcast in Malaysia and have a large following among Chinese-speaking audiences in Malaysia. This series was broadcast in Malaysia in early 2013. Some TVB actors and actresses even perform in concerts held in Malaysian resort Genting Highlands, where local fans purchase tickets to see their idols. Ghetto Justice is a TV drama based on the lives of lawyers defending the lower class citizens in Hong Kong, who are often oppressed by the more powerful social classes. The Wiki-d-addicts website, a fan site for drama serials, provides the most comprehensive synopsis:

> Law Lik-ah (Kevin Cheng), a resident of Sham Shui Po, together with his cousin George Mike, Jr (Alex Lam) runs a legal clinic for the community in the social service centre[47].

In the Chinese-medium institution, 40 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would watch 'Ghetto Justice'. In the English-medium institution, 31 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would watch 'Ghetto Justice'. The Chinese-educated respondents prefer to watch Ghetto Justice more compared to the English-educated respondents. However, notably many respondents from the latter group also indicate an interest. This shows content preference.

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[47] 'Ghetto Justice'. *Wiki-d-Addicts*. http://wiki.d-addicts.com/Ghetto_Justice

Carstens (2003) found that Malaysian Chinese audiences distinguish clearly between the various forms of transnational Chinese media produced in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China. She writes that Hong Kong productions are the most popular, possibly due to similarities between the experiences and perspectives of Hong Kong and Malaysian Chinese. This study concurs with Carstens' finding that Malaysian Chinese, especially the Chinese-educated, prefer to watch the Hong Kong TVB series Ghetto Justice the most compared to other TV programmes. Given that some TVB actors and actresses have a large fan base in Malaysia, this may indicate that Malaysian Chinese identify more with the Hong Kong productions.

6.1.2.3   The Amazing Strategist Liu Bowen

This is a Taiwanese drama series which has spanned 404 episodes and was broadcast in Malaysia until the point of the study in 2013. Liu Bowen was a real-life military strategist and advisor to the Ming Dynasty Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang. This drama series portrays the events in his life, including a mythical and supernatural dimension. Zhu Yuanzhang was the founder of the Ming Dynasty in China and was responsible for overthrowing the Yuan Dynasty which was founded by the Mongolian Genghis Khan, thus restoring the rule of China by the Han Chinese. He relied heavily on the foresight of his trusted advisor Liu Ji, also known as Liu Bowen. The Wiki-d-addicts website, a fan site for drama serials, provides the following synopsis:

Aided by Liu Bowen's amazing abilities to predict the future, Zhu Yuanzhang overthrows the Mongol Yuan and establishes the Ming Empire[48].

In the Chinese-medium institution, none of the 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Liu Bowen. In the English-medium institution, none of the 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Liu Bowen. Interestingly not many Malaysian Chinese displayed any interest in Chinese history. This may indicate a lack of identification with ancient China, though they still uphold cultural attributes such as language. This shows content preference over language preference.

6.1.2.4   Gossip Girls

This drama series is an English-language series revolving around the lives of upper class teenagers attending a boarding school in Manhattan. The often scandalous events that happen in their lives are chronicled by a gossip website which is shared within the school, and the identity of the writer remains a mystery. The Gossip Girls Wikia, a fan site for the Gossip Girls series, provides the following synopsis:

> Gossip Girl is an American teen drama television series based on the book series of the same name written by Cecily von Ziegesar. Narrated by the omniscient blogger Gossip Girl, voiced by Kristen Bell, the series revolves

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[48] 'Shen Ji Miao Suan Liu Bo Wen'. *Wiki-d-Addicts.* http://wiki.d-addicts.com/Shen_Ji_Miao_Suan_Liu_Bo_Wen

around the lives of privileged young adults on Manhattan's Upper East Side[49].

In the Chinese-medium institution, 7 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch 'Gossip Girls'. In the English-medium institution, 19 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch 'Gossip Girls'. This shows a language preference.

6.1.2.5   Hitman Reborn

This is a Japanese anime, or animation series about a boy who discovers he is the heir of a mafia family, and is sent a 'home tutor' to groom him in the ways of the mafia. In typical anime fashion, the characters, despite being mafia members, are drawn with a cute appearance, known as 'kawaii' in Japanese. The cuteness of the characters is portrayed in a 'chibi' or super-deformed way, by giving them child-like characteristics. This is done despite the adult themes in the storyline such as violence. The Hitman Reborn Wikia website, which is a fan site for this anime, provides the following synopsis:

Reborn! (official US title), known as Katekyō Hitman Reborn! (家庭教師ヒットマンREBORN!, Kateikyōshi Hittoman Ribōn!) in Japan, which roughly translates to "Home Tutor Hitman Reborn![50]

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[49] 'Home'. *Gossip Girl Wiki.* http://gossipgirl.wikia.com/wiki/Gossip_Girl_Wiki
[50] 'Hitman Reborn'. *Reborn Wiki.* http://reborn.wikia.com/wiki/Reborn_Wiki

In the Chinese-medium institution, none of the respondents claimed they would prefer to watch 'Hitman Reborn'. In the English-medium institution, none of the respondents claimed they would prefer to watch 'Hitman Reborn'. This shows that both groups have a content preference where they are not influenced by Japanese popular culture.

6.1.2.6 American Idol

This programme is a reality singing talent contest based in the United States of America, broadcast since 2002 until the point of the study in 2013. Winners and finalists go on to become successful recording artists, such as Kelly Clarkson and Adam Lambert. This programme has since spawned a franchise which has spread to other countries. In 2004 Malaysia had its own version of the programme, Malaysian Idol. The official Facebook page of American Idol provides the following description:

> Every year, tens of thousands of hopefuls from across the nation audition for a shot at stardom[51].

In the Chinese-medium institution, 3 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch American Idol. In the English-medium institution, 19 percent claimed they would prefer to watch American Idol. This shows a language preference.

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[51] 'American Idol'. *Facebook.com*. https://www.facebook.com/AmericanIdol

6.1.2.7   Guess Guess Guess

This is a Taiwanese variety show featuring games with participants made up of celebrities. The tone of the show is playful. It was broadcast in Malaysia up to the point of this study in 2013. The synopsis of the programme is provided below:

> Hosts Jacky Wu (吳宗憲) headlines Guess Guess Guess, a variety show that usually features two major segments: 'The Truth Cannot Be Faked' (真的假不了) and 'Do Not Judge a Book by Its Cover' (人不可貌相). During 'The Truth Cannot Be Faked' segment, four guests insist they know how to do something, such as a special talent like singing or dancing. The second segment, 'Do Not Judge a Book by Its Cover,' is a themed contest with five contestants. The contests range from talent competitions to mini beauty pageants[52].

In the Chinese-medium institution, 29 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Guess Guess Guess. In the English-medium institution, 17 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Guess Guess Guess. In the mixed-medium institution, 8 percent out of 75 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Guess Guess Guess. There is a language preference.

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[52] 'Guess (variety show)'. *Wikipedia.* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guess_(variety_show)

6.1.2.8 Cerekarama

This is a Malaysian movie TV segment which features local made-for-TV Malay-language movies. It is produced by local private TV station TV3. This segment has been running since 1985[53] up to the point of this study in 2013. The TV3 website provides the following description[54]:

> Slot Cerekarama yang ke udara setiap hari Sabtu, jam 10 malam bakal menghiburkan para penonton dengan menyajikan drama menarik.

The researcher's translation is as follows:

> The Cerekarama (story) slot airs every Saturday, at 10 pm, and will entertain audiences with a selection of interesting movies.

In the Chinese-medium institution, none of the 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Cerekarama. In the English-medium institution, none of the 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch Cerekarama. None of the respondents claim to have an interest in watching Malay-language telemovies. This may or may not be a language preference but is a content preference.

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[53] 9 Oktober 2013. 'Festival Drama Yang Pertama dan Bakal Berlangsung!' *MediaPrima.com.my.* Available from: http://www.mediaprima.com.my/pressrelease/press-release.aspx?id=192 [Accessed 19 January 2015]
[54] ibid

6.1.2.9   City Hunter

This is a Korean drama series about one man's revenge for the injustices committed against him as a result of a political conspiracy. It was broadcast in Malaysia in early 2012. The Wiki-d-addicts website, a fan site for drama serials, provides the following synopsis:

> The story takes place in Seoul, 2011. Lee Yoon Sung is a talented MIT-graduate who works on the international communications team in the Blue House. He plans revenge on five politicians who caused his father's death with his surrogate father Lee Jin Pyo and eventually becomes a "City Hunter.[55]

In the Chinese-medium institution, 11 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch City Hunter. In the English-medium institution, 6 percent out of 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to watch City Hunter. As this is a Mandarin-dubbed version, there is a slight language preference.

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[55] 'City Hunter'. *Wiki-d-Addicts.* http://wiki.d-addicts.com/City_Hunter

6.1.3 MUSIC
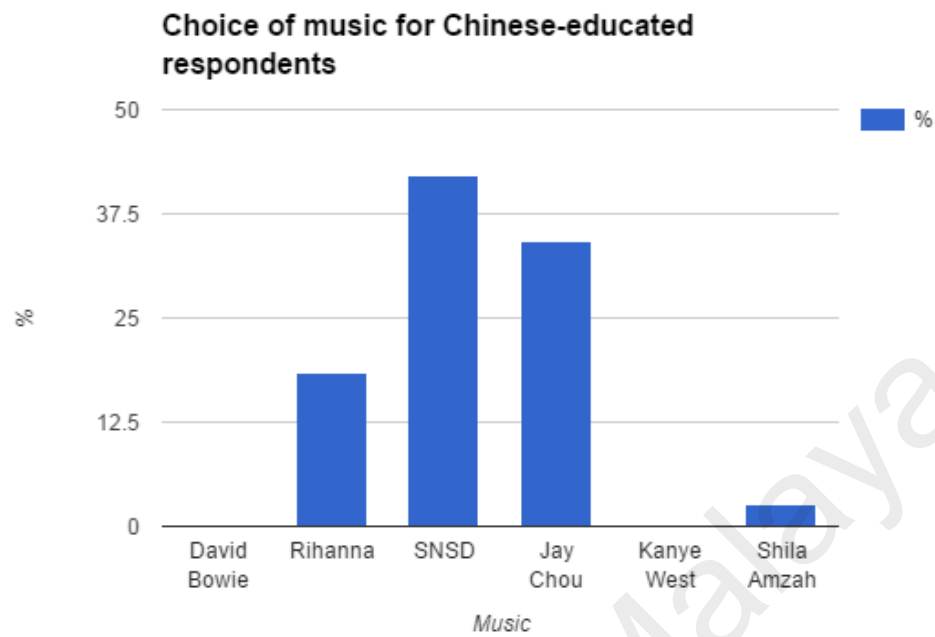
Figure 6.5 - Choice of music for Chinese-educated respondents
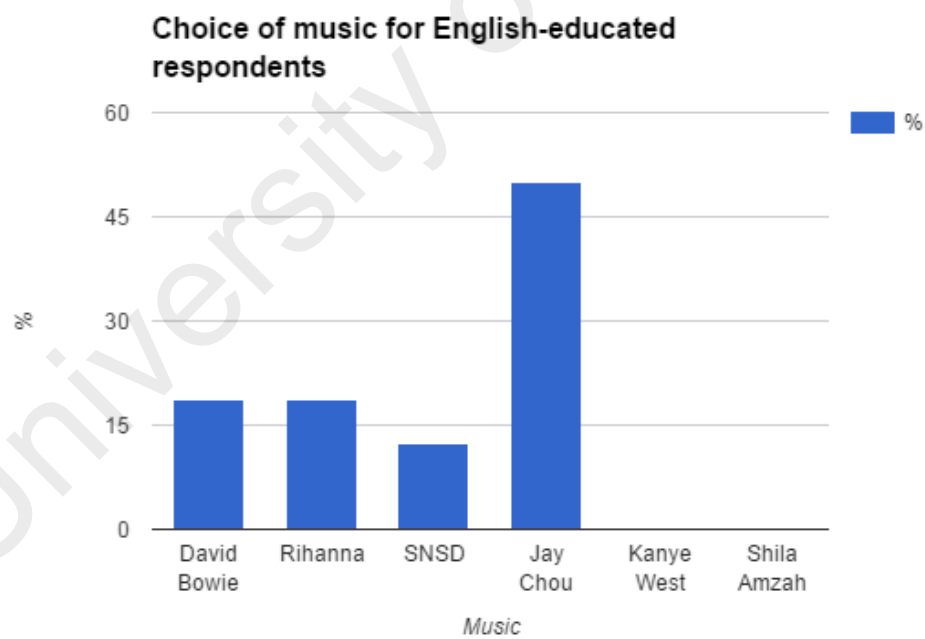
Figure 6.6 - Choice of music for English-educated respondents

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, Hebdige (1979) cited music taste as one of the crucial elements of subcultural self-presentation. This question asked respondents 'if you could only choose one album to listen to, which singer/artiste/group would you choose? (Please choose only ONE album)'. It is about the type of music respondents would prefer to listen to if given only one choice. The response options include 'David Bowie', 'Rihanna', 'Girls' Generation', 'Jay Chou', 'Kanye West', and 'Shila Amzah'. The response options are explained below.

Table 6.3 - Categorisation of music by language, genre, and content

Musician	Language	Genre	Content
David Bowie	English	Avant-garde	Political, artistic
Rihanna	English	Pop	Sexual, edgy, wild
SNSD	Korean	Pop	Bubblegum, dreamy
Jay Chou	Mandarin	Hip-hop	Political
Kanye West	English	Hip-hop	Sexual, edgy, wild
Shila Amzah	Mandarin	Pop, ballads	Sentimental

6.1.3.1   David Bowie

David Bowie is a musician, singer and actor who has been performing since the 1960s and is now in his sixties. Over the years he has influenced the art, fashion and music world by inspiring the birth of new wave punk music, or also known as underground music. Trained as a visual artist, Bowie was the original performer who included performance art aesthetics drawn from Japanese Kabuki Theater into his music performances. His legacy has inspired other famous artists including Madonna, Lady Gaga, and many other musicians who incorporate image aesthetics into their music performance. Bowie has changed his image with every album, adopting various personas such as Ziggy Stardust, The Thin White Duke, and others. His music may be categorised loosely as 'rock', while his lyrics include deeper themes such as existentialism, art, and politics. Read separately, his lyrics can stand alone as poetry, and Bowie has written journalistic pieces himself about art for Rolling Stone magazine. Bowie is still active as of the point of this study in 2013, with the release of his latest album The Next Day. A biography of Bowie states the following:

> The original pop chameleon, Bowie became a science fiction character for his breakout Ziggy Stardust album.[...]Known as a musical chameleon for his ever-changing appearance and sound.[...] Bowie, who was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1996, was a 2006 recipient of the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.[56]

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[56] 'David Bowie Biography'. *Biography.com*. http://www.biography.com/people/david-bowie-9222045 Because of the variety of mass media forms, such as movies, television and music, in which there are no academic articles written on, Wiki sources are referenced.

In the Chinese-medium institution, none of the respondents claimed they would prefer to listen to David Bowie. In the English-medium institution, 19 percent out of the 60 respondents claimed they would prefer to listen to David Bowie. More English-educated respondents claim they would listen to Bowie.

6.1.3.2   Jay Chou

Now we examine how the musicians are described either by themselves in their own websites, or in the popular press.

> "So I stopped playing the piano and cello for a period of time. But privately I still played some pop songs (It was at this time when I came into contact relatively more with pop songs).[...]At times classical, at times pop." [57]

Respondents from both groups mostly favoured Jay Chou, who performs the rap genre in Chinese with lyrics that are often imbued with serious messages. Jay Chou is a classically trained musician who has ventured into popular music. Both groups would listen to Jay Chou.

6.1.3.3   Rihanna

This was followed by a preference for Rihanna, who sings pop, R&B and hip-hop with highly sexualised content. Rihanna embraced an adult image with lyrics that are congruent with it.

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[57] 'Jay Chou Profile'. *Jaychoustudio.com.* http://jaychoustudio.com/jay-chou-profile

"In 2007, Rihanna effected a transformation from cute teen pop princess to fully fledged superstar and sex symbol with her third album, Good Girl Gone Bad, fueled by its smash hit lead single "Umbrella," featuring Jay-Z."[58]

Both groups listen to Rihanna second most following Jay Chou.

6.1.3.4   Shila Amzah

This is followed by local Malay singer Shila Amzah who sings pop music, and has recently crossed over to singing in Chinese, receiving a lot of positive attention from the Chinese-speaking community in Malaysia.

"On 20th September 2012, I became the Champion of Asian Wave, a Chinese reality singing talent show held in Shanghai featuring popular contestants/artistes from many Asian countries.[...] I have also recorded the theme song for the Chinese Idol programme "A Moment Like This" (Chinese version) and was invited to perform at the grand finale of the programme."[59]

More Chinese-educated respondents listen to Shila Amzah, likely because she has recently broken into the Chinese-language music industry, reaping success in China itself. This shows there is language preference, since 'Chineseness' is identified by language as one of its indicators. Those who identify strongly with 'Chineseness'

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[58] 'Rihanna Biography'. *Biography.com.* http://www.biography.com/people/rihanna-201257#def-jam-records

[59] 'Shila Amzah Profile'. *Studionlab.com*. http://sa.studionlab.com/about-us

would listen to a song even by a singer of non-Chinese ethnic origin if the language is in Chinese.

6.1.3.5 Girls' Generation (SNSD)

Next is K-pop girl group SNSD or also known as Girls' Generation, who sings pop songs. SNSD is a manufactured Korean popular girl group which comprises young talents who have been groomed in various facets of the entertainment industry.

> "The members were professionally trained primarily in singing and dancing, while some members were also selected to be trained in acting and modelling. [...] Marked by dance routines and vocals, "Girls' Generation" was a hit for the group, and the album has sold 121,143 copies to date, placing 8th in the year-end charts."[60]

The Chinese-educated group has a preference for Korean girl group Girls' Generation (SNSD) while the English-educated group does not have much of a preference. This is a content preference.

6.1.3.6 Kanye West

American rapper Kanye West is a chart-topping rap artiste who is known for being outspoken.

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[60] 'SNSD Profile'. *SNSDKorean.com*. http://snsdkorean.com/snsd-members/

"Kanye West is a Grammy-winning rapper and sought-after producer who is as well known for his outrageous statements as he is for his broad musical palette."[61]

Interestingly, both groups did not show any interest in Kanye West, despite his high-profile public persona. Although he raps in English, there is no language preference and neither is there content preference.

6.1.4   PRINT MAGAZINE
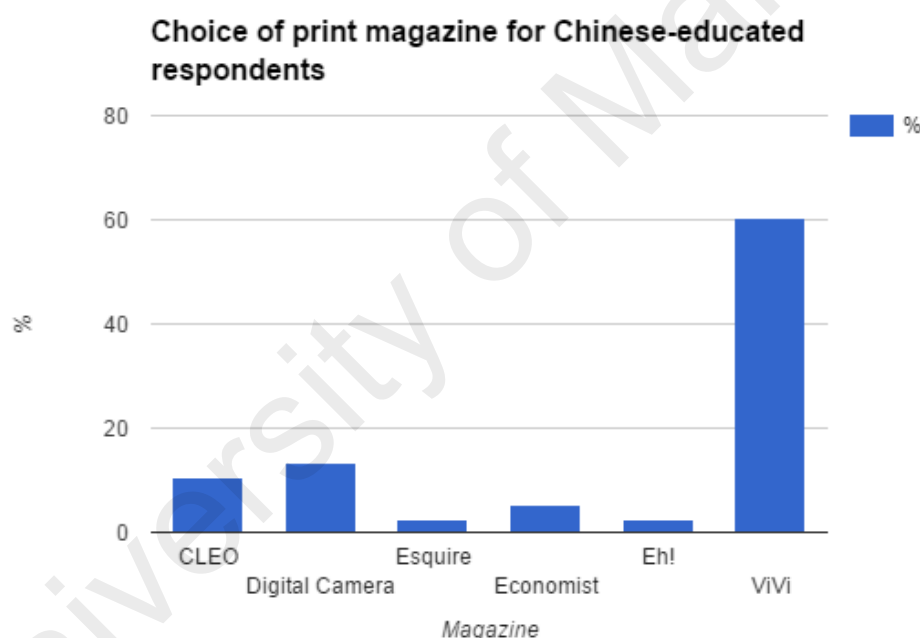
Figure 6.7 - Choice of print magazine for Chinese-educated respondents

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[61] 'Kanye West Biography'. *Biography.com* http://www.biography.com/people/kanye-west-362922
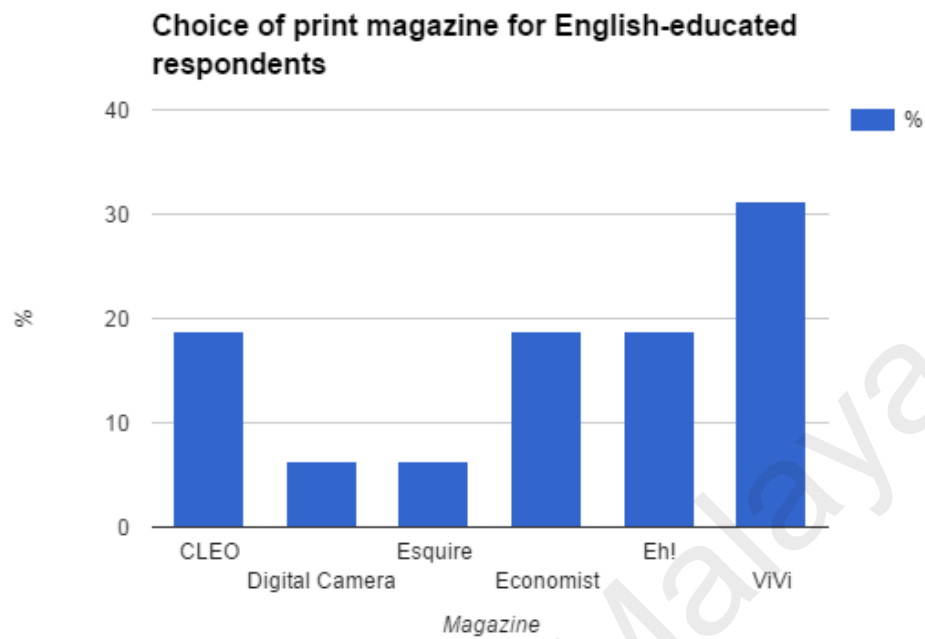
Figure 6.8 - Choice of print magazine for English-educated respondents

Both groups favour ViVi, a Japanese women's fashion and beauty magazine which has been translated into Chinese language.

6.1.5 PRINT NEWSPAPER
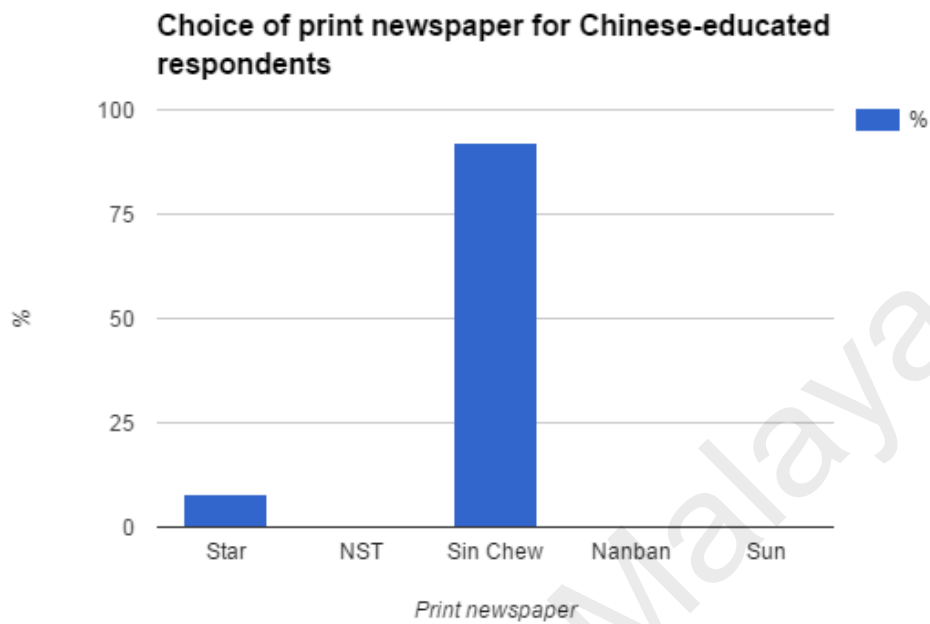
Figure 6.9 - Choice of print newspaper for Chinese-educated respondents
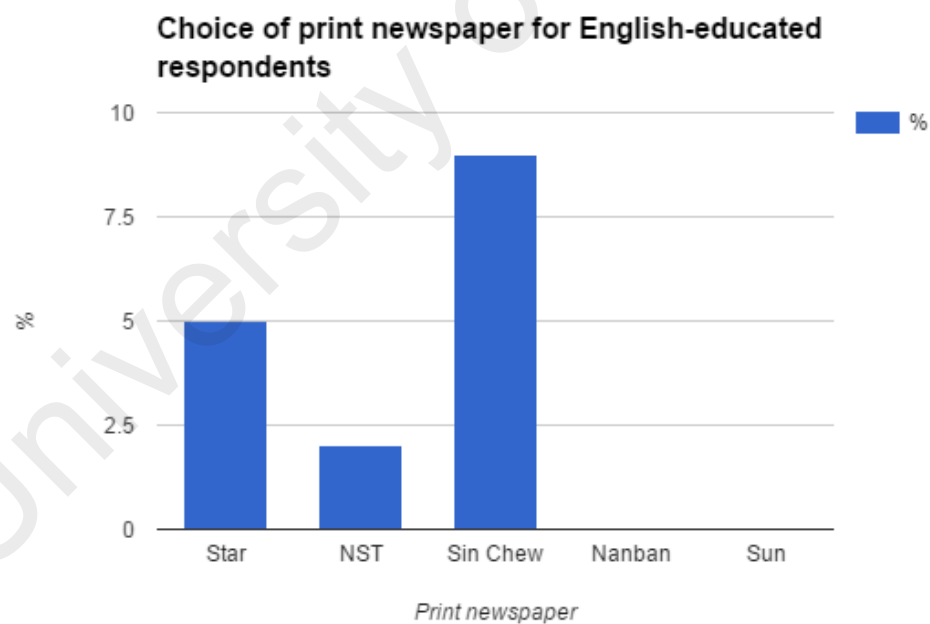
Figure 6.10 - Choice of print newspaper for English-educated respondents

Print media readership has been increasing steadily since 2007, though this includes readership of tabloids. Where solid news is concerned, digital media increasingly competes with print media (Ding Jo-Ann and Koh Lay Chin 2013). Both groups of respondents favour Sin Chew Media as their source of news. Sin Chew Media is a Chinese-language media corporation. Out of the four million Malaysian Chinese population aged above 15, about three million read a Chinese newspaper everyday (Nielsen Media Research 2009). The market penetration rate of a Chinese daily is five times higher than that of an English daily (Nielsen Media Research 2009). Among the Chinese newspapers, Sin Chew Daily holds the lion's share at 41 percent, followed by China Press, Guang Ming Daily, Nanyang Siang Pau, and Kwong Wah Yit Poh (Nielsen Media Research 2009). Chinese language newspapers have a high number of subscribers, with 65% of the Chinese respondents in the nationwide 2006 Merdeka Youth Survey reading it for five or more days a week (Merdeka Center 2006). My findings concur exactly with this, regardless of Chinese or English-educated respondents.

6.1.5.1 The Star, New Straits Times and The Sun

The Star is the leading English daily with a circulation of more than 200 000 copies per day, followed by New Straits Times with more than 130 000 copies per day, and The Sun with 150 000 copies per day (Mohd Safar Hashim 2003).

6.3.5.2 Sin Chew Media

Sin Chew Daily was founded in 1929 and is ranked first among all the Chinese newspapers at 40 percent of the market share (Nielsen Media Research 2005).

6.1.5.3   Malaysia Nanban

Malaysia Nanban, established 1986, is the largest and most popular Tamil daily circulated in Malaysia (Nielsen Media Research 2009).

6.1.6   ONLINE NEWSPAPERS
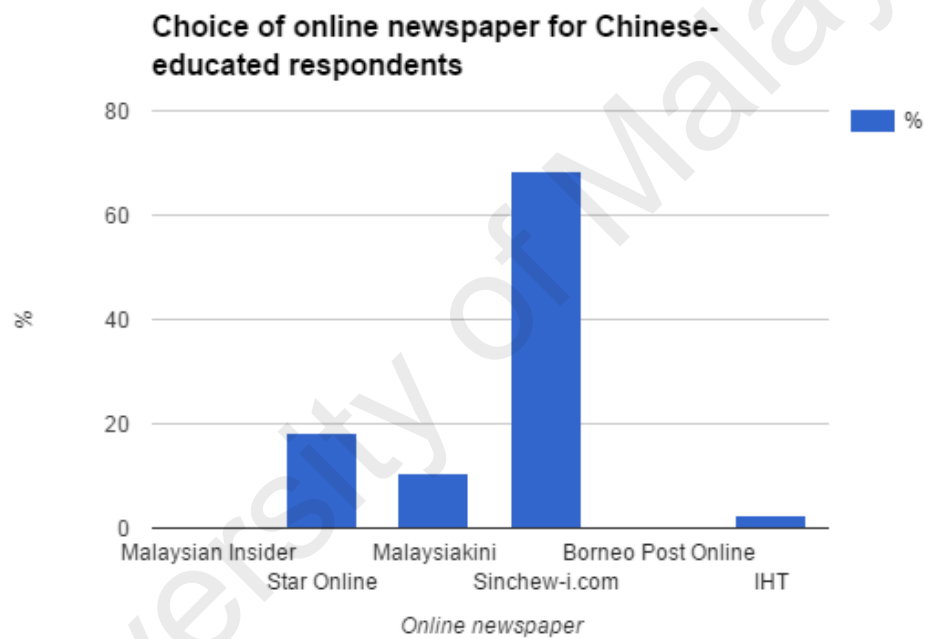
Figure 6.11 - Choice of online newspaper for Chinese-educated respondents
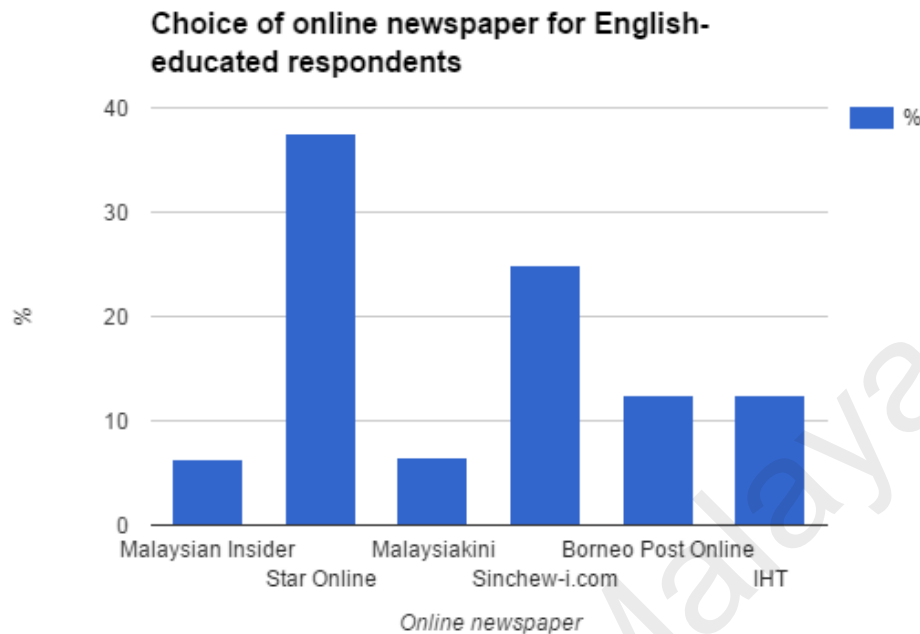
Figure 6.12 - Choice of online newspaper for English-educated respondents

In Southeast Asia, individuals spend on average over 22 hours online a week (Nielsen Media Research 2014). Since 2005, Malaysians have had increasing access to digital technology, with about 17.5 million Internet users in 2011, which is 65 percent of the population (Ding Jo-Ann and Koh Lay Chin 2013). Malaysia is one of the best-served countries in the Southeast Asian region in terms of wireless broadband (PWC 2013). Online newspaper subscription is the second highest consumer spending item in Malaysia especially for younger consumers (PWC 2013). In general, young adults between the ages of 21 to 24 in Malaysia are fairly intensive users of online news sites (Karen Sabina Freeman 2013). They are also more interested in entertainment news than in finance or politics (Karen Sabina Freeman 2013).

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This makes online platforms an important premise for cultural capital activity. The following few variables measure respondents' preference for digital content.

In the case of online news, both groups favour Sin Chew Media again, though the English-educated prefer The Star more. This shows that Sin Chew does indeed have a high market penetration rate compared to other newspapers, though the English-educated prefer reading English news online.

6.1.6.1 Malaysian Insider

The Malaysian Insider was established in 2008, financed by a group of businessmen and journalists to reportedly counter Malaysiakini ("The Malaysian Insider" 2013, in Lumsden 2013).

6.1.6.2 Star Online and Sinchew-i

These two portals are the online versions of print newspapers The Star (English-language) and Sin Chew Daily (Chinese-language).

6.2.1.3 Malaysiakini

Malaysiakini is an independent news source available in English, Malay, Tamil and Chinese, and is the first professionally produced online newspaper (Nadarajah 2000).

6.1.6.4 Borneo Post

The Borneo Post is the largest and most read English daily in Borneo, established 35 years ago on April 24, 1978 (@theborneopost).

6.1.6.5   International Herald Tribune

The International Herald Tribune was, for 125 years, the newspaper of choice for the international community. Its role was to assemble the best news report using content from The New York Times and other sources (About IHT).

6.1.7   WEBSITE

Figure 6.13 - Choice of website type for Chinese-educated respondents
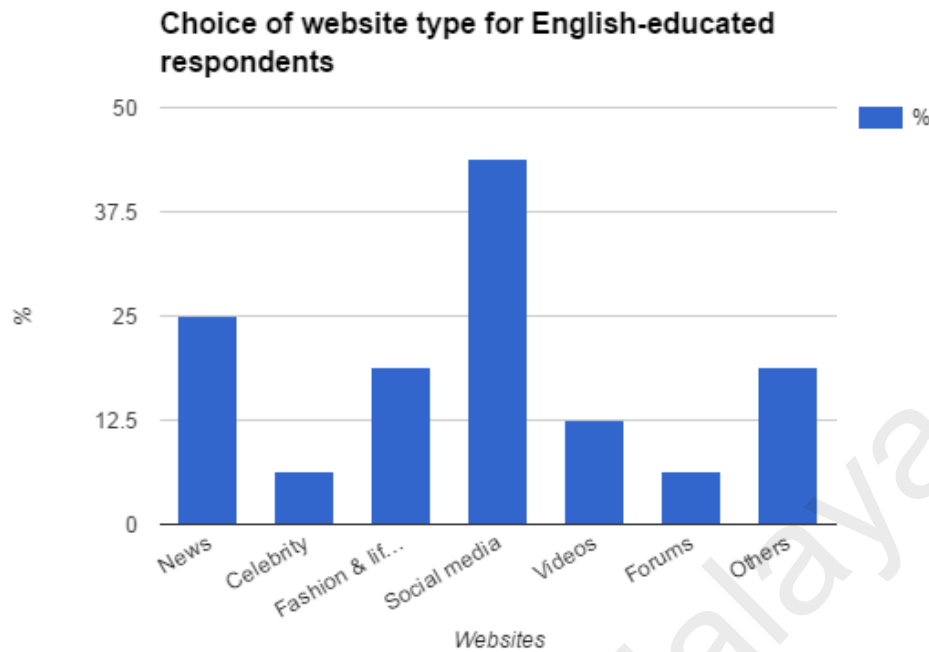
Figure 6.14 - Choice of website type for English-educated respondents

This attribute is the type of website respondents prefer to visit when spending time online. The types of websites listed are based on their content. Both groups most prefer to spend their time online using social media. Malaysians are heavy users of social media, with more than 12 million Facebook users in 2011 (Ding Jo-Ann and Koh Lay Chin 2013). Malaysians also have the most Facebook friends, which is on average 233 (Ding Jo-Ann and Koh Lay Chin 2013).

Secondly, Chinese-educated respondents also enjoy watching videos, while English-educated respondents enjoy perusing news. While 'video' as a type of website here indicates video streaming sites such as YouTube, it may serve as a different platform for accessing news. This Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents may differ only in terms of visual or textual preference. Notably, both groups have a

larger interest in real-life events such as those on social media, videos or news, and less so in entertainment or lifestyle.

6.1.8 BOOKS

The following table represents the classification of the six books given as choices to respondents in our close-ended questionnaire. I gave this exhaustive list of books as options to my respondents, asking them which out of the six they would prefer to read if they could only choose one. These books are chosen for their high prominence in their respective genres and availability. The books below are classified by language, genre, content, and values which readers may pick up or be interested in as a result of reading the respective book.

Table 6.4 - Classification of book preferences

Book	Language	Genre	Content	Classification of value-interests from reader's perspective
6.1.8.1 Harry Potter	English	Young adult fiction	Magic, fantasy, parallel universe, trials of growing up	Liberal democratic values – freedom to explore
6.1.8.2 Kite Runner	English	Popular fiction	Friendship, political issues, trials of growing up	Conflict of liberal democratic values and traditional ones (although

				not Confucian)
6.1.8.3 The Castle	English	Literary fiction	Philosophy, critique of bureaucracy/social criticism	The internal struggle of opposing liberal democratic values of rationality and freedom
6.1.8.4 Introduction to Marketing	English	Academic textbook	Basic marketing concepts (with marketing being a subject applicable to a wide variety of degree courses)	Pragmatist orientation towards studying a core textbook
6.1.8.5 Doraemon	Japanese (original) -Available in Malay and English translation	Manga	Science fiction, trials of growing up, very implicit social critique of technology	Depending on the way the reader 'reads' the text, the meaning could be pragmatist (using gadgets to get by) or it could be seen as a critique of rationality
6.1.8.6 Bu Bu Jing Xin	Chinese	Popular fiction	Fantasy, time-travel, historical fiction, romance	Confucian values from the past experienced by the protagonist

The focal point of this classification is the value-interests orientation. The value-orientations here are divided between liberal democratic-cosmopolitan and insular-pragmatist, to be aligned with Confucian values and Western values. In most cases the value-orientation is clear cut, whereas in two instances, it depends on the reading of the individual of the text.

Most of the chosen books already provide a clear message the moment the reader confronts it – Harry Potter is clearly packaged as young adult fiction, Bu Bu Jing Xin is clearly packaged as historical fiction, Introduction to Marketing is clearly packaged as an introduction to the subject of marketing, and The Kite Runner is clearly packaged as popular fiction with realist humanistic themes.

The two other books may be seen in more complicated terms. The Castle was written as a social critique of bureaucracy, the epitome of rationality, during the author (Kafka)'s time, when more and more organisations were embracing bureaucratic measures. Read literally, the allusions to bureaucracy might not be clear immediately. In the case of Doraemon, on the surface it functions as a stereotypical Japanese manga, or comic book, with the story of a time-travelling cat robot who brings inventions from the future. However, reading between the lines, author Fujio F. Fujiko created this series at the peak of technological expansion in Japan, and may be viewed as a critique of over-reliance on technology as a means of 'bailing oneself out from tough situations'.

Thus in the two last examples, the value-orientation is more complex as it can be read on the surface as pragmatist, but really focuses on the clash of rational and

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traditional values. At any rate, let us examine the preferences of our respondents, as shown in the following charts. The first chart displays the choice of books among respondents from Chinese-medium tertiary education institutions while the second chart displays preferences of respondents from English-medium ones.
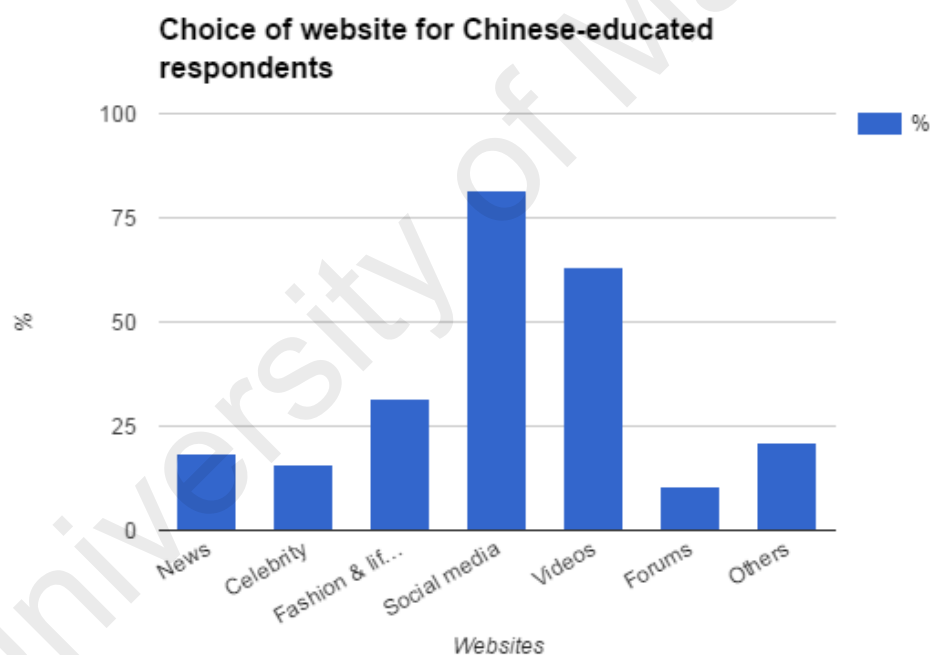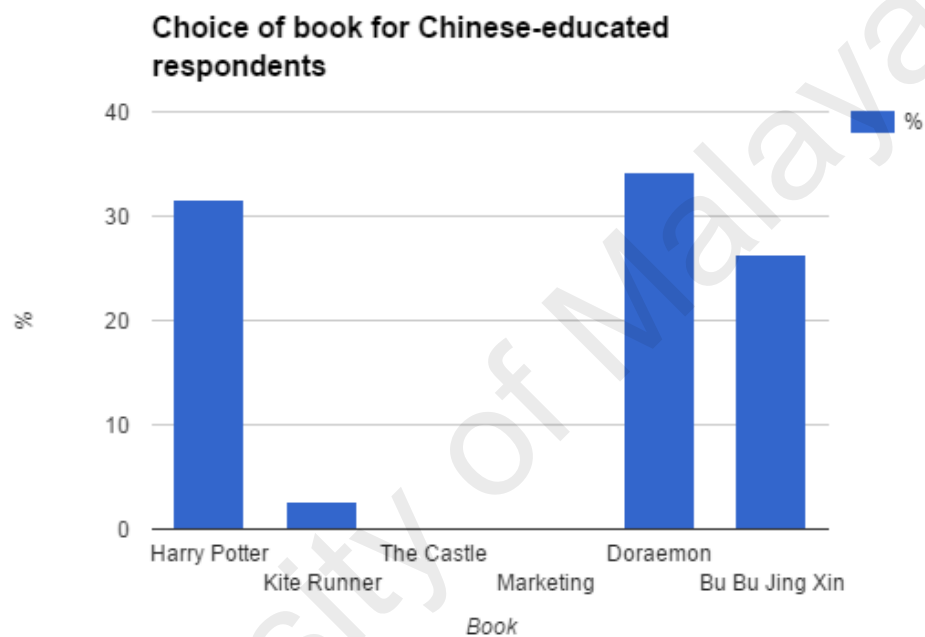

Figure 6.15 - Choice of book for Chinese-educated respondents
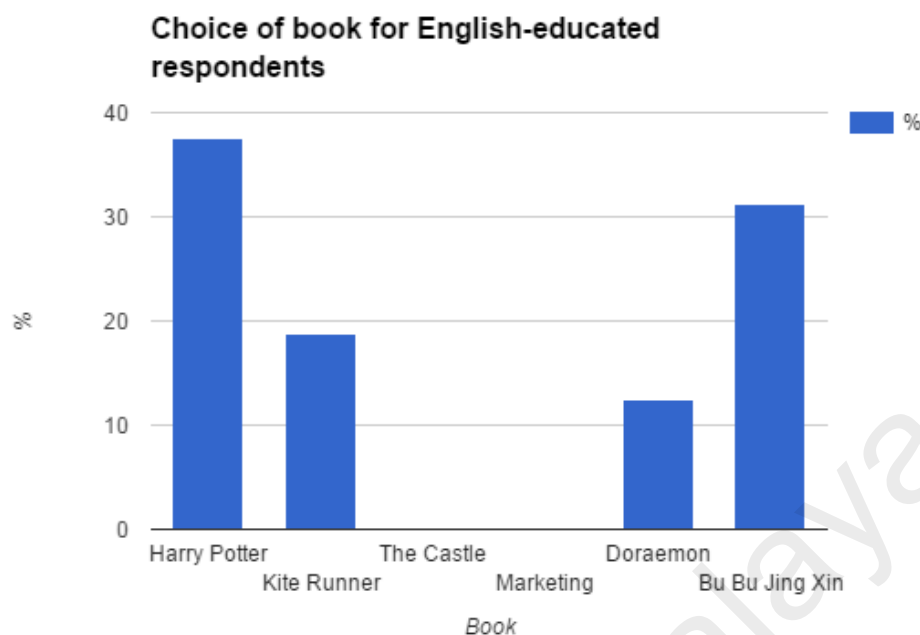
Figure 6.16 - Choice of book for English-educated respondents

In both groups, respondents highly favour Harry Potter, the English-language young adult fiction series. Both groups also favoured Bu Bu Jing Xin (Startling By Each Step), a Chinese-language novel about time-travel. In terms of differences, the Chinese-educated respondents strongly preferred the popular manga, Doraemon, while the English-educated strongly preferred popular fiction novel Kite Runner.

For the Chinese-educated respondents, the most commonly chosen book was Doraemon, followed by Harry Potter, then Bu Bu Jing Xin, and Kite Runner (without anyone choosing The Castle or Introduction to Marketing). They claimed that the main reason for their choice of book was because they identified strongly with the storyline, characters, or theme.

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This meant that most of them identified with characters, the storyline, or theme of the Doraemon manga series, which is about "a robotic cat from the 22nd century who travels back in time to befriend a group of kids."[62]

The second-most identified-with storyline was Harry Potter, a tale about a "school in a castle filled with moving staircases, a sport played on flying broomsticks, an evil wizard intent on domination, [and] an ordinary boy who's the hero of a whole world he doesn't know."[63]

The third-most identified-with was Bu Bu Jing Xin (Startling By Each Step), a Chinese-language novel about "Zhang Xiao, a 25 year old girl from modern times" who time-travels backward into the 18th century Qing Dynasty, which was also adapted into a drama series[64].

It appears respondents are engaged with fantasy-themed stories, where the protagonists face numerous trials and tribulations in the quest to achieve self-identity. These storylines are not entirely pragmatic and allow for the reader to indulge in escapism. When compared, the English-educated respondents also display the same preference for fantasy. In order of preference, the latter prefer Harry Potter, Bu Bu Jing Xin, Kite Runner, and Doraemon. Again, while Doraemon has been

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[62] 'Doraemon Museum.' *Japan-Guide.com*. Available from: <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3252.html> [Accessed 31 March 2015].

[63] 'Harry Potter - About the Series'. *HarryPotter.Scholastic.com*. Available from: <http://harrypotter.scholastic.com/series_information/> [Accessed 31 March 2015].

[64] The Magnolia Translating Team (2011). *Startling Surprises at Every Step.* Available from: <http://bubujingxinenglish.blogspot.com.au/p/chapters-directory.html> [Accessed 31 March 2015].

relegated to the fourth place and Harry Potter at the top, it appears Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents both enjoy the fantasy genre.

Interestingly, the reading habits of Malaysian Chinese youth do not appear to be divided mainly along linguistic lines. While there is a slight preference for the English language witnessed among English-educated respondents, Chinese-educated respondents did not display any language preference, choosing the Malay-translated (in lesser cases English-translated) Doraemon series over the Chinese-language novel.

While the Malaysian Chinese continue associating with ethnic identification, they have not resorted to choosing reading material solely based on language preference. This may be due to several factors. Firstly, reading is a private activity for some people, and people may relax their impression management while alone, back stage. Thus a front stage ethnic affiliation need not be displayed while in private. Secondly, the proliferation of prosumption activities on the Internet have left us with an availability of fan-translated material, in the case of the lack of officially translated versions. Because of this, avid readers no longer need to choose reading material based on language.

The reason why genre surpasses language in book preferences may be because of the themes found in these books. The respondents were students undergoing tertiary education and are at the age cohort of 18 to 25. At this age, using Erikson's developmental psychology term, they are at the stage of finding their identity. Such

themes that relate to going in quests to discover oneself, facing trials and tribulations throughout, may be of greater interest because of its immediate relevance.

In terms of values, the Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents can be divided along value-orientations. The Chinese-educated chose Doraemon as the most popular book, which is classified as pragmatist or social-critical depending on the way the reader 'reads' the text. The English-educated chose Harry Potter as the most popular book, which is classified as liberal-democratic because it emphasises the value of freedom of self-exploration and discovery. Basing on this, if we assume that the Chinese-educated read Doraemon uncritically, then they have chosen the book because of its straightforward and practical sounding storyline, while the English-educated have chosen a book which encourages them to take risks to achieve the ideal which means the most to them.

The other two more commonly chosen books were The Kite Runner and Bu Bu Jing Xin. Interestingly both the Chinese-educated and English-educated claimed to read Bu Bu Jing Xin, showing that many respondents who attend English-medium tertiary education had also made an effort to learn the Chinese language. Again, the genre of this book is historical fiction, revolving around the challenges a young adult must face when she is transported to a past life in the Qing Dynasty in China. There is an interplay of Confucian values from the past experienced by the novel's protagonist, which contradicts the more liberal values she has adopted from the present. Bu Bu Jing Xin is the third favourite choice for the Chinese-educated and second favourite

for the English-educated, again indicating that the Chinese-educated do not necessarily display language preference.

The Kite Runner, the fourth choice for both groups, revolves around a youth experiencing the conflict of liberal democratic values and traditional ones (although not Confucian)[65]. The book gained popularity after it was dramatised on the big screen in 2007. Genre-wise, it also appeals to the respondents likely due to the theme of a youth growing up in troubled times, though it does not have the fantasy element. Due to its realistic nature, this choice may be more depressing for readers who are seeking escapism. This may be the reason why the fantasy genre is more highly preferred.

The Castle discusses the internal struggle of opposing liberal democratic values of rationality and freedom[66]. It is not an easy read as the reader needs to understand the literary allusions the author makes to describe bureaucracy. For readers of fantasy this difficulty may be alienating. Again, readers of fantasy clearly wish to experience an alternative world with the promise of better outcomes, and as such may not be predisposed to reading a novel which tone is dystopian and bleak. Thus no Chinese-educated or English-educated reader chose this book.

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[65] 'The Kite Runner – Synopsis'. *KhaledHosseini.com.* Available from: <http://khaledhosseini.com/books/the-kite-runner/synopsis/> [Accessed 31 March 2015].

[66] Burrows, W. (2011). 'Winter read: The Castle by Franz Kafka'. *The Guardian.co.uk.* Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/dec/22/franz-kafka-winter-reads> [Accessed 31 March 2015].

Introduction to Marketing is a basic marketing textbook introducing the basic concepts and theories of marketing, which is a subject that is required for many tertiary-level courses today[67]. Anyone who claims that this is their choice of book out of the six options may be a staunch pragmatist, whose intention may be to score well in exams (also a common pragmatist trait found in Confucian-oriented individuals). However, no respondent claimed to choose this book.

Education acts as a socialisation agent, transmitting values as well as language of choice. In this study, we find that language does not separate preference of books in a significant way. The difference, if any, of book preferences among the English-language educated and Chinese-language educated Malaysian Chinese is small. Both groups claimed to prefer the Harry Potter series the most, followed by Chinese novel Bu Bu Jing Xin. While Harry Potter is originally written in English, its popularity around the world has resulted in the availability of multilingual translations, including Chinese. Bu Bu Jing Xin on the other hand, started out as an Internet novel serialisation, gaining increased fame after its drama televisation, and was finally made available in the English language. Because of this, language itself does not limit individuals' choice of books. This is one of the effects of cultural globalisation, with the World Wide Web allowing for prosumer activity in the case of fan translations, and the word-of-mouth sharing of interesting reads through various social media.

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[67] Armstrong, G. and Kotler, P. (2015) *Marketing: An Introduction,* 12/E. New York: Prentice Hall.

In terms of value orientation, I find that individuals from both English-language education and Chinese-language education do not differ. Both groups chose Harry Potter, which celebrates the protagonist's individualistic quest for self-identity, in the face of many social institutional obstacles, such as a dysfunctional family unit (Harry's foster family who locks him in a broom closet and abuses him); mean schoolteachers (Professor Snape is often mean to Harry and frequently punishes him for small mistakes); totalitarian school rules (Harry's school Hogwarts is taken over by authoritarian ministry official Dolores Umbridge); and yellow journalistic mass media (Rita Skeeter's tabloid-style reports scandalising Harry's problems). Despite the failure of these social institutions around him, Harry and his friends Hermione and Ron persevere to accomplish their goal to rid the magic world of malicious forces personified by Dark Lord Voldemort. In such a climate of dysfunction, the angle which the reader is encouraged to assume is one where they cheer for a hero fighting an individual quest against authority and conformity. Instead of conforming to self-survivalist pragmatism, Harry braves himself to oppose evil at the cost of his well-being. This is not a certainly not a collectivist orientation and is certainly aligned with the liberal democratic spirit.

In comparison to other similar studies on mass media preferences, particularly in the case of books, we find one main similarity. In Kline (2003)'s study on media consumption among youth, it was found that the majority of his respondents, regardless of gender, also claimed to prefer the Harry Potter book series the most. In terms of genre, they also claimed to favour the adventure genre. Perhaps this is due

to its universal appeal of an individual overcoming obstacles to define their own identity through self-achievement.

Bu Bu Jing Xin meanwhile, chronicles a young lady's experience of being transported from the present modern day to the historical Qing Dynasty period. From the present globalised era which allows relatively individual freedom, the heroine Zhang Xiao finds herself in the midst of a restrictive 18th century Manchurian Chinese regime. In this era, social institutions retain a tight hold over individuals, with the family and gender roles rigidly defined, the government strictly obeyed, and the societal strata strongly observed. It is almost the opposite of Harry Potter, where the protagonist arrives from freedom and ends up in social constraints. This is amplified further as she finds herself transformed into an imperial concubine embroiled in court politics. As this novel is based on time travel, all of Zhang's actions are predestined and she is unable to change history. From the reader's perspective, one enters from a relatively unrestrained life into one that is rigidly constrained albeit exciting, due to the cultural differences. However, viewed through the eyes of a tourist, one is still able to remain detached and therefore maintains the excitement. When viewed through the lens of a participant, one realises that one is truly stuck in time and cannot escape from the situation. Then it no longer becomes detached. It is interesting that respondents of this survey also wish to experience the control of social institutions, much as they would like to experience breaking away from it, though cathartically.

6.2   FAVOURITE LOCALE

Choice of Shopping Mall for Chinese-educated respondents
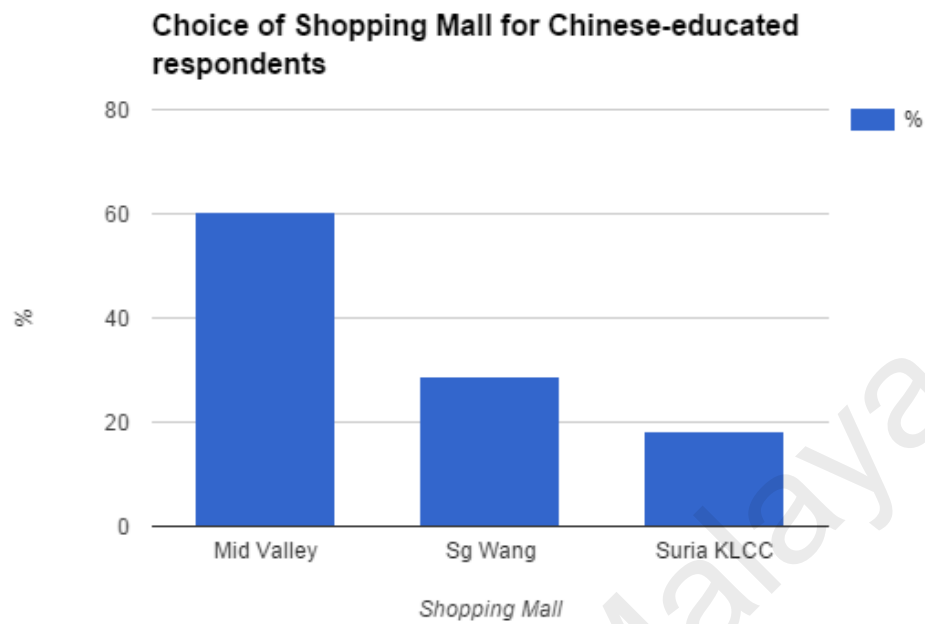
Figure 6.17 - Chinese-educated respondents' favourite locale

Choice of Shopping Mall for English-educated respondents
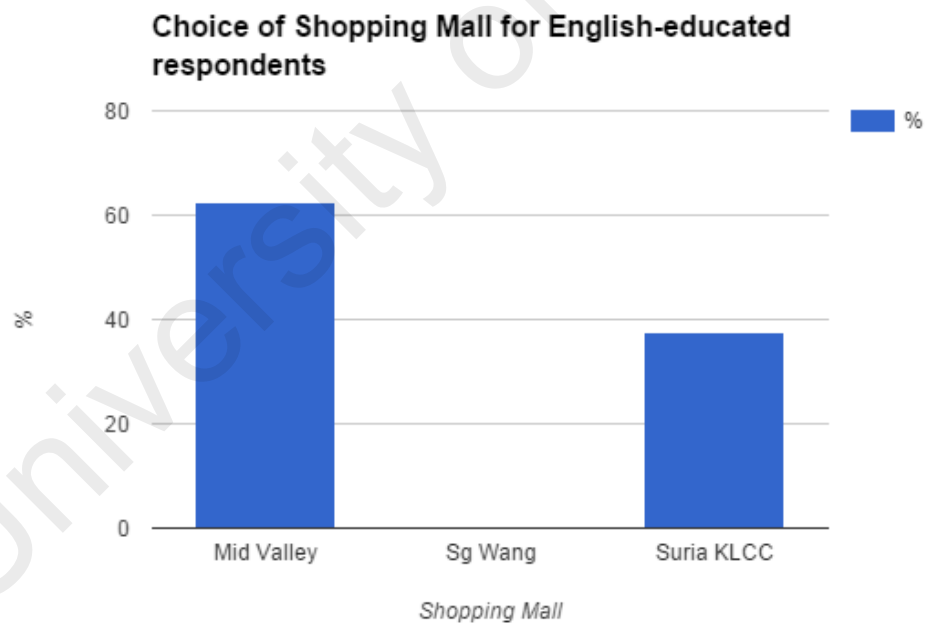
Figure 6.18 - English-educated respondents' favourite locale

Favourite locale is also another aspect of subculture, being viewed as a 'social space'. Bourdieu and Hebdige are similar in their conception of 'social space', where

they believe one's use of 'social space' entails taste. This same 'social space' is defined by commodities, or objects of consumption related to one's lifestyle (Kakonge 2010).

Here, Suria KLCC represented the mall associated with a luxury upper class lifestyle; Mid Valley represented the middle class lifestyle, while Sungei Wang represented the working class lifestyle. This categorisation is based on the types of goods boutiques that largely make up the tenants in the respective shopping malls.

Both groups favoured Mid Valley Megamall as their choice of locale for leisurely activity. Among the English educated, significantly no one chose Sungei Wang. This may be due to the association it has with working class culture. Among the Chinese educated, there is a higher preference for Sungei Wang. The reasons for these preferences are explored in the section on embodied cultural capital.

6.3   LEISURELY ACTIVITY

Favourite leisurely activity for Chinese-educated respondents
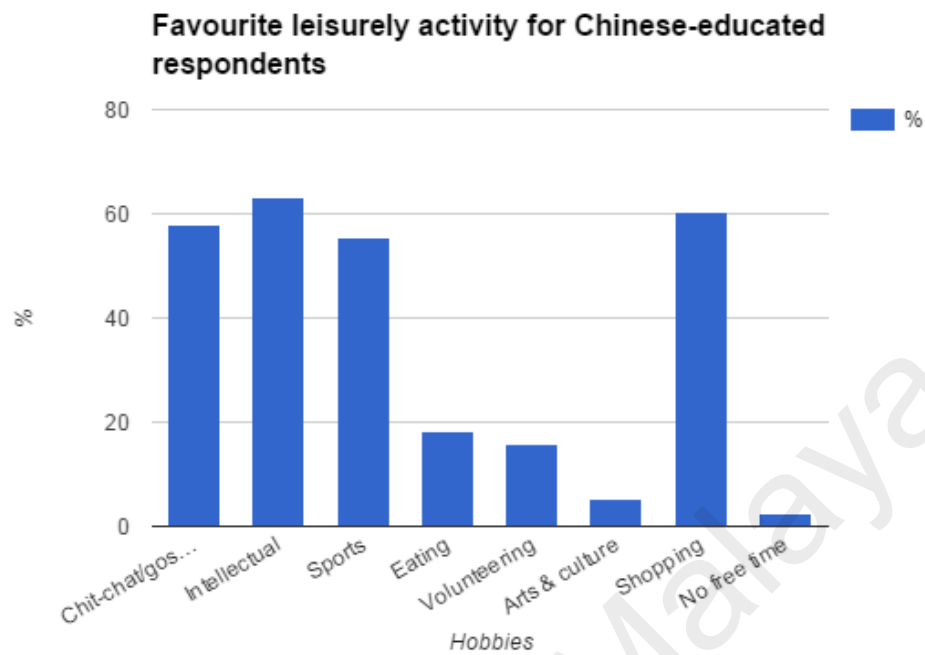
Figure 6.19 - Favourite leisurely activity for Chinese-educated respondents

Favourite leisurely activity for English-educated respondents
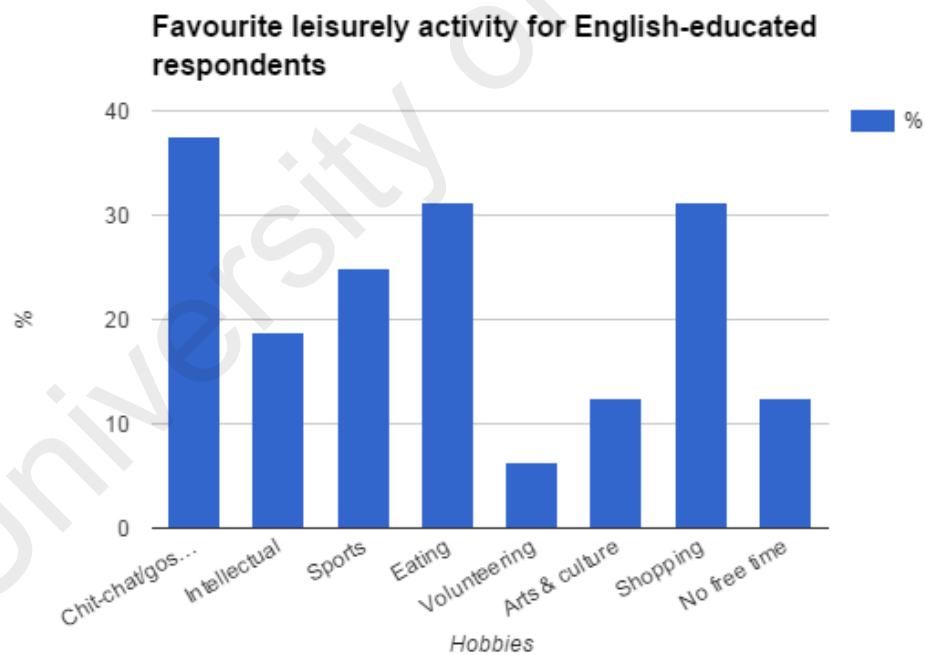
Figure 6.20 - Favourite leisurely activity for English-educated respondents

Because subcultures could not self-present at work or school, leisure time became of paramount importance for doing so, and this was further enhanced if they could obtain a favourite locale, or 'social space' (Šidlová 2014). Socialising based on chatting face-to-face appears to be the most common leisurely activity among both groups. This is followed by preference for shopping. The reasons for these preferences are explored in the section on embodied cultural capital.

Likewise, the majority enjoy socialising, with solitary and intellectual hobbies coming a close second. As discussed by Kaufman (2004), there is a link between cultural capital and choice of extracurricular activities in determining the college attainment process. The likelihood of entering college is exacerbated by the individual's choice of leisurely activity. However, Kaufman claimed this was not due to the individual's own participation on the arts, but due to their parents' expressed interest in the arts. Thus parents' interest has a strong influence on the offspring's cultural capital, which in turn assists them in entering college.

6.4   FASHION INFLUENCE

Fashion influence of Chinese-educated respondents
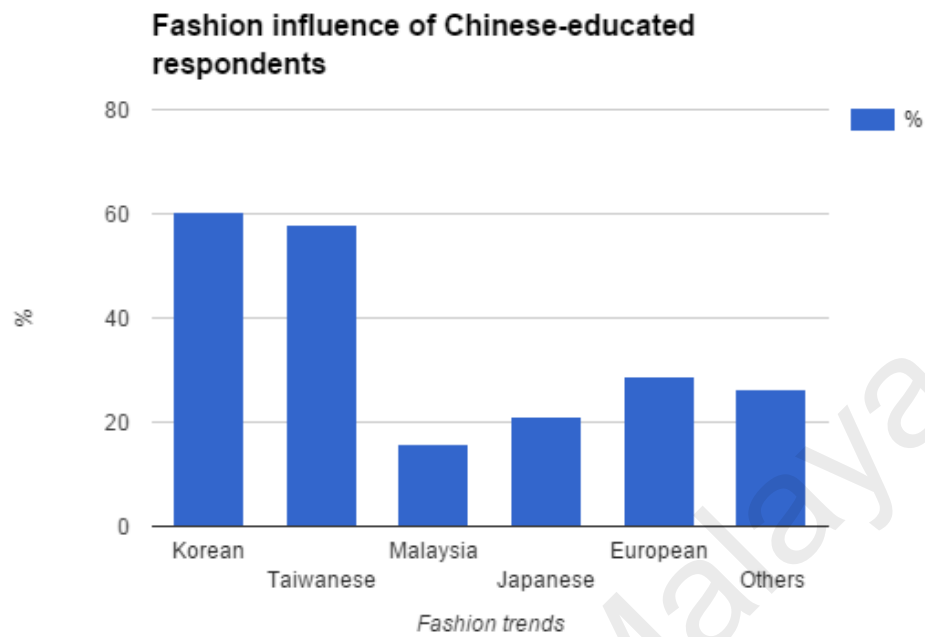
Figure 6.21 - Chinese-educated respondents favourite fashion influence

Fashion influence of English-educated respondents
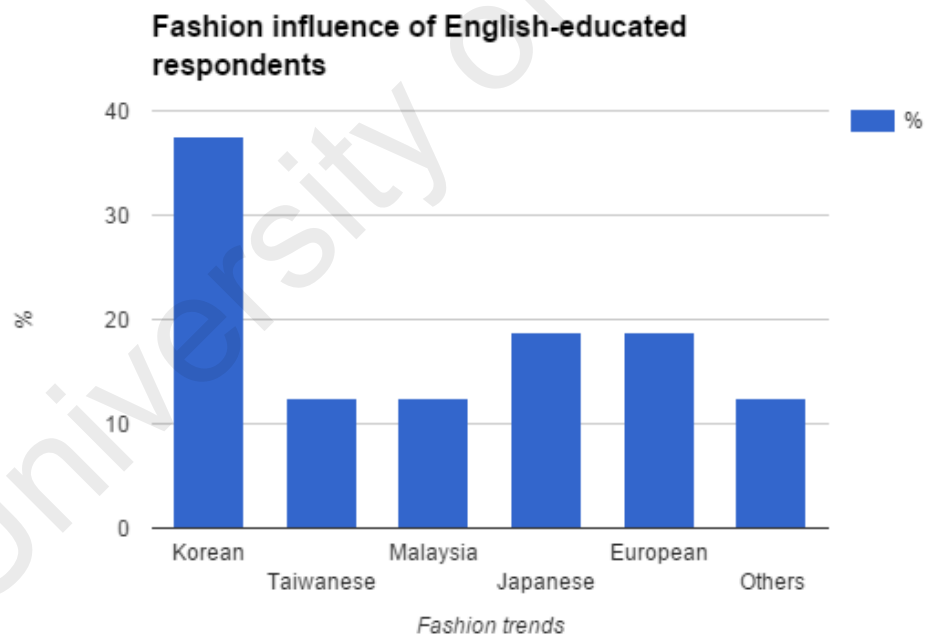
Figure 6.22 - English-educated respondents' favourite fashion influence

Members of a subculture focused on street style or fashion in a way that deviated from the established mainstream societal norms (Hebdige 2012). This is an element of consumption that translates into self-presentation, and is thus used here as an aspect of objectified cultural capital. Both groups displayed a high preference for Korean fashion trends, indicating that the global influence of Korean popular music, or K-Pop, is strong. As Shim (2006) noted, over the past decade, an increasing amount of Korean popular cultural content such as TV dramas, movies, pop songs, and celebrities had gained immense popularity in Southeast Asian countries. The 2006 Merdeka Youth Survey in Malaysia found that East Asian countries such as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and Korea are more likely to be visited by Chinese Malaysians (Merdeka Center 2006). The reasons for these preferences are explored in the section on embodied cultural capital.
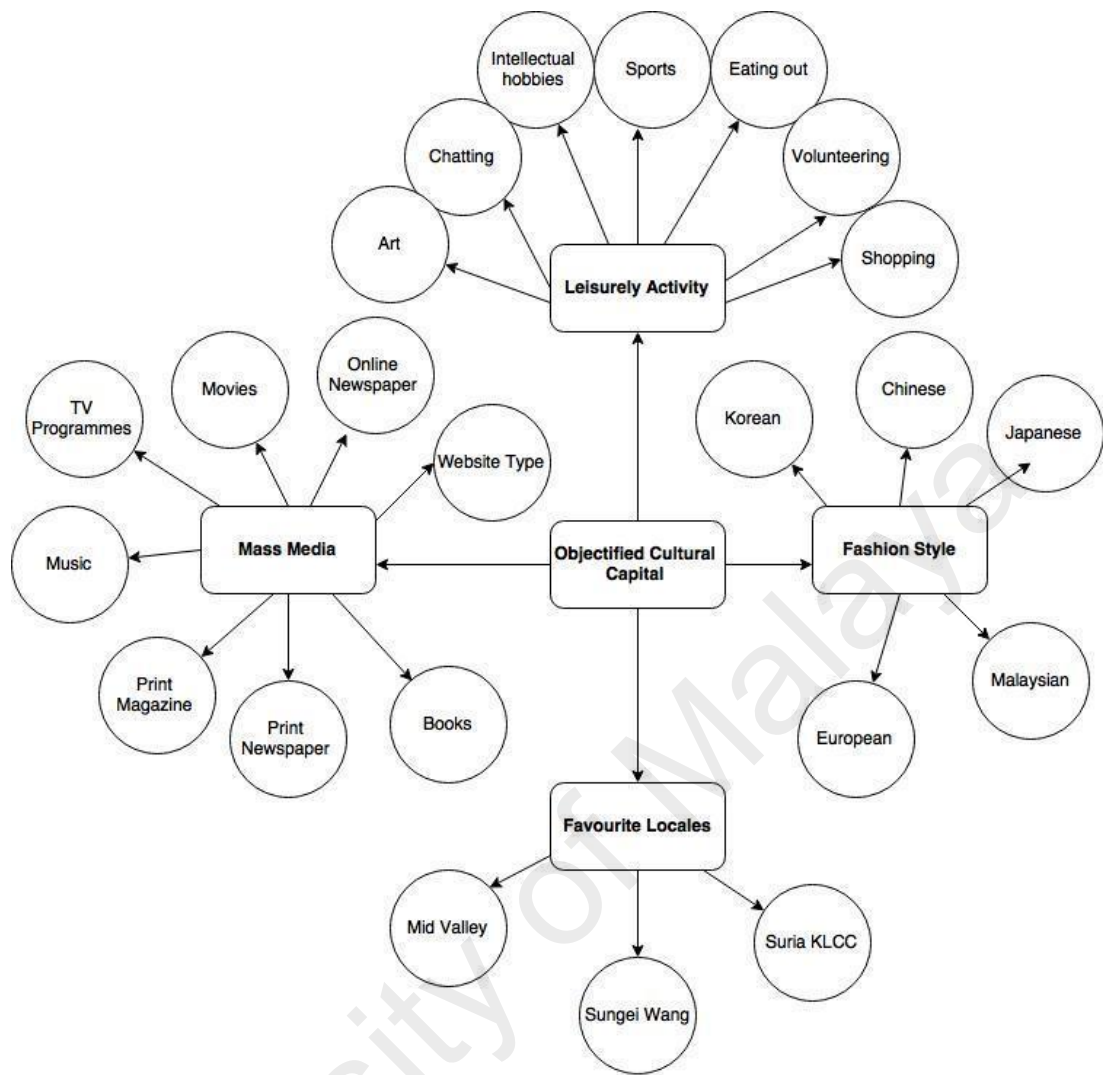
Figure 6.23 - Objectified Cultural Capital

In summary, there are four elements of self-presentation which are indicated by objectified cultural capital. Based on Hebdige (1979)'s subcultural definition, these elements are fashion, consumption of mass media, favourite locale, and leisurely activity. Two groups which are the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese were compared. The former preferred watching the Chinese-language movie CZ12, the Cantonese-language TV show TVB Ghetto Justice,

listening to K-pop music by SNSD, reading the Chinese-translated print magazine ViVi, reading print and online news by Sinchew Media, using social media, reading the Japanese manga Doraemon, using Mid Valley Megamall as their social space, shopping leisurely, and wearing Korean fashions. The latter preferred watching the English-language movie Twilight, the Cantonese-language TV show TVB Ghetto Justice, listening to Mandarin-language songs by Jay Chou, reading the Chinese-language print magazine ViVi, reading print and online news by Sinchew Media, using social media, reading Harry Potter, using Mid Valley Megamall as their social space, chatting leisurely and wearing Korean fashions. There is little difference between both groups, save for choice of music and book. Even so, there is little language preference as the English-educated prefer to listen to Jay Chou who sings in Mandarin. Interestingly the Chinese-educated prefer listening to Korean music, though this is probably due to the wide coverage given to K-pop by Chinese-language media. The last difference is where Chinese-educated respondents prefer shopping while the English-educated prefer chatting. This shows the former are slightly more materialistic while the latter is more concerned with building social bonds. In general, there is slight difference in consumption behaviour based on language preference in the case of movie choice, among respondents who attended Chinese-medium schools and English-medium schools.

CHAPTER 7

EMBODIED CULTURAL CAPITAL AMONG THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE

7.0   INTRODUCTION

This section covers the final aspect of cultural capital, which is the embodied form. The embodied form is the lived dispositions of participants, which also represents the phenomenological or sense-making aspect. In this part, I have included questions in my survey which have mined the reasons for respondents' objectified cultural capital tastes. Their ambitions and values are also included in this aspect. The reasons for their tastes may be influenced by their values and aligned with their ambitions. This section includes participants' fashion ideas, reason for linguistic preference, reason for leisurely pursuits, and reasons for their choice of peers.

The research question answered in this section is whether phenomenologically, is there a clear dichotomy of Confucian versus Western liberal democratic values between the Chinese-educated and English-educated.

As outlined in the theoretical framework, much debate has centered on the operationalisation of the concept of habitus. In particular, supporters and detractors of Bourdieu's work have focused on the phenomenological aspect of his concept of habitus. Supporters of Bourdieu's work claim there is inherently an element of

phenomenological social constructivism which enriches the explanation of structural conditioning in his work (Lau, 2004).

7.1 EATING OUT
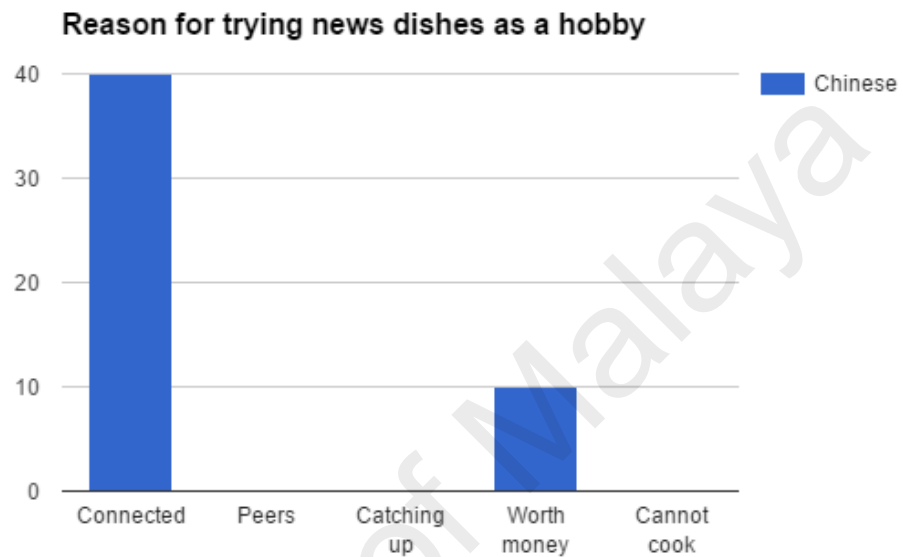
Figure 7.1 - Reason for trying new dishes as a hobby for the Chinese-educated respondents

This section examines the reasons respondents attribute to their choice of leisurely activity, as depicted in the section on objectified cultural capital. For those who claimed their hobby is eating out, their main reason is that it makes them feel connected to the rest of the world.
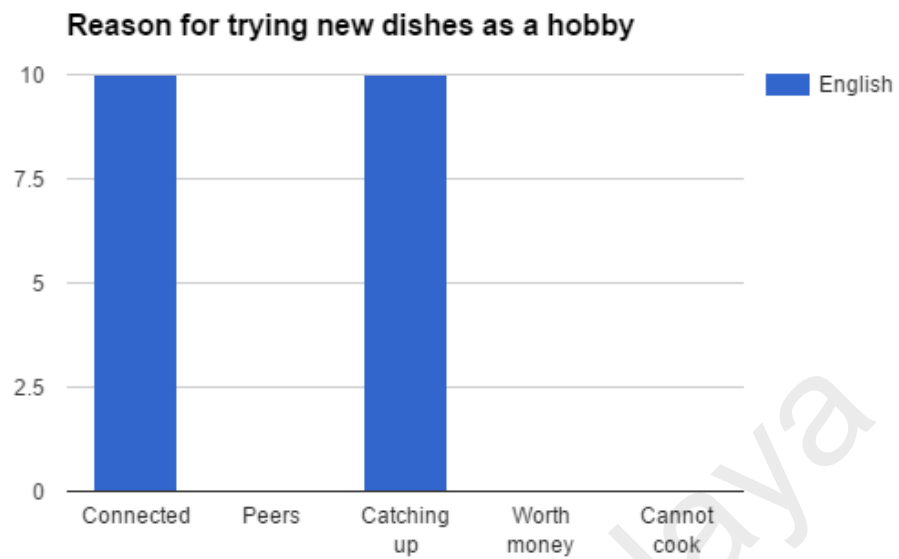
Figure 7.2 - Reason for trying new dishes as a hobby for the English-educated respondents

For those who claimed their hobby is eating out, their main reason is that it makes them feel connected to the rest of the world, as it does enable them to also catch up with existing friends.

'Eating out' has been included as a consumption preference by Savage, Bennett, Silva, and Warde (2006), amongst others such as music, reading, film, TV, sports, art and leisure. Food has often been cited as offering a good vantage point for observing globalization, as it highlights close connections among peoples, cultures and places (Yoshino 2010). The findings show this to be true. This is exacerbated by the multicultural society in Malaysia, giving rise to accessibility to various types of food. This opens up their eyes at an early stage to being welcome to cuisines found beyond Malaysia itself. A sizeable new middle class has emerged and the traditional

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ways of life and eating habits of the different ethnic communities are changing (Poulain et al 2015). Food modernity in Malaysia can be regarded as a consequence of the modernisation of Malaysian society (Poulain et al 2015). However, while food consumption can be categorised by ethnicity, the case in Malaysia is more complex as individuals may belong to more than one ethnic group and experience intra-ethnic diversity. The rise of individualism has also led to new personal preferences in trying out fusion food (Poulain et al 2015).

7.2 VOLUNTEERING
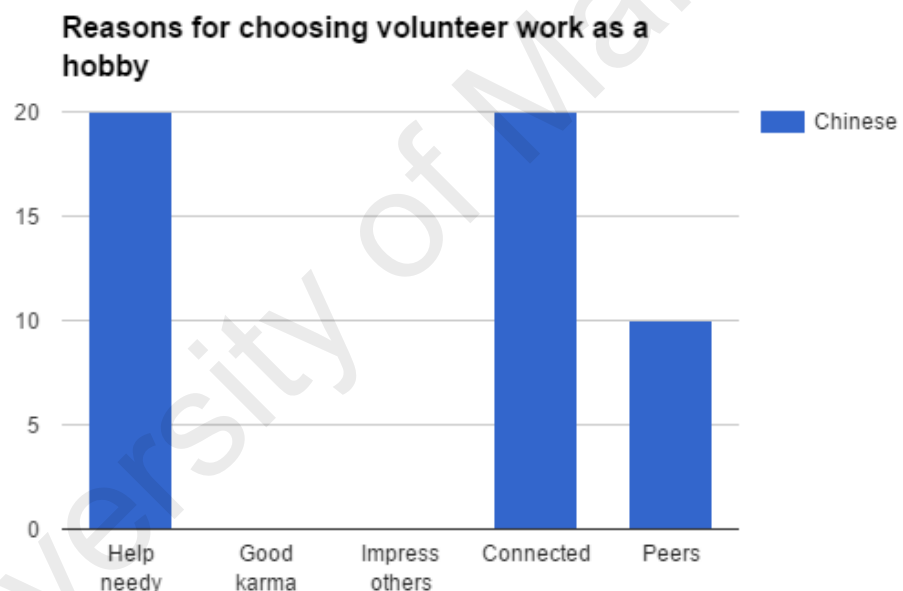
Figure 7.3 - Reason for volunteering as a hobby for the Chinese-educated respondents

The Chinese-educated respondents who claimed volunteering as a hobby claimed that they did so because apart from wishing to help the needy, it also made them feel

connected to the rest of the world. Among the respondents from the English-medium institution, no one reported choosing volunteer work as a favoured pastime.

Bennett (2013) found that young people who participate in the traditionally highbrow activity, going to the theatre, are more likely to volunteer. People from lower social classes on the other hand were less likely to volunteer compared to those from higher social classes. This class influence was only negated when individuals took part in cultural activities, such as attending art exhibitions. There appeared to be a link between accumulating highbrow cultural capital and volunteering. This may indicate that a feeling of generosity or benevolence may arise from participating in activities linked to high society. High society, usually in ownership of more financial resources, is often expected to be philanthropic. These norms may be unconsciously passed on to those who participate in traditional high social class activities.

7.3   ATTENDING CULTURAL EXHIBITS
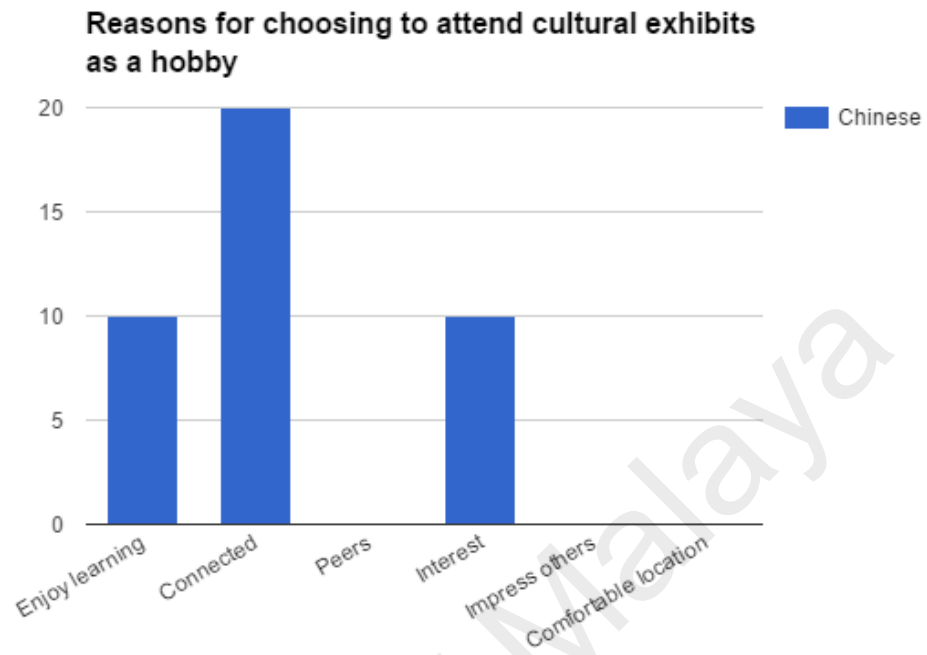
Figure 7.4 - Reason for attending cultural exhibits as a hobby for Chinese-educated respondents

Those who claimed to attend cultural exhibits as a hobby did so because it made them feel connected to the rest of the world. Among the English-medium respondents, no one claimed to attend art or cultural exhibits as a favoured pastime.

7.4   SHOPPING
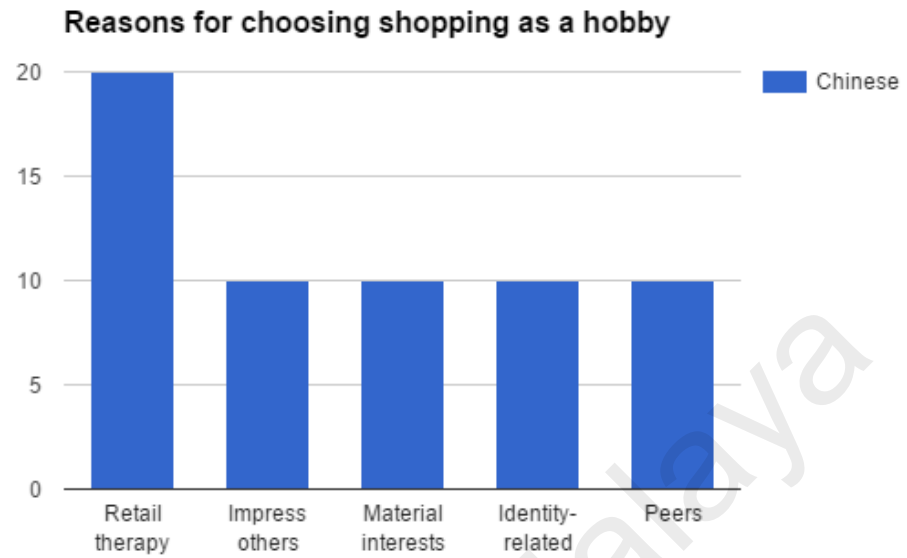
Figure 7.5 - Reasons for shopping as a hobby for Chinese-educated respondents

Those who claimed shopping as their hobby claimed the main reason for doing so was due to the 'feel good' factor of buying things.

Reasons for choosing shopping as a hobby
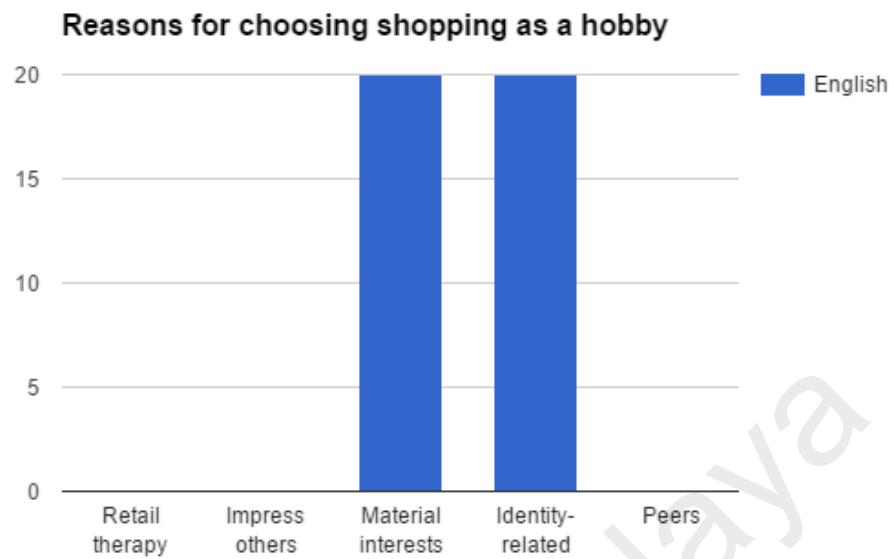
Figure 7.6 - Reasons for shopping as a hobby for English-educated respondents

Those who claimed shopping as their hobby claimed the main reason for doing so was due to the material drive and identity formation aspects.

Generation Y thoroughly enjoys shopping and are easily bored, thus making them on the lookout for new excitement, whether online or offline (Lachman and Brett 2013). In the United States, 37 percent of Generation Y claim to 'love' shopping while 48 percent claim to 'enjoy' it (Lachman and Brett 2013). A study conducted among students of two private universities in Kuala Lumpur, Binary University College and Sunway University found consumers search for products which have images compatible to their perceptions of self (Muniandy et al 2014). In the case of the English-educated respondents, this seems to be true, because they claim that one of the reasons they choose shopping as a hobby is that it allows them to purchase things

which relate to their presentation of self. One popular way of shopping today in the globalised age is online shopping. There are many sites that enable such transactions, such as Amazon.com, Alibaba, Taobao and others. Although my survey did not differentiate between online and offline shopping, I can assume that shopping includes both forms. The issue of offline brick-and-mortar malls is tackled in a following question asking respondents which shopping mall they would prefer to spend time in. Online shopping has becoming a popular activity today because of the ease and number of people using information technology tools and the Internet (Syuhaily Osman and Chan 2010). Syuhaily Osman and Chan (2010)'s study conducted among undergraduates in a local public university, Universiti Putra Malaysia, found that the quality of shopping websites influence online shoppers' decision-making. This shows that mass media has an influence on shopping behaviour, in this case among undergraduates. This correlates with Sklair (2001)'s conception of the transnational elite using the mass media to promote the 'culture-ideology of consumerism', where users of mass media are encouraged to buy more to enjoy a fulfilling life.

7.5   HAVING NO FREE TIME
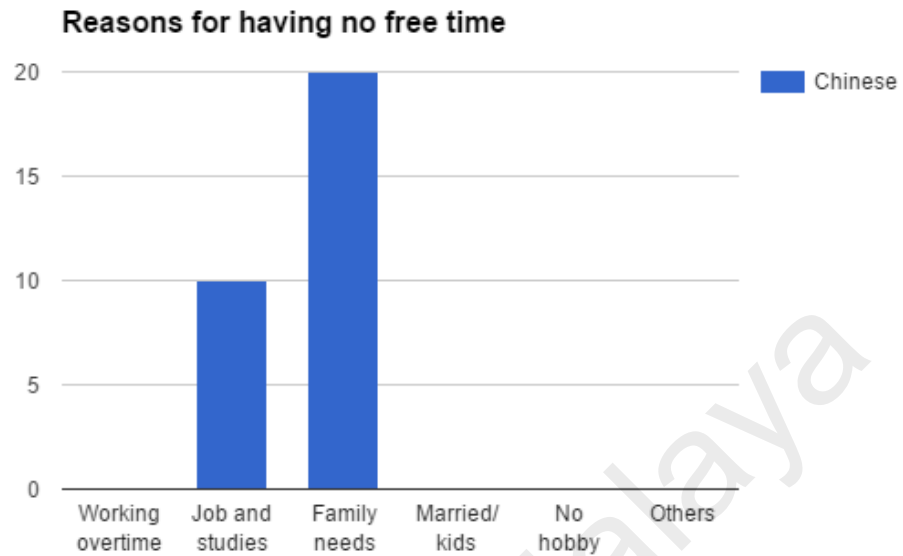
Figure 7.7 - Reasons for having no free time for Chinese-educated respondents

Among the Chinese-educated respondents, those who reported having no free time for hobbies explained it was due to family needs and balancing a job and studies. No respondents from the English-medium institution reported having no free time to pursue a hobby. One indicator of cultural capital may be the quality of leisure and beneficial personal outcomes, based on the diversity of activities (Stalker 2011). In the case of having absolutely no free time due to other obligations, this indicates that the respondent possesses a lesser amount of cultural capital.

7.6   LOCALE

7.6.1   MID VALLEY MEGAMALL
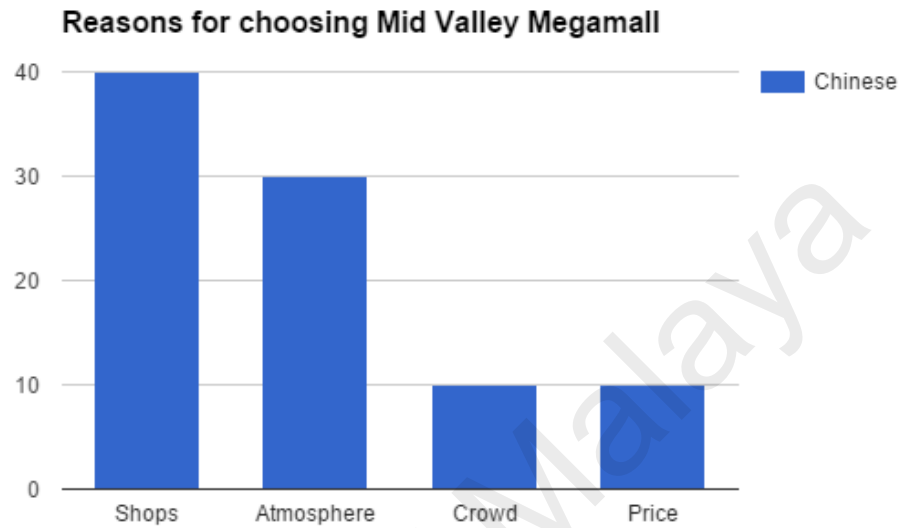
Figure 7.8 - Reasons for choosing Mid Valley Megamall for Chinese-educated respondents

Those who chose Mid Valley Megamall gave the reason that type of shops influenced their choice of hangout spot.
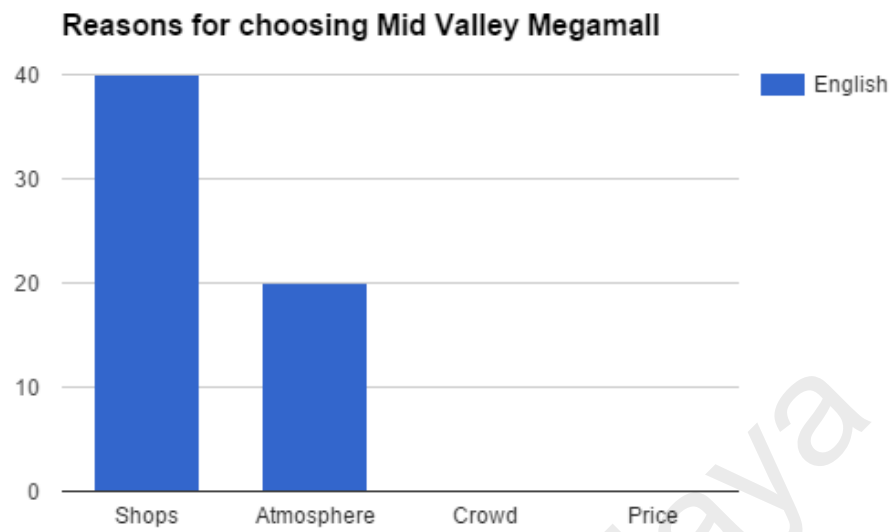
Figure 7.9 - Reasons for choosing Mid Valley Megamall for English-educated respondents

Among the English-educated respondents, those who chose Mid Valley Megamall gave the reason that type of shops influenced their choice of hangout spot.

7.6.2   SUNGEI WANG

Reason for choosing Sungei Wang
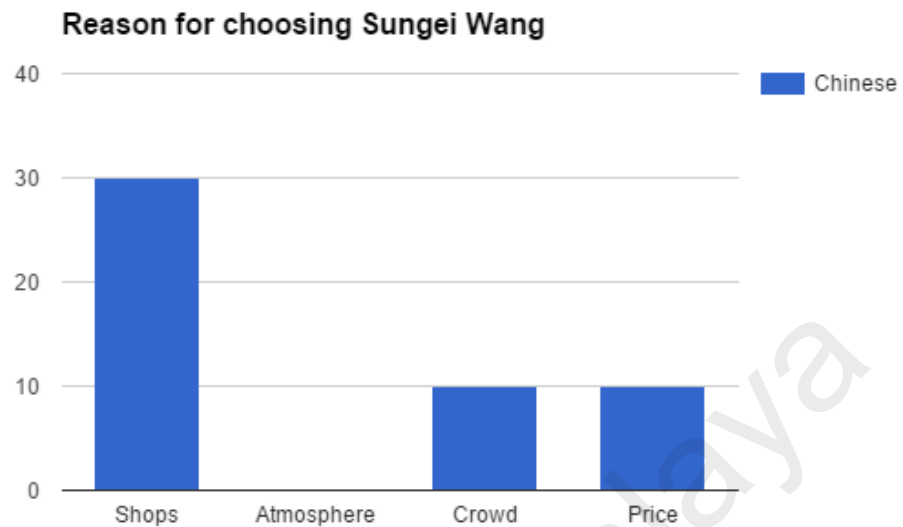
Figure 7.10 - Reasons for choosing Sungei Wang for the Chinese-educated respondents

Among the Chinese-educated respondents, those who chose Sungei Wang claimed their reason was the type of shops. No respondents from the English-educated group chose Sungei Wang.

Shopping malls may be viewed as a 'third place' away from the routines of daily life. It also functions as the source of goods which individuals can purchase to denote their identity. Members of subcultures, in defining their countercultural identity, invented an 'elsewhere' as their locale of choice (Hebdige 1999). Putnam, who advanced Bourdieu's concept of social capital, also explored Oldenburg's concept of the 'third place', which meant places for community engagement separate from work or home (Frey 2010). Putnam emphasised the importance of these places by showing

that communities with high social capital are better educated, healthier, vote more, are more altruistic, and more prosperous than those with weaker social networks (Frey 2010). The 'third place' may well give rise to stronger or weaker participation in cultural capital-based activities.

It appears that respondents largely choose a shopping mall based on the type of shops available. This shows that the types of goods and services available are important to them. Respondents choose a shopping mall based on the possibility of engaging in identity-based consumptive behaviour. At the same time, they are aware of the constraints of price.

7.6.3   SURIA KLCC

Notably, no one chose Suria KLCC as their choice of third place, likely because of a limited budget, as the respondents are still students and cannot afford branded goods, which Suria KLCC specialises in selling. Suria KLCC has been catering mainly to tourists and people of high disposable income. While Mid Valley Megamall includes a diverse range of shops, most of the shops in Sungei Wang cater to highly fashion conscious youth, fans of electronic gadgets and members of youth subcultures. The prices are lower than in Mid Valley. Most of the shops are also owned by local Malaysian Chinese and tend to employ young Malaysian Chinese workers who are of university age (but not in university) or foreign workers.

7.7   MOVIE CHOICE
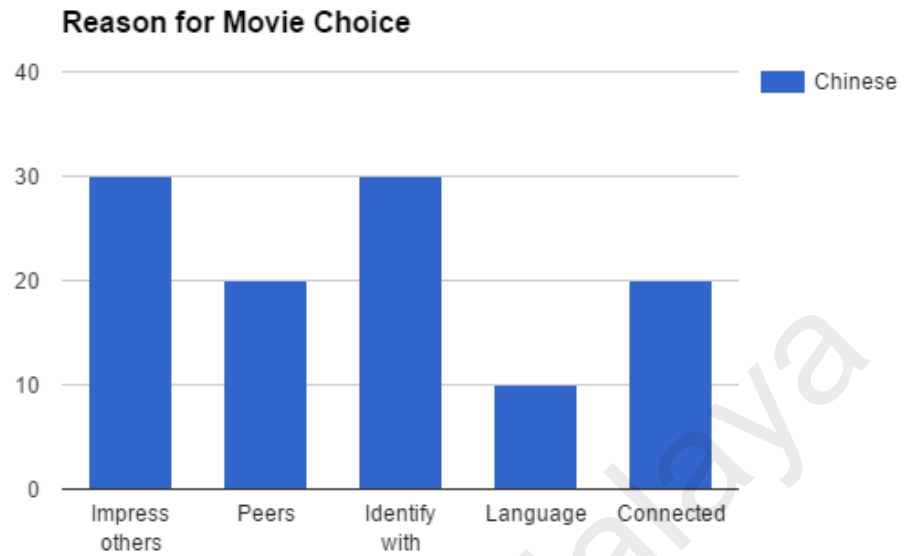
Figure 7.11 - Reasons for movie choice for Chinese-educated respondents

Respondents chose to watch movies for two main reasons, i.e. because they identified with the characters, plot, or theme, and because they wanted to impress others.
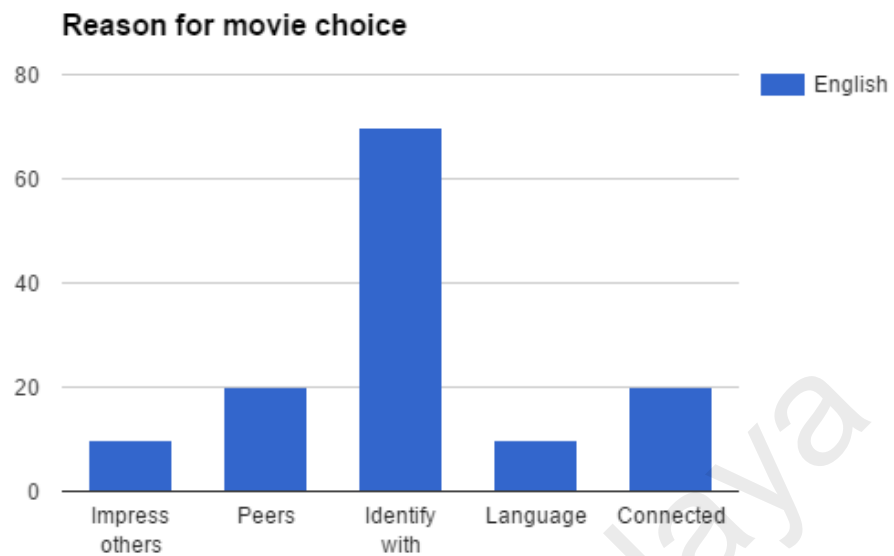
Figure 7.12 - Reasons for movie choice for the English-educated respondents

Respondents chose movies mainly because they identified with the characters, plot or theme. One study showed that identification with characters was associated with spectators' degree of enjoyment of feature films of different genres (Igartua 2010). A second study showed that identification with characters was associated with greater cognitive elaboration and a more complex reflexive process during the viewing; while a third study showed that identification with characters predicted the impact of the film on attitudes and beliefs (Igartua 2010). It appears that among both groups of respondents, identifying with characters, plot or theme of the movie they watched was the main reason for their movie preference. This shows that they are concerned with understanding the movie fully in its context, which Igartua (2010) has demonstrated is enhanced when they identify with it. It also had the ability to shape

the respondents' attitudes and beliefs, which relate closely to their embodied cultural capital. Media could therefore act on top of existing socialisation agents to resocialise respondents into embracing a new kind of *habitus*.

7.8   TELEVISION PROGRAMME CHOICE
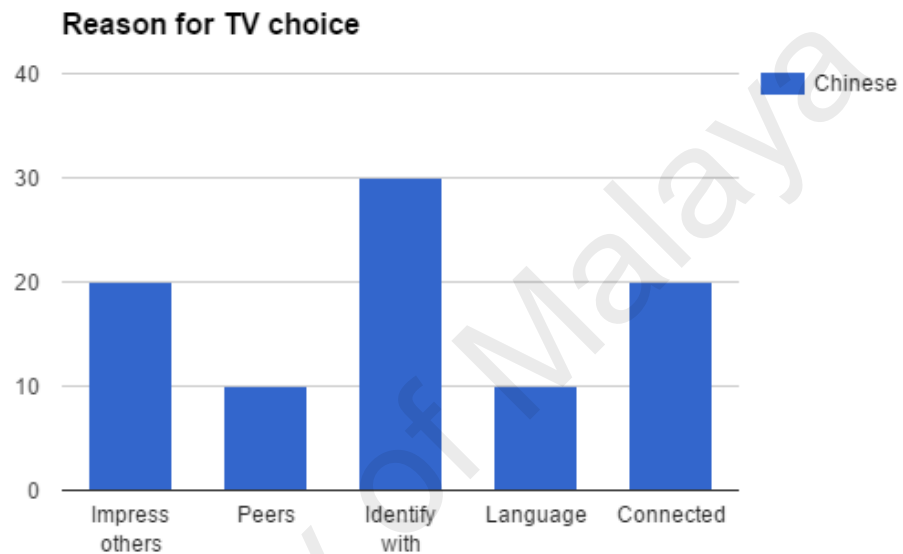
Figure 7.13 - Reasons for TV programme choice for the Chinese-educated respondents

Respondents chose TV programmes mainly because they identified with the characters, plot or theme.
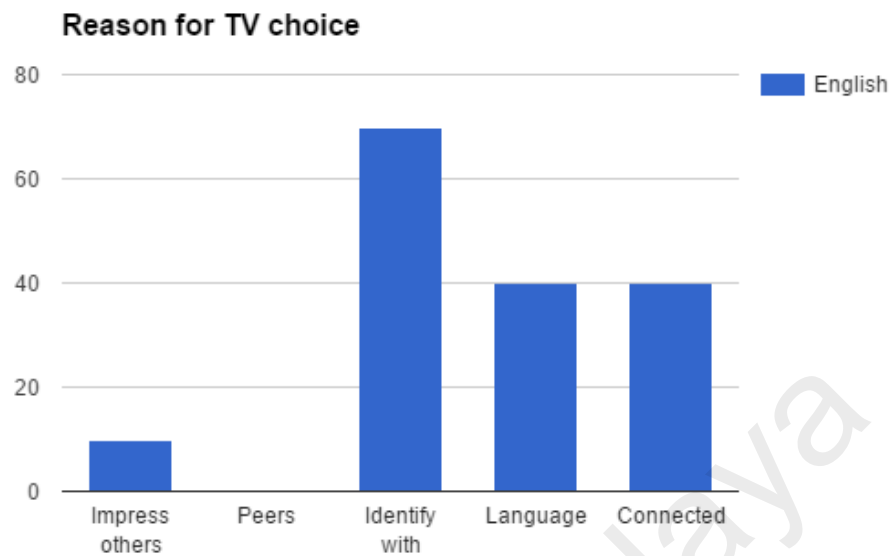
Figure 7.14 - Reasons for TV programme choice for the English-educated respondents

Respondents chose TV programmes mainly because they identified with the characters, plot or theme. Identification with media characters is one outcome of television viewing that is believed to mediate audience responses (Buchanan 2005). The desire to be like or act like a character in an example of mass media is termed as 'wishful identification' (Buchanan 2005). Again, the same process happens as described above about movie preference. Identification with characters, plot or theme becomes central to enjoyment of the TV programme, resulting in the TV programme being able to resocialise the viewer with attitudes and beliefs relating to the habitus.

7.9   MUSIC CHOICE
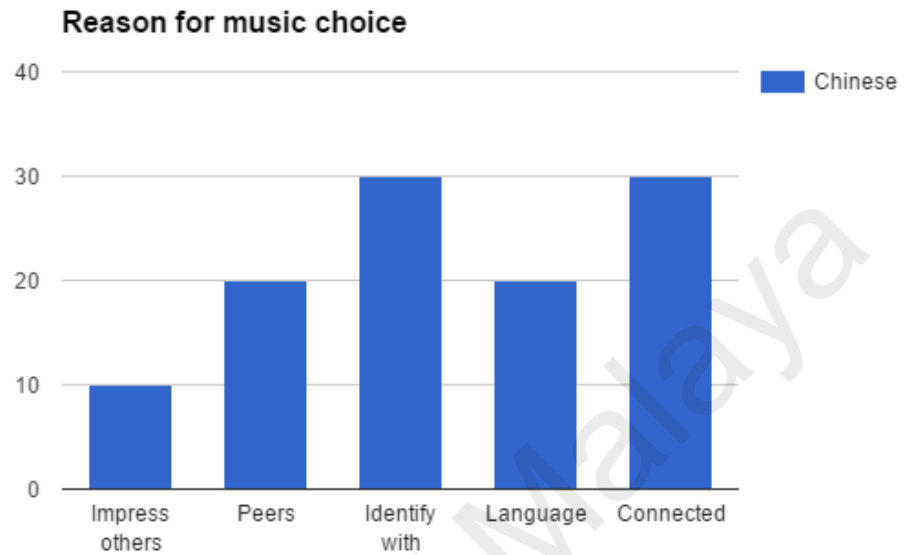
Figure 7.15 - Reasons for music choice for Chinese-educated respondents

Respondents chose to listen to music mainly because they identified with the singer/songwriter, lyrics, or music genre.

Reason for music choice
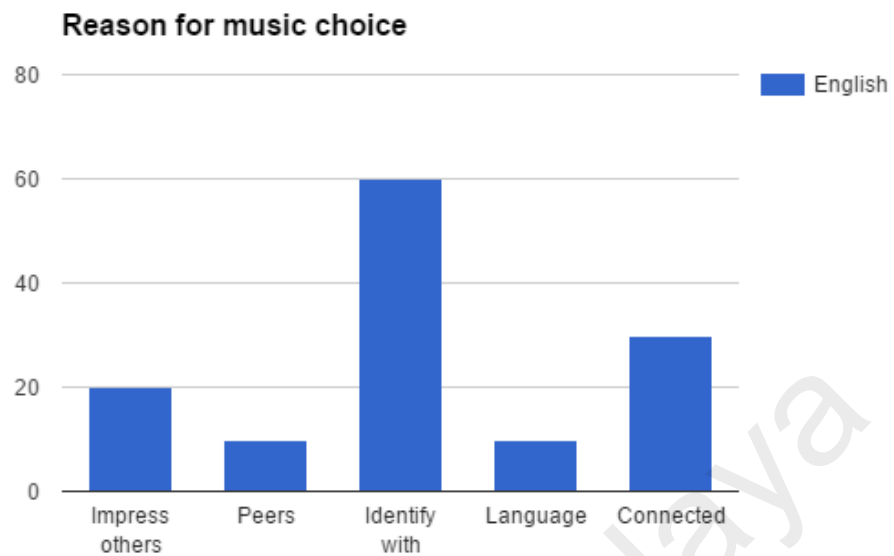
Figure 7.16 - Reasons for music choice for English-educated respondents

Respondents chose to listen to music mainly because they identified with the singer/songwriter, lyrics, or music genre. Once again, the concept of identifying with the material or the creator itself becomes a major reason for respondents' music preference. Lyrics are an important aspect of music preference. From an analysis of lyrics from large online music databases, music can be classified into a psychological model of emotion comprising 23 specific emotion categories (Yang and Lee 2009). Music omnivorousness, or diversity of tastes is one of the measures of highbrow cultural capital (Bryson 1997; Emmison 2003; Katz-Gerro et al 2007; Garcia Alvarez at al 2007; in Katz-Gerro 2008).

Music is often viewed as an accompaniment to other activities rather than an activity by itself, concurrent with previous research (Upadhyay 2013). At the same time, it is

considered at least as important as most leisurely activities (Rentfrow and Gosling 2003). In subculture, music has been used as an element of self-presentation to demarcate oneself from the mainstream culture, such as in the case of punk (Hebdige 1979). Participants in Rentfrow and Gosling's study also believed that their music preferences reveal much about their own personalities (Rentfrow and Gosling 2003). This shows that there is no significant difference in the way Chinese-educated and English-educated participants consume music, which is for individualist purposes and related to the expression of identity.

7.10   BOOK CHOICE
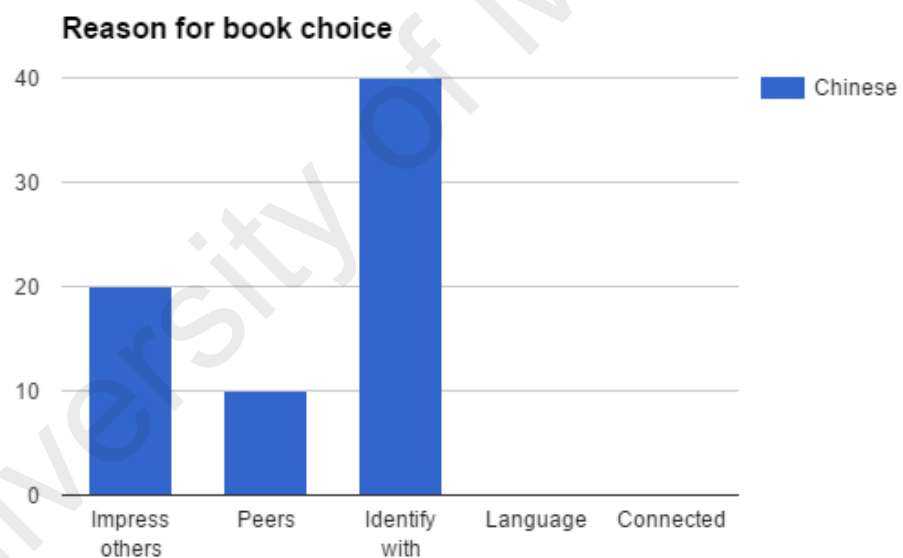
Figure 7.17 - Reasons for book choice for Chinese-educated respondents

Respondents claimed they chose to read books because they identified with the characters, plot or theme.
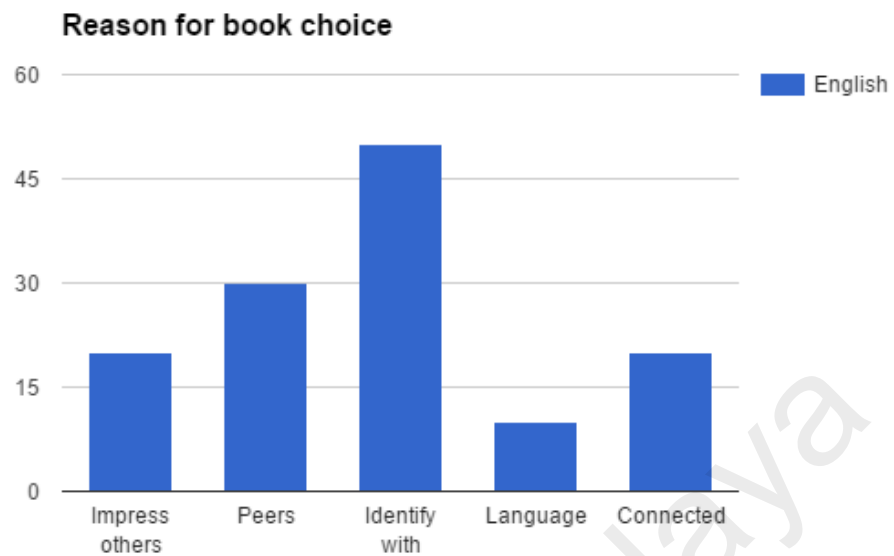
Figure 7.18 - Reasons for book choice for English-educated respondents

Respondents claimed they chose to read books because they identified with the characters, plot or theme. In China, managerial, professional, and civil officials are most likely to read intellectually challenging books with literary prestige, while blue-collared workers are less likely to read books (Wang, Davis and Bian 2006). Social differentiation is evident in this case as there is a 'hierarchy of tastes' observed with members of higher privileged groups display higher propensity for reading, especially towards highly acclaimed literary texts. Literary texts have been traditionally differentiated from non-literary texts based on its function, form and content (Khosravishakib 2012). Literary texts tend to impart some lesson on life through the lens of the main character, using metaphors and symbols (Khosravishakib 2012). Non-literary texts tend to allow the reader to simply enjoy

the text for entertainment (Khosravishakib 2012). In this case, both groups display 'wishful identification' towards Harry Potter and Bu Bu Jing Xin most strongly. The first chapter of Bu Bu Jing Xin depicts a typical after-work scene of an urban white-collar woman, providing evidence on how *habitus* is configured by the socioeconomic transformation of China's young generation (Tang 2014). Because readers identify with the main character, they are able to enjoy Bu Bu Jing Xin. Harry Potter meanwhile, depicts two very important motifs in children's literature, which are that parents' love is omnipotent, and a reassuring message about death (Trites 2001). The books also rely on social institutions to proscribe adolescents' place in society (Trites 2001). Thus, these two books can be argued to contain both literary function, form and content, while at the same time being entertaining. Ultimately, the only difference in the language in which they were originally published, which readers can now read in translated versions. There is nonetheless still a Chinese-educated preference for Bu Bu Jing Xin and an English-educated preference for Harry Potter. What is outstanding is that respondents who are Chinese-educated and English-educated have the same reason for enjoying a book.

7.11   ONLINE NEWS CHOICE

Reasons for online news choice
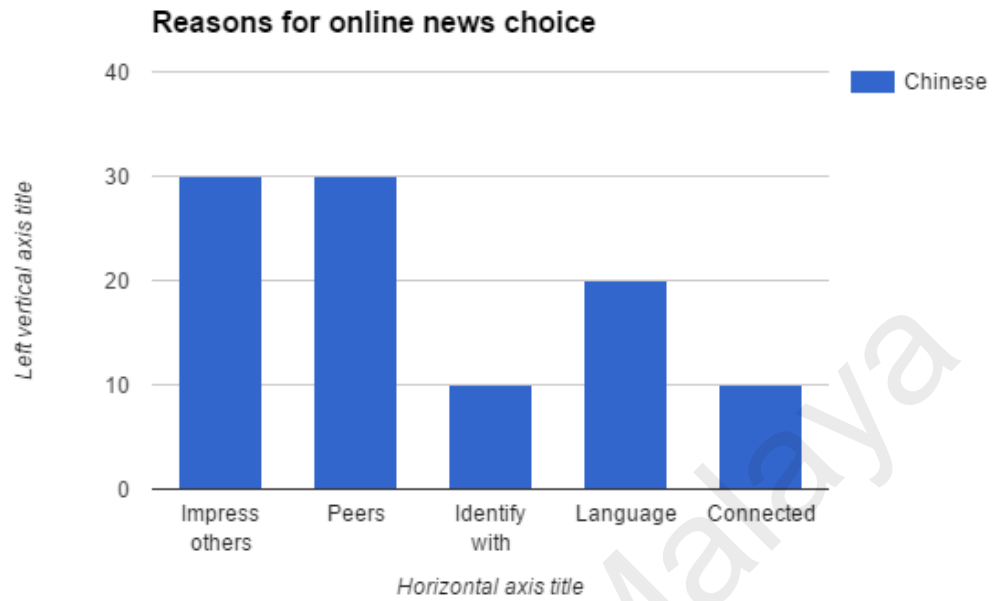
Figure 7.19 - Reasons for online news choice for Chinese-educated respondents

Respondents claimed they chose to read news from certain news portals because they

wished to impress other people and also because of peer influence.

Reasons for online news choice
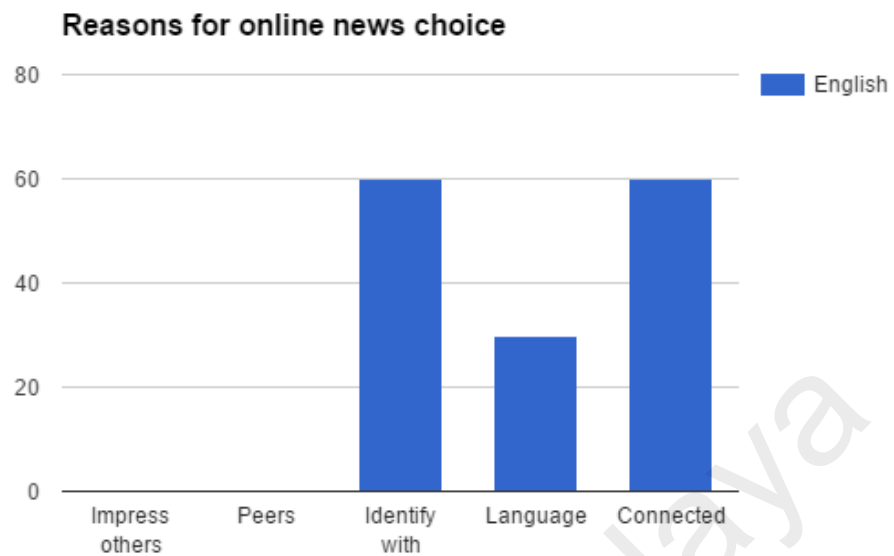
Figure 7.20- Reasons for online news choice for English-educated respondents

Respondents claimed they chose to read news from certain news portals because they identified with the angle and style of writing, as well as because it made them feel connected to the rest of the world.

In this instance, Chinese-educated respondents and English-educated respondents differed in their choice of online news. The former were influenced by peer interaction while the latter identified with the angle and style of writing. The most popular choice of news media for both Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents was Sin Chew Daily. A study by Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak and Yang Lai Fong (2013) found that Sin Chew Daily had a neutral angle and used an episodic frame of writing, which centred on the event, reporting facts in a descriptive way. Respondents from both groups clearly identify strongly with this neutral perspective

and prefer news that is written factually and descriptively. As Sin Chew Daily is long established and has an online presence, it is likely this also contributes to the peer influence aspect, where one reads Sin Chew Daily because one's friends also do.

7.12   WEBSITE CHOICE
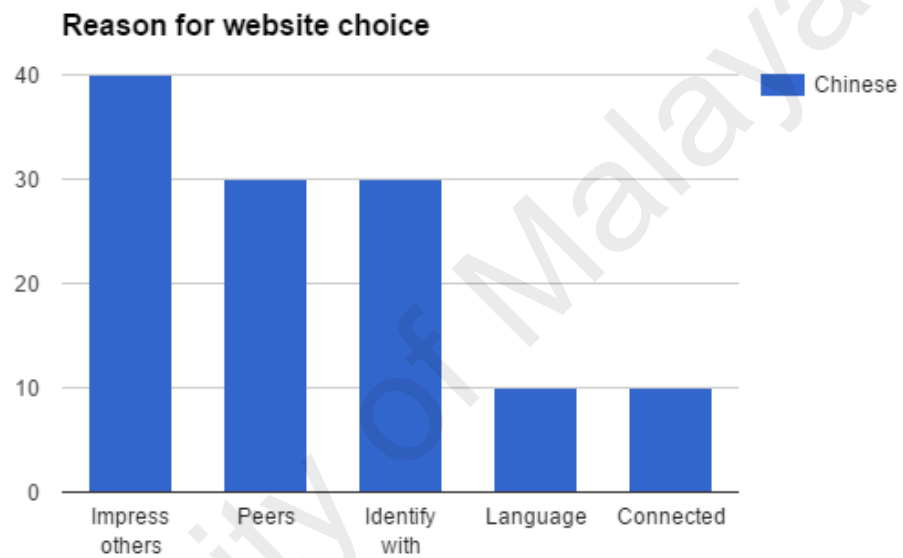
Figure 7.21 - Reasons for website choice for Chinese-educated respondents

Respondents claimed they perused certain websites because they wished to impress others, followed by peer influence and identifying with the website angle and style of presenting information. In a study among teenagers in another Malaysian city, Johor

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Bahru, the most frequent websites accessed were social networking sites, in which they had an average of between 201 to 300 online friends (Johari Hassan and Raja Shahrina Raja Abdul Rashid 2012). My study also found the same results, with social networking sites being the most frequently accessed websites. This is evident in the respondents' *habitus* here, as the main reason for using such websites was to impress others and peer influence. With an estimate of 201- to 300 friends each, there is a relatively wide audience for one's online activity and is enough to posting material that may 'impress' them. Studies which have focused on motivations for using social networking sites found that greater 'bridging social capital' happens for college students who use it to learn about people they have met offline (Marlow 2011). This is an activity which is enabled and enables the process of globalisation, bridging national boundaries in the area of making friends.
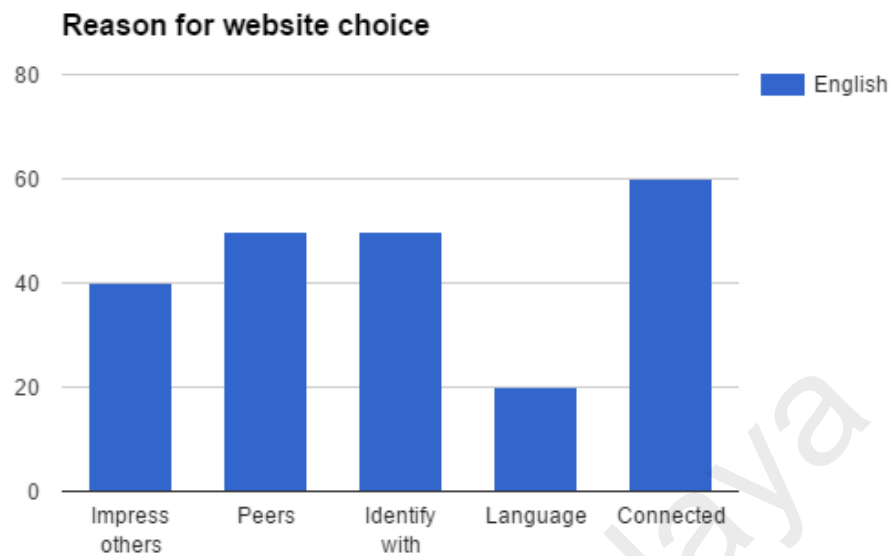
Figure 7.22 - Reasons for website choice for English-educated respondents

Respondents claim that they choose to peruse a particular website because it makes them feel connected to the rest of the world. Website choice relates to individual identities. There are psychologically meaningful links between users' personalities, their website preferences and Facebook profile features (Kosinski et al 2013).

From the findings above, it appears that 'feeling connected' is one of the main reasons given by respondents to account for their tastes in objectified cultural capital. This influence is stronger compared to other influences such as peer pressure, in which respondents may choose to consume because their peers are interested or because they wish to impress their peers. Respondents appear to desire connectivity to the rest of humanity, but not necessarily to succumb to direct peer pressure. Using

Putnam's theory of social capital, the effect of 'bridging social capital' outweighs the effect of 'bonding social capital'.

Social capital is a concept originally identified by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, defined as the actual or potential resources accrued through one's network of more or less institutionalised relationships (Knudsen et. al.). Later on, the political scientist Robert Putnam re-examined the notion, redefining it as features of social organisation like norms and networks which improve society's efficiency through coordinated actions, also regarded as norms of reciprocity (Putnam, 2000 in Knudsen et. al.). Putnam differentiated two kinds of social capital, the bridging and the bonding social capital. Bridging social capital is defined as outward looking ties that encompass people across diverse social cleavages, while bonding social capital is defined as inward looking connections that promote in-group solidarity and reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups (Putnam, 2000 in Knudsen et.al). Individuals who are confined by bonding social capital may display exclusivity to outsiders, thus giving themselves insular characteristics. Individuals who possess bridging social capital, on the other hand may be predisposed stronger towards cosmopolitanism.

In fact, while the discussion focuses on habitus, or embodied cultural capital, the concept of social capital can also be seen as a subset of this aspect. This is because respondents' choice of social network comes from their own norms and values. At the same time peers are also an agent of socialisation. Social capital in this case overlaps with cultural capital.

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7.13   AMBITIONS OF RESPONDENT

Ambition is defined by Turner (in Sewell, 1966) as upward social mobility, and is generated by the social context as well as family, peers, and neighbourhood. Turner (1988) claimed that students shared values and choose friends on the basis of their aspirations rather than background. Ambition can thus be viewed here as desire to move upwards in Malaysian society, and is influenced by socialisation agents. Socialisation agents such as the education system can provide respondents with either Confucian or Western liberal democratic values, and these values will be obvious in their ambitions. The following charts display the ambitions of the Chinese-educated respondents and English-educated respondents. The chart data is displayed according to percentage of respondents who choose each ambition option. The researcher compares the percentage of Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents who claim to possess each ambition option.

The following chart is constructed based on the survey question, 'Among the following aspirations/ambitions, which is the most important to you? Please choose only ONE answer'. The response options include 'To have a high position in my career/to obtain more power', 'To have respect from others/achieve high social status', 'To have a successful marriage and happy family', 'To make a lot of money/have a lot of wealth-related assets', 'To pursue a high level of education/to excel in education/to obtain as many qualifications', and 'To pursue something out of interest to the fullest'. The response options are explained below.
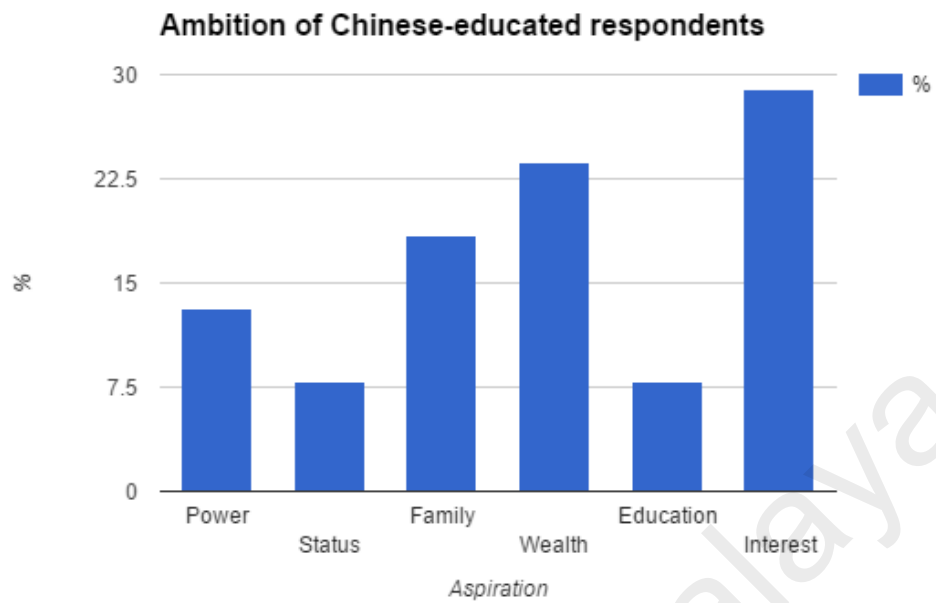
Figure 7.23 - Chinese-educated respondents' main life ambition
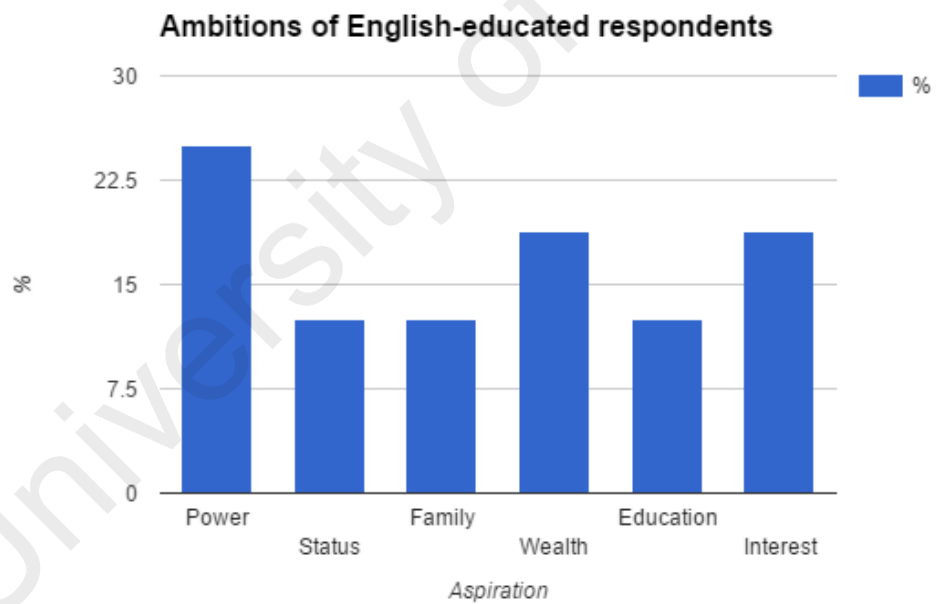
Figure 7.24 - English-educated respondents' main life ambition

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The following is the definition of each ambition response, and the comparison of percentages of Chinese-educated respondents and English-educated respondents who chose each ambition response.

7.13.1 To have a high position/obtain more power

Power is defined by Max Weber as the individual's ability to make someone else do something against their will. There are three forms of social stratification based on power which are class, status, and party. The researcher meant 'personal power' when using this term. In the Chinese-medium institution, 13.2 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'power' was their main life ambition. In the English-medium institution, 25 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'power' was their main life ambition. This shows that the English-educated respondents are the most concerned with attaining power, indicating an individualistic mindset with a desire to stand out. The Chinese-educated respondents are not as concerned with attaining power, displaying less desire to stand out and more conformism, which is a collectivist orientation and complies with Confucianism.

7.13.2 To have respect from others/achieve high social status

Status is defined by Max Weber as an individual's position in society, based on the amount of esteem granted by others upon them. In the Chinese-medium institution, 7.9 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'status' is their major life ambition. In the English-medium institution, 12.5 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'status' is their major life ambition. As with the response option 'power', the Chinese-

educated respondents are not very motivated by attaining 'status'. They do not desire to attain a position which grants them a lot of public esteem. This indicates conformism, which is a collectivist orientation and complies with Confucianism. There is a relation between power and status, where high status enables the execution of power upon others. This represents an individualistic interest to stand out above the rest. In comparison, the English-educated respondents are more interested in obtaining status. They are more individualistic, and are motivated by the ability to gain esteem from the public, as well as personal power.

7.13.3 To have a successful marriage and happy family

Giddens (2012) defined the family as a group of persons directly linked by kin connections, the adult members of whom assume responsibility for caring for children. Marriage is the bond that ties spouses together legally, to ensure the formation of a legitimate family as well as for property possession. In the 2006 Merdeka Youth Survey in Malaysia, it was found that nearly a quarter (24%) of the respondents cite the desire to "raise a happy family" to be an important goal for themselves – an aspiration subscribed mainly by older respondent groups (Merdeka Center 2006).

In the Chinese-medium institution, 18.4 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'family' was their main life ambition. In the English-medium institution, 12.5 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'family' was their main life ambition. The Chinese-educated respondents placed more importance on building a family. This

represents a collectivist principle, particularly when it overrides other life ambitions. One Chinese-educated respondent illustrated the importance of family when talking about how her ambitions are inspired by the members of her family:

"[…] to study hard in order to pass all my subject in my course, so that I won't disappoint my parents. The reason for me to study hard is because of my future. My inspirations is from sister. She always do a great job in everything she do. She is confident and out-going. These are what I want to learn from her".

This respondent explained their life ambition at the current moment is to study hard because their parents have placed such hopes on them. They are also inspired by their sister who appears to excel in everything she does, on top of being confident and outgoing. The respondent compares themselves to their sister and wishes to learn how to be successful like her. Influenced by the family, the respondent views success as performing well in their studies, being good at everything they do, and being confident and outgoing. As a result, the respondent may become competitive in all these fields. One English-educated respondent replied the following when referring to their family influence:

"I was brought up on a balanced set of values which stay with me till today."

They acknowledged that their family, in this case their parents, socialised them throughout their life-course with a set of balanced values, which they still hold on to. However, they also acknowledged:

"Celebrity role models have also influenced the way I view and handle life."

The same English-educated respondent did not negate the effect celebrities had on their values and worldview. They had balanced their family values with those which they picked up from celebrities. They clearly placed importance on and were influenced by their family as well, similar to the Chinese-educated respondent. Interestingly, another English-educated respondent explained their self-concept of gender through family socialisation:

"I have strong, masculine views because I grew up in a male dominated family. My parents have done more than their part to guide my growth by giving me enough freedom and restriction."

This English-educated respondent claimed to have masculine views because of their male-dominated family. Although this study does not discuss gender, it is clear that the respondent is aware of the effect their family has upon their own worldview, classifying it as masculine. In this case the respondent has again acknowledged the effect of family socialisation upon their identity.

7.13.4 To make a lot of money/have a lot of wealth-related assets

Wealth is defined as the sum total of an individual's assets minus their liabilities. In the Chinese-medium institution, 23.7 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'wealth' is their main life ambition. In the English-medium institution, 18.8 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'wealth' is their main life ambition. This shows that the Chinese-educated respondents are the most motivated by wealth compared to the

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English-educated respondents. Making money and wealth represents a desire to attain power in the economic sense. Malaysia however is not a class-based society and thus economic power refers strictly to the purchasing power of individuals.

A Chinese-educated respondent explained the following reason for their motivation in making money:

> "Making money is important for everyone. However, without a career ambitions, we wouldn't have the ability to make money. Therefore, we should have a career ambitions and know our path to success in order to earn more money in the future."

This respondent prioritised career ambitions as a factor for wanting to succeed in life, which entailed making money. For them, without having career ambitions, a person would be considered aimless in life. As such life would be devoid of direction for such a person. This respondent defined success as making a lot of money, and shows that the reason for wanting to acquire wealth is because they equate it with success. Another Chinese-educated respondent also echoed this principle:

> "I think its very important to have career ambitions and making money because one get to be related through the world in career and obtain security in money."

This respondent included the issue of power in their explanation of the reason behind being motivated by career ambitions and wealth. They view security in one's career and wealth as the impetus to gaining an influential network which will bring them

attention and power. This respondent equates power with success. However, one respondent felt less influenced to view success in this way:

"It is certainly important but luckily I am not pressured by anyone in the family unlike many of the typical Chinese family. I am free to pursue any ambition that I like."

This respondent, unlike the previous two, claimed that their family did not influence them to view success as being equated with power or wealth. Their family did not pressure them to pursue any particular ambition that the former defined. This respondent's family allowed them a greater degree of autonomy in making life decisions. The respondent also contrasted their family to other traditional Chinese families, who are depicted as having a tendency to pressure their children to fulfil a certain ambition. The family's way of thinking affects the individual's aspiration in life.

The English-educated respondents provided the following explanation for the reasons behind their life ambitions:

"I believe most in finding a career/vocation that makes one feel fulfilled and happy, no matter if it is conventional or not. Making money depends on one's existing financial situation – if one is financially comfortable and can maintain that level of comfort through prudent spending and reasonable income, there is no need to keep pursuing further wealth, unless it is their personal interest to do so."

This respondent is not primarily motivated by making money, and believes in pursuing an interest which appeals to them in terms of career ambition. They also do not mind if their interest is conventional, showing a desire to stand out and be individualistic. To them, making money is only relevant as a basic need, but it is not necessary to go beyond that. They believe in careful spending that does not exceed one's means. Success to them infers moderation and not necessarily having a lot of assets. Another English-educated respondent replied with the following:

> "Money and career(s) are fine but not the whole story. So long as I have enough to maintain my lifestyle and needs, I am fine. I would rather pursue my interests and learn new things as I go along. Self-enrichment and self-fulfilment are the mantras to my life."

This respondent also echoed the view of the above respondent. They believe in moderate spending that is sufficient to meet their lifestyle and needs. Pursuing their interest to attain self-actualisation is more important to them than career ambitions or making money. They are both less aggressive in pursuing their ambitions in the conventional sense. It is interesting to note that the Chinese-educated respondents are more motivated to make money over the non Chinese-educated respondents.

7.13.5 To pursue a high level of education/to excel in education/to obtain as many qualifications

Giddens (2012) defines education as a social institution which enables and promotes the acquisition of skills, knowledge and the broadening of personal horizons In the

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Chinese-medium institution, 7.9 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'education' is their main life ambition. In the English-medium institution, 12.5 percent out of 60 respondents claimed that 'education' is their main life ambition. The English-educated respondents are more motivated by an interest in education compared to the Chinese-educated respondents. The reasons for this are elaborated by several of the respondents in the following excerpts from the follow-up interview. There are in fact contrasting reasons to Chinese-educated respondents' attitudes towards education. A Chinese-educated respondent claimed the following:

> "I am a person who quite lazy, especially, when we need to study for exam. I only felt interested during working because I can learn something different from book, however, I still need study as a foundation for future."

This respondent, despite having attended Chinese-medium primary and secondary school, was quite honest in their self-assessment and claimed they were lazy. Being a part-time working student, they claimed they enjoyed gaining experience during work rather than through academic lessons. However they also acknowledged the importance of acquiring a degree to increase competitiveness in the job market. Hence, they are motivating themselves to continue studying for a degree as it will help them progress in their career, supplanting their desire to make more money instead of remaining in an entry level part-time job.

Another Chinese-educated respondent claimed the following:

> "By gaining more and more knowledge, I have a greater sense of humility, which is also found in Chinese culture. With more exposure from reading,

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travelling and mass media, I often associate myself as a world citizen as opposed to confined to a single nationality. This view has enabled me to pursue limitless aspirations as I don't see national boundary as an obstacle. I believe more and more people ought to feel this way."

This respondent also attended Chinese-medium primary and secondary school, but has a greater academic interest than the previous respondent. They claim that knowledge can provide them with a higher degree of humility which is in touch with Chinese culture. This shows they are interested in upholding their Chineseness. However they also acknowledge that as a result of having undergone tertiary education, they have broadened their minds to associate themselves as a 'world citizen'. They believe that the world is not limited to their immediate surroundings or nationality, and have strived to increase the distance of their aspirations. They are also hopeful that more people will think similarly. While continuing to associate with 'Chineseness', this respondent has used education as a tool to increase their cultural capital, expanding beyond the norms and values of Malaysian schools to embrace a globalised phenomenology.

7.13.6   To pursue something out of interest to the fullest

The researcher uses the term 'interest' to indicate a subject or hobby that the respondent is passionate about. In the Chinese-medium institution, 28.9 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'interest' is their main life ambition. In the English-medium institution, 18.8 percent out of 60 respondents claimed 'interest' is their main life ambition. Interestingly, more Chinese-educated respondents claim to be

motivated by their personal interest, compared to English-educated respondents. This shows that Chinese-educated respondents are beginning to put their personal interests before other life ambitions, such as family obligations. This indicates they may be moving away from traditional Confucian concepts such as filial piety or community.

The following table demonstrates how the Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents have acquired Confucian collectivist and Western individualistic values, indicated in their embodied cultural capital as choice of ambition.

Table 7.1 - Classification of Values in Respondents' Ambitions According to Confucian or Western Values

Education Medium/Values	*Confucian Values Present in Respondent's Ambitions*	*Western Values Present in Respondent's Ambitions*
Chinese-Education	-To have a successful marriage and happy family	-To pursue something out of interest to the fullest -To make a lot of money/have a lot of wealth-related assets
English-Education	-To pursue a high level of education/to excel in education/to obtain as many qualifications	- To have a high position in my career/to obtain more power -To have respect from

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		others/achieve high social status

The respondents from Chinese-medium education displayed both Confucian and also Western liberal democratic values in their ambitions. The Confucian values they practiced were visible in their ambition to have a successful marriage and happy successful family, while the Western values they practiced were visible through their desires to pursue something out of interest to the fullest and to make a lot of money (acquire wealth). The attachment to family indicated collectivism, which is taught in Chinese-medium schools. The pursuit of individual interests and personal wealth meanwhile are individualistic goals emphasised by Western liberal democracies. The individualistic values indicate competitiveness which is an attitude championed by the neoliberal machinery of globalisation.

The respondents from English-medium education displayed both Western and Confucian values in their ambitions. The Western values they practiced were their desire to have a high position in their career and to have respect from others, while the Confucian values they practiced were their interest to pursue a high level of education. The desire to attain power and status indicated individualism, which is propagated in English-language education. The interest in education is a basic Confucian value, given importance second only after the family.

Hsu (2001) wrote about the origins of Confucianism and Western values in mainland China. Confucianism emerged strongly as a belief in the Chinese Qin and Han

dynasties. According to Hsu, the Confucian ideology was based on the interaction between human, biological, environmental, and cosmic systems. It also emphasised the need for acquiring knowledge, with the philosopher Confucius (Kung-fu Tze) himself being portrayed as equipped with outstanding wisdom and intelligence. Being similar to a structural functionalist perspective of society, it also promoted obedience to traditional and legal authority.

Western influence entered mainland China as a result of interaction between the Chinese and Western Christian missionaries in the 1600s. Hsu (2001) explains that the Western concepts of democracy, republic, communism, individualism, and capitalism were introduced by Christian missionaries and Chinese students who returned after studying abroad. Later on Chinese intellectuals also promoted Western learning in mainland China.

This shows that such a phenomenon had also existed in China beginning in the 17th century, where traditional Confucian Chinese-education co-existed with Western education. The fact that Chinese intellectuals and Chinese students returning from studies in the West also promoted Western-style education exacerbated this occurrence. In Malaysia, the presence of the British colonial powers had similarly introduced Western-style education, and the influence continued to last even after Malaysia's Independence, as the British played a part in preparing the nation for its self-governance. This they did by converting the vernacular schools to English-language, then later Malay-language schools in order to reach unification between the ethnic groups who were divided by language.

On top of this, globalisation which had occurred as a result of advances in travel and information communication technologies had also energised this process in Malaysia after the 1970s. The transmission of Western-style education was facilitated by developments in Malaysia's education policy after 1970. Arokiasamy (2010) wrote that beginning in the 1970s, the number of universities in Malaysia increased, followed by the introduction of overseas private tertiary education in Malaysia in the 1990s, and finally culminating in the positioning of local research universities, such as the University of Malaya, in the global sphere. Malaysia's Ministry of Higher Education had aimed to open up the country as an education hub and aspired to become globally competitive. The introduction of overseas private tertiary education in Malaysia led towards the influence of Western-style education such as American Degree Transfer Programmes, British, and Australian degree twinning and distance-learning programmes. However, as China's ascendance to economic and political power also increased in the past few decades, there was a global job market demand for individuals competent in Mandarin Chinese. Practicing Confucian values also became desirable in anticipatory socialisation for dealing with business counterparts from mainland China. Interestingly, while all this occurred, students from China started displaying an interest in learning English. In fact, Hui Huang (2002) wrote that modern China's social transformation and opening to the outside world encouraged the popularity of overseas education, with foreign education gradually replacing traditional Chinese education as the dominating cultural capital. There was already an exchange of cultural capital between Chinese-medium and English-medium education in mainland China itself. Igarashi and Saito (2014) also found that

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education systems today legitimise cosmopolitanism, which is the openness to foreign others and cultures, as a desirable global disposition. This may be the reason students of both Chinese-medium education and English-medium education are exchanging values with the goal of developing a broader, inclusive worldview.

Cultural capital has become a commodity that can be acquired in tertiary education, which acts as a socialisation agent. As Brown (2012) wrote, the global job market is becoming increasingly competitive, functioning like a 'global auction'. As education becomes more widespread, the only way for individuals to distinguish themselves is by 'personal branding', marketing themselves based on additional skills. In this case, it is respondents' cultural awareness and adaptability of Confucian and Western values. Cultural capital becomes a movable feast that can be adjusted to meet market needs.
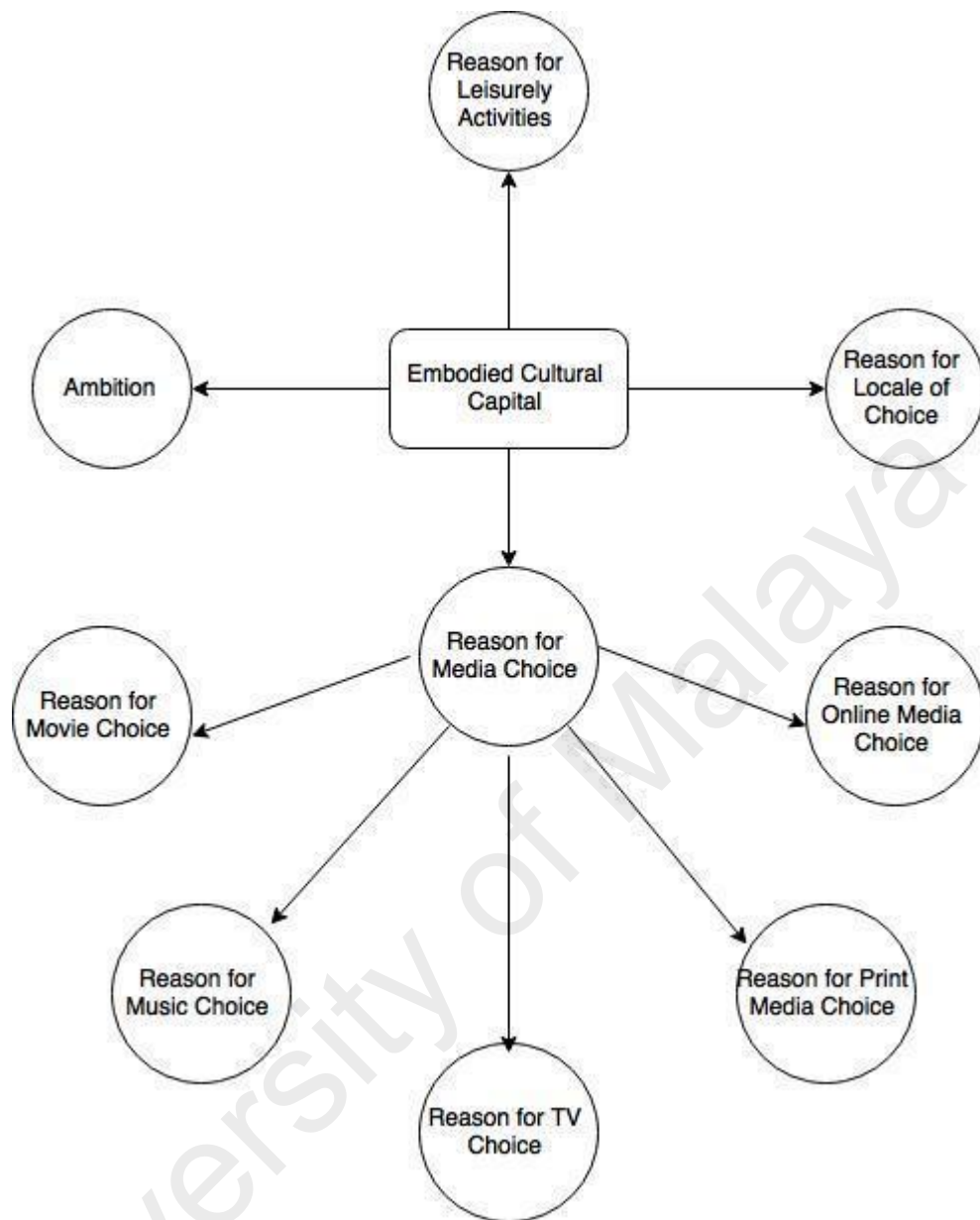
Figure 7.25 - Embodied Cultural Capital

To recap, embodied cultural capital is composed of the meanings behind respondents' preference for objectified cultural capital, giving their tastes a phenomenological layer. Thus most of the questions for this section are composed of the reasons respondents attribute to their consumption behaviour, or tastes. Two

groups were compared, that were the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese. The former ate out and tried new dishes frequently as a hobby because it made them feel more connected to the rest of the world, volunteered and participated in charity events to help those in need and feel more connected to the rest of the world, attended cultural exhibits because it made them feel more connected to the rest of the world, shopped as retail therapy, and when they had no free time it was because of family needs. The latter ate out and tried new dishes frequently as a hobby because it made them feel more connected to the rest of the world as well as being able to catch up with friends, and shopped because it was a platform to display their identity through consumption practices. The Chinese-educated had a greater variety of hobbies, notably being more engaged in volunteering and attending cultural exhibits, indicative of more cosmopolitan cultural capital.

Where choice of social space was concerned, both groups claimed to prefer Mid Valley Megamall, due to the type of shops available. This shows they are driven by consumption needs in choosing a social space.

In terms of preference in mass media, both groups chose movies, TV shows, music, and books because they identified with the characters, plot, theme, style, writing angle, or lyrics.

The Chinese-educated however chose online news in order to impress others and due to peer influence, while the English-educated did so because they identified with the angle or style of writing, and because they felt more connected to the rest of the

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world. Similarly, this was the case with choice of websites, which in both cases was social media, where the Chinese-educated wished to impress others and the English-educated felt more connected to the rest of the world.

Finally, the Chinese-educated claim that their life goals would be motivated by their interest in a pursuit, while the English-educated claim that they have a high power-orientation.

Phenomenologically, both Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents demonstrate a strong desire to embrace global norms and values, which indicates cosmopolitanism rather than insularism. As the 2006 Merdeka Youth Survey in Malaysia found, a majority of young Malaysians believed that global and events in faraway places affect their daily lives (Merdeka Center 2006).

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION

This chapter highlights the answers to my four research questions, provides an explanation of my theoretical model derived from the above, and shows the significance of my findings.

8.1   INSTITUTIONALISED CULTURAL CAPITAL

Research Question 1: What values and norms do Chinese-education and English-education pass on to its students?

Both local and global social institutions play a part in shaping identities of the Malaysian Chinese. Firstly, there still exists a marked difference between schooling systems in Malaysia. There is without a doubt the continued existence of Chinese schools alongside English and Malay schools in the country. The majority of students in Chinese schools are indeed Chinese. The mixture of students in non Chinese schools is more ethnically diverse. Malaysians are still identified by their ethnicities. Malaysia is a multicultural and multilingual society, and students are expected to know more than one language and are tested for this in the national exams. The multicultural character of our society is also heavily emphasised in national broadcasts in a variety of mass media, especially in tourism campaigns.

Globally, this study is situated in the context of cultural globalisation, where cultural flows occur from inside and outside of the nation-state, affecting norms and values travelling through the process of socialisation. Culturally, globalisation has been theorised by some to homogenise individuals in terms of lifestyles and preferences. Politically, it has also been said to erode nation-state boundaries in terms of governance. Economically, it is said to enable free trade to flourish.

Social institutions in Malaysia remain harmonious on a functional level. This study takes place in the period of 2013 to 2014. Politically, the nation is headed towards modernisation through the creation of a Bangsa Malaysia or a united Malaysian nation by 2020, introduced by Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister (Shamsul 1995).

Malaysia's international relations with world superpowers such as the United States have been devoid of major disputes since Malaysia's independence in 1957, as the government has never flirted with leftist ideologies or sought an alliance with the Soviet Union (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009). Relations with the other superpower, China are also friendly. In 1974, Malaysia became the first member of the ASEAN community security alliance to recognize the People's Republic of China (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009).

Economically, Malaysia has recently overcome the 2009 financial crisis which affected most of the world, particularly European countries such as Greece. It has not impacted on Malaysia as strongly as it has Europe, thus Malaysia continues to enjoy

significantly stable employment rates, which allow them to continue pursuing their interests evident through their lifestyles. Malaysian domestic financial intermediation has continued to be well-supported by sound financial institutions, orderly financial market conditions and sustained confidence in the financial system (Bank Negara Malaysia 2013).

Malaysia's economy relies on an export-oriented industry jumpstarted in the early 1970s (Mohammad B. Yusoff, Fauziah Abu Hasan and Suhaila Abdul Jalil, 2000). This happened after the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971 with the intention to re-establish multiethnic harmony (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009). Before that, after achieving Independence in 1957, Malaysia relied on timber and oil export earnings, along with manufacturing finished products, to become one of the few multiethnic countries to join the ranks of the world's fastest-growing economies (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009). It then transitioned from agriculture into an import-oriented industrial economy rapidly (Mohammad B. Yusoff, Fauziah Abu Hasan and Suhaila Abdul Jalil, 2000). During the colonial era, the Chinese migrated from South China to pursue economic opportunities in tin mining, eventually moving into commerce and self-employment (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009).

Culturally, Malaysia is multicultural and is comprised of several main ethnic groups, often classified as the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians (Hirschman 1987); as well as the indigenous groups whose majority is the Semai (Arabestani and Juli Edo 2011), and in East Malaysia the Kadazan-Dusun (Defense Language Institute

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Foreign Language Center 2009). Currently many other ethnic groups exist in the country as well, due to a high level of international migration fuelled by the search for job opportunities. Over two million migrant workers are found in Malaysia in industries such as plantation, construction and the domestic sector, coming largely from Indonesia, Bangladesh, and the Philippines (Lin, 2006). In total, Malaysia's population for the year 2014 is 30 097 900 (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2014).

The Chinese form the second largest ethnic group among Malaysians (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2014) and are part of a huge global Diaspora, making their issues of identity complex and noteworthy of study. Given the increased global influence of mainland China as well as Malaysia's close ties to it, the impact of these events on the identity of the Malaysian Chinese cannot be ignored. This is even more so given the past ties between Malaysian Chinese and mainland China during the British occupation of Malaya. The Cantonese, Hokkien and Hakka are the three largest dialect groups among the Chinese in Malaysia. Their initial relationship with each other shows there is a level of intra-ethnic diversity. The Cantonese and Hokkien tended to be urban merchants, while the Hakka tended to be tenant farmers or labourers (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009). However, among the second generation who were born in Malaysia itself, these differences eroded and they began to view themselves as Chinese collectively, viewing mainland China as an ancestral homeland and not their hometown (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center 2009). In 1948, a lot of the ethnic Chinese migrants were resettled in New Villages by the British in order to stifle the communist insurgency which occurred after the Second World War. These villages were made up entirely

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of Chinese residents and pursued Chinese medium education such as the one we have today. Among these villagers, some later moved to the cities to look for employment and underwent identity formation resulting in the existence of subcultures, such as the Ah Beng subculture which is based on conspicuous consumption and identification with the Chinese language (Chan 2015).

The British colonial authorities occupying Malaya were responsible for creating social constructs including racial categories such as the 'Malay', 'Indian', or 'Chinese' (Hirschman 1986, in Sharmani, 2013). The notion of 'Chineseness' was also such a colonial-orientalist social construction based on place of origin and dialect groups (Shamsul 1999). The British colonial administrators simplified their classification of what was essentially a complex network of identification based on attributes such as dialect group, occupation, class, gender and village (Carstens 2005, in Sharmani 2013). Thus the concept of race, and further on, 'Chineseness', can be said to have been a lumping together of people based on certain perceived social factual similarities.

One of these social facts was language, which also functioned as a social institution. The Chinese language, in this case, Mandarin was used as a marker to identify the Chinese people. In 1871, dialect groups were eventually replaced as a method of classification for the migrants from South China (Shamsul 1999). The 'Chinese' became a singular large category subsuming all who spoke Mandarin and had arrived originally from mainland China. In 1891, the British colonial authorities used this

classification to include three main categories of people under their 'divide-and-rule' policy, which were the Malays, the Indians, and the Chinese (Sharmani 2013).

The setting up of schools by the British also followed this line of events. The establishment of English schools and Chinese schools at the turn of the century were soon followed by the establishment of Malay vernacular schools (Shamsul 1999). The teaching in each type of school naturally followed each language as unique mediums respectively. Eventually, in the case of the Chinese, they came to identify themselves as Chinese instead of by dialect group (Shamsul 1999). Identifying as a tight-knit community, they set up their own schools and business guilds to safeguard their cultural heritage and commercial importance (Shamsul 1999).

The social institutions that are usually noted as socialisation agents are the family, peers, education and mass media (Giddens 2013). Family-wise, in 2014 there are more than 6 million households in Malaysia with the average household size being 4.4 members (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2014). This implies that most nucleus families in Malaysia are now made up of two parents and two children. This gives room to parental and sibling socialisation. Malaysian demographics show that the majority of citizens, 70 percent are between the working ages of 15 to 64 years old (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2013). This indicates that many will be able to raise young families and will be needing to enrol themselves or their offspring in education. This is also the age group with the potentially highest spending power and is active in leisurely activities which involve peers and consuming mass media.

In terms of mass media, 86.5 percent of households have access to television, 20.9 percent have access to fixed telephone lines (a rapid decrease from before due to smart phones), 71 percent own mobile phones (an increase where fixed line ownership has decreased), and 18.2 percent own personal computers (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2014). From this data itself we may surmise than television plays the biggest part in mass media socialisation because most household own at least one. Secondarily, mobile phone content provides information to its users. Least of all are personal computers, though some of its functions may overlap by the more portable smart phones, which include tablet phones. In 2012, the literacy rate for Malaysians was 96 percent for males and 92.1 percent for females (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2014). Media penetration among youth was also fairly high at the 84.8th percentile (Malaysia Youth Index Survey 2006). Because of this high media penetration, Malaysian youth are highly influenced by Western cultures as well as fashion and entertainment news and updates from other countries like Japan, Korea, and Taiwan (Cheow 2012). This shows that almost all Malaysians can read and write, and that means they have no problem in accessing and participating in the use of mass media.

Education-wise, in 2012 more than 2 million students are enrolled in primary school, more than 2 million in secondary school, and more than 500 000 are enrolled in public tertiary education institutions (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2013). In private tertiary education institutions, more than 400 000 are enrolled (Statistics Department of Malaysia 2013). Almost half of those who pursue primary and secondary education end up pursuing tertiary studies. The high number of

educational enrolment may be the reason for the high literacy rate mentioned above, allowing for consumption and production of mass media content.

In terms of peer socialisation, we can look at the overall quality of life for Malaysian youth. The 2006 Malaysian Youth Index showed that youth health levels were at an excellent level, at the 97.7 percentile. Access to mass media was at a score of 84.8. The majority of Malaysian youth are not involved in deviant acts, at a score of 87.4. In terms of social relations, the score is at a good level, which is 73.5 (Youth Development Research Institute, Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2006). The Merdeka National Youth Survey found that Malaysian youth possess a dominant affiliation with communal boundaries, enjoy volunteering, are regular news consumers particularly with respect to entertainment and sport, and feel a little helpless in solving problems in society (Merdeka Center 2006). This shows that Malaysian youth enjoy a peaceful existence, are sufficiently affluent, and peers do not pose a negative influence to a large extent. Social relations are healthy which indicates there is a high degree of social interaction, without any significant antisocial behaviour such as the *hikikomori* in Japan (a form of reclusive social withdrawal to reject society's norms).

Sharmani (2013) observes that while the first and second generations of Malaysian Chinese did indeed emphasise their Chinese cultural identity over their Malaysian national identity, their descendants identify first and foremost as Malaysian. In the 2006 Merdeka Youth Survey, the Chinese respondents were nearly evenly split

between those who saw themselves as Malaysians first at 44% and as Chinese at 47% (Merdeka Center 2006).

Likewise, Sim (2012) also shows in her study of mass media consumption among the Malaysian Chinese that they are divided into three groups, with the first and older group preferring Chinese-language media and the second, younger group preferring English-language media, followed by the third group, Generation Y, preferring to learn both languages in order to consume more. The identification of Chineseness particularly based on Chinese language is waning. In the case of Chinese medium schools, my research shows that this is indeed true, as the effects of mass media clearly outweigh the socialisation from schools alone.

In comparing the two groups, Sim (2012) examined several areas such as worldview, leisurely activities, self-perception, self-expression, work orientation, attitude towards elders, social capital, happiness, and dealing with problems. These were the results of either Chinese-medium or English-medium education. Although my study does not list down the attributes in the same way, instead expressing them within the framework of cultural capital (institutionalised, objectified, and embodied), these areas of scrutiny do overlap.

I now compare my findings to those of Sim (2012). My study focused on Generation Y while Sim's study included Generation Baby Boomer, X, and also Y. The Baby Boomer generation is the one which is separated into the Chinese-educated and English-educated while Generation Y forms a hybrid that attempts to traverse the former value and lifestyle divisions.

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Sim found that the Chinese-educated group is strongly community-oriented while the English-educated group prefers to follow their own life goals. These value differences manifest themselves in the following ways. The Chinese-educated group enjoys spending time in big groups while the English-educated group prefers smaller groups. The former tends not to be too opinionated and the latter more outspoken. The former consider showing anger uncivilised and are prone to subtly trying to defuse the situation, avoiding conflict. The Chinese-educated are more hierarchical and the English-educated more democratic. Respecting elders is more crucial for the former. Having a happy or harmonious family is an important life goal for the former while the latter focus more on developing a career. The issue of social capital is also fleshed out, in the way both groups build social networks and use them. Sim finds that the Chinese-educated prefer to conduct business with people they know directly or through their existing contacts; are wary of most institutions; and believe in establishing networks of trust, or *guanxi*. Conversely, the English-educated are more individualistic and prefer mixing in small clusters. Sim terms the members of Generation Y who have crossed the divide as Group 3. They originally come from either the Chinese-educated group or the English-educated group and then make an effort to attain the language ability and the values and norms of each other.

In my study, I have found that my respondents, who belong to Generation Y, are in fact not clearly divided along institutional lines. Based on primary education, the Chinese-educated group come largely from the Hokkien dialect group, while their

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English-educated counterparts come from the Cantonese dialect group. Both are considered ethnic Han Chinese, though this indicates members of the Hokkien dialect group hold stronger attachment to Chinese language and culture. This could be due to the strong presence of Hokkien clans in Malaysia, whom being the first dialect group to arrive in Malaya,[68] practice strong community attachment and have links to Chinese schools.

Both groups, however, spoke Mandarin with their family and peers. This shows that their parents are likely to be Chinese-educated. They also prefer spending time with their own ethnic group. Among the English-educated, their peers are more influential in determining their self-presentation through fashion, though both groups also derive inspiration from mass media. The Chinese-educated value teamwork the most, showing collectivism, while the English-educated value diligence, or hard work, in accomplishing their goal, showing instrumentalism.

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[68] Yen. C.H. 2006. 'The Role of Hokkien Chinese in the History of Malaysia and Singapore'. Journal of Malaysian Chinese Studies. Available from: <http://huayan.gokaki.com/UserFiles/File/journal9/jn9_chyen.pdf>

8.2   OBJECTIFIED CULTURAL CAPITAL

Research Question 2: How do the possession of these values and norms manifest in individual's tastes and consumption?

Objectified cultural capital comprises the consumption of goods and services which reaffirm one's identity through the elements of self-presentation. These include fashion sense, mass media (television, movies, books, magazines, newspapers, websites, and social media), favourite locales, and leisurely activity (adapted from Hebdige 1979). Does a collectivist versus individualist dichotomy indicate different material tastes and does it have any effect on tastes at all?

I found that there were striking similarities in the consumption habits of respondents, in the case of mass media preference. Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents both enjoyed using social media, getting their news from Sinchew Media, reading the Japanese fashion magazine ViVi, and watching the Hong Kong TVB serials on TV. They only differed slightly in choice of movie, where the Chinese-educated preferred CZ12 where the English-educated preferred Twilight, and where the former preferred SNSD's music while the latter choosing Chinese singer Jay Chou. In terms of consumption, it appears education background has no influence.

8.3   EMBODIED CULTURAL CAPITAL

Research Question 3: Do these values and norms affect the individual's worldview, or attitudes towards issues in life?

In my research, I have delved into the process of norm and value socialisation from education institutions as a socialisation agent – to assess the primary source of values and norms. Although these values and norms may be exchanged later, it is important to see if there is in fact a difference caused by the schooling process. Because of this, I have also assessed values and norms received from peers, family, and mass media in order to examine where the divide starts to be bridged. In line with this, I selected the Generation Y age group as my sample, besides other reasons like their financial autonomy, the psychosocial need for identity development at that age, and because they were born and brought up in the era of globalisation. These socialisation aspects form the institutionalised cultural capital of my respondents. Those aspects which Sim has observed such as media preference, and which I too have observed, are the behavioural manifestations which form the objectified cultural capital aspect. Finally, attitudes such as individuality versus collectivism make up the aspect of embodied cultural capital. In my research, I have found that the Generation Y group of Malaysian Chinese have indeed bridged the cultural divide in all these aspects as a result of the influence of other socialisation agents apart from education. Mainly, this is the influence of the mass media and the messages it carries. The mass media is the mouthpiece of cultural globalisation, and in particular it touts the message of cosmopolitan cultural capital, also known as the *global habitus*. To look forward

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with the times, and to be able to navigate one's way within it, one must be able to embrace this mindset, which manifests in one's worldview and lifestyle.

I found that embodied cultural capital did not differ much across both groups. Both Chinese-educated and English-educated respondents claim the main reasons for their preferences are 'identifying with' and 'feeling connected'. This shows individualism that is tempered by a desire to increase their bonding social capital. Education medium does not seem to result in any difference or preference nor reason for doing so. The main reason given for the choice of hobbies was 'feeling connected to the rest of the world' and the main reason given for choice of mass media was 'identifying with the characters, plot or theme'. There is apparently an interest to traverse borders, especially given that Generation Y has been closely connected to digital media.

Numerous characteristics have been associated with Generation Y. These include being a digital native, having grown up with unlimited choices, a lesser need to conform, a desire for consumer control, exploratory learning, flexibility, convenience, customisation, personalisation, bluntness, and impatience (Sweeney 2006). These characteristics represent individualistic, self-motivated values. There is a desire for the individual to triumph front and center over the community. Thus, Generation Y has also been labelled derogatively as "Generation Me" (Twenge 2014). Many platforms influence the drive for personal competitiveness, not least the ever-pervasive social media which Generation Y actively indulges in. This is particularly so with Malaysian millennials, of which 96 percent of survey

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respondents use social networking sites such as Facebook (PriceWaterHouseCoopers 2009)

With that said, Generation Y has also been commended for their positive qualities. Despite feelings of self-entitlement, they also possess a greater curiosity about the outside world, more open-mindedness, and are more adventurous. They are more committed to global causes which concern humanitarian and environmental issues as well as equality in aspects such as gender (PriceWaterHouseCoopers 2009). Millennials expect potential employers to be committed to the same causes and this affects their job choices (PriceWaterHouseCoopers 2009). In addition, millennials also hold a dynamic worldview regarding global phenomenon. They believe that China, Russia, and India will overtake the US and Europe as economic powerhouses by 2020, and that corporations will become more influential than nation-states in the future (PriceWaterHouseCoopers 2009). This indicates that millennials, the age cohort of which my respondents belong to, are facing social changes which come from external sources, in which their response is geared towards economic survival. This is echoed especially by a Guardian report that stated millennials worldwide are facing economic instability, due to factors such as debt, joblessness, and rising house prices (Barr C. and Shiv Malik 2016). Hence, behaviours which are engineered towards increasing competitiveness are adopted. Often, this behaviour is also identified as *kiasu*-ism, a Chinese Hokkien term that means 'afraid to lose'. *Kiasu*-ism can manifest positively as diligence or hard work (Chua 1989), or negatively as extreme competitiveness such as envy and selfishness (Kagda 1993) [(Hwang et al 2002)].

While millennials expect much from potential employers, research shows that employers too have their share of expectations. JobStreet Malaysia (2013) states that employers expected fresh graduates to be self-motivated in continuous learning, be competent in using the English language, and show confidence. Values such as diligence, curiosity, pro-activeness, entrepreneurship, and leadership were also championed.

Two closely similar studies to mine in research design are that of the BBC-LSE Great British Class Survey (2013) and the Merdeka Malaysian Youth Survey (2006). The first frames identity within social class and cultural capital, while the second does not use the cultural capital frame, but investigates youth social activity using many variables that overlap with the three aspects of cultural capital. A study closely similar to mine on topic would be Sim (2012)'s Unmistakably Chinese, Genuinely Malaysian media report, for its focus on the clusters of Malaysian Chinese based on language identity. My study differs from the British Class Survey and the Merdeka Youth Survey in terms of comparing identity within one ethnic group. It also differs from Sim's study where I use the cultural capital framework, investigating the institutionalised, objectified and embodied types of cultural capital which go beyond media consumption.

8.4   CULTURAL HOMOGENISATION

Research Question 4: Does cultural globalisation have an impact on the prior possession of norms and values?

As a result of the integrated global habitus (embodied cultural capital), Malaysian Chinese are becoming more integrated as a whole, in terms of values. They identify more strongly with the concept of Chineseness regardless of school. This may be seen along the rise of China, which is also becoming more influential in the global mass media (Huang 2013).

This, in comparison to previous studies showing difference in identity expression among Chinese-educated and Western-educated Malaysian Chinese, shows a new change. Mass media has overcome education in the socialisation of identity formation, expressed here through cultural capital. This concurs with the ideas of hyper globalisation theorists, who advocate the homogenisation of cultures by the mass media. Who controls the global mass media? Sociologists claim that MNCs and TNC s do, and there appears to be a shift away from the US to China in terms of this control.

China now (since 2000) has become more influential in the production of movies, television shows, and the Internet, spreading the idea of its cultural dominance. Similarly, the legacy of Western (US) media remains, particularly where free market ideology is concerned. Freedom of expression is one of the hallmarks of this ideology.

While China was formerly closed-door, and even today regulates free speech, it has now opened up to global trade and to some extent embraced neoliberal ideology. It is neoliberal ideology that is the intersection between the West and China, and that is where similar values are propagated through the media, which is now more prevalent in its reach than schools. Even schools rely on the Internet for teaching. This Malaysian Chinese cultural homogenisation is none other than a neoliberal influence on the habitus of the global citizens.

Chinese television has become globalised in accordance with the Chinese Communist Party's profound changes in the face of globalisation (Hong Zhang 2009). The Chinese case demonstrates that a country is able to absorb Western television cultural forms in order to modernise its television system while retaining Communist state party control (Hong Zhang 2009). This shows that in China itself, highly identified with by the Chinese-educated Malaysian Chinese in the past, values from Western media have been absorbed and rechanneled through China's dominant global media. Despite being a Communist party, China too has selectively embraced certain Western neoliberal values. It is a go-between process of retransmitting values from neoliberal Western media to the Malaysian Chinese.

One of the main issues surrounding Chinese schools in Malaysia is the lack of racial integration since students come from predominantly one ethnic background, that is Chinese (Kuek). However, current statistics show that parents from other ethnicities are increasingly enrolling their children in Chinese schools, due to the perception of

excellence in its teaching methods. In this case, it is not certain that the children of other ethnicities are embracing 'Chineseness', though they are certainly embracing the Mandarin language and other norms and values closely held in regard by the Chinese. Nonetheless, because of the possibility of integrating one's global habitus later on in life, this does not mean that anyone who goes to Chinese schools will deterministically become 'Chinese'. One may still continue to practice one's culture as advocated by one's family, thus a family of an ethnicity different from Chinese will continue to practice its own norms and values. Moreover, as we have witnessed through the findings, it is not even certain that Chinese individuals will continue to practice only Confucian norms throughout their life course just because they attended a Chinese school. If increasing employability requires them to embrace individualistic values they might do so just the same.

Mathews (2000) calls this availability of global as well as local norms the 'cultural supermarket'. In the case of the Chinese in Hong Kong, Mathews (2000) found that his interviewees who identified as Hong Kong Chinese viewed their cultural identity as torn between a 'particular culture' (the Confucian Chinese culture) and the 'global cultural supermarket' (other sources of values including Western or English education). A respondent claimed that because of his experience being scolded by an Englishman for not addressing him as 'sir', he felt culturally inferior and decided to take up English literature to be on par. The cultural supermarket allows one to 'complete the gaps' in one's identity where others perceive as lacking by 'purchasing' a different set of skills which come with a different set of values. In the case of Hong Kong, being 'Chinese' and speaking only Chinese was not enough.

However, one argument that may be made is that in its true essence, Confucianism does not differ that greatly from Western liberal democratic values. Shi Li (2013) describes Confucianism as composed of the values of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faith and a dedication to lifelong self-cultivation. Western liberal democracy is composed of the values of individualism, self-achievement, and freedom of choice. While Confucianism appears to be infused with a greater sense of duty and concern for the social structure, Western liberal democracy was based off the Enlightenment ideals which stressed liberty, equality, and fraternity for the people's sake. Paragons of Confucianism such as Zhuge Liang, the military genius who was renowned for his brilliance and loyalty during China's Three Kingdoms period, were worshipped for their pursuit of knowledge and also their unwavering service to their people. Similarly, icons of Western liberal democracy such as Voltaire were celebrated for their spirit of inquiry and their devotion to championing the causes of the common folk.

I argue that Chinese schools in Malaysia have interpreted the Confucian ideals in their own way, making the differences between Chinese schooling and non Chinese schooling seem unbridgeable. The atmosphere described by Purcell (1948) of rote-learning, unquestioning obedience to teachers, and an insular distrust of outsiders were not originally Confucian ideals.

Chinese education in Malaysia from primary to tertiary levels is overseen by the social movement known as *Dongjiaozong,* which includes the school board of trustees, *Dongzong* and the teachers' association*, Jiaozong* (Ang 2009). The Malaysian Chinese community looks up to it as the defender of Chinese culture and rights in Malaysia (Ang 2009). Lew (2001) found that *Jiaozong* was pivotal in maintaining a competitive system in Chinese education in Malaysia (Ang 2009). Tan (1980) meanwhile found that Chinese schools in Malaysia functioned to fortify Chinese culture, thus creating a sharp division within the Chinese community (Ang 2009). We can see from here that the existence of *Dongjiaozong* as a supervisory board over Chinese schools in Malaysia was responsible for creating a system of education which emphasised competitiveness and had also divided the Malaysian Chinese.

Thus, can we say that *Dongjiaozong* had interpreted the Confucian ideals commonly associated with Chineseness in its own way? While intending to defend the rights of Malaysian Chinese culture, *Dongjiaozong* was not without its controversies. According to scholars such as Lin Wu Cong (2006), Tan Ai Mei (2006), and Kua Kia Soong (2009), there were several scandals within the social movement which include alleged corruption and infighting (Ang 2009). Personal interests among members of a social movement can also shift the direction of administration of Chinese schools, influencing its education system. Furthermore, Ang (2009) also highlights that Lim Kay Thiong (1999) criticised the movement's self-imposed restriction within the educational sector, and that Chinese entrepreneurs who financed the cultural activities of the Chinese community influenced the direction of

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the activities. If Chinese schools in Malaysia received funding from donors, to some extent the donors (who were mostly businesspeople) could influence the education system. Thus Confucian values in its pure sense may not have been what Chinese schools in Malaysia are practicing, though it may be a modification of some of these values and a combination of it with other values. This is not to say that it is either good or bad, but the reason why Chinese schools may have created a division among the Malaysian Chinese itself in the past is due to these mechanisms. Ultimately, Malaysian Chinese who attend Chinese schools embrace values influenced by the funders of those schools indirectly, and Malaysian Chinese who do not attend these schools do not embrace such values but a different set of values, aligned with national unity. With that said, the Confucian set of values that tend to be associated with Chinese schools has not been practiced in its true form as advocated by Confucius himself. Confucian values call for a dedication to one's duties and the state; and so do the values of Western liberal democracy, though the latter stresses hierarchy less that the former. As Wittfogel has claimed, bureaucracy began in ancient China, and so did an emphasis on hierarchy. In the final analysis Confucian and Western values both emphasise self-cultivation and loyalty to the state. However, with various interests of differing social movements, and the forces of globalisation, these value sets may not be practiced in its true form, but adjusted to fit the climate. Because of the stronger force of globalisation, it has triumphed over the efforts of social movements in creating differences through sets of values. Globalisation has been the great equaliser that sells its own packaged set of values bridging the divide.

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With that said, Hong Zhang (2009) notes that currently the Chinese Communist Party has proposed an alternative path to development by promoting Confucian values such as a 'harmonious society', to counter Western democracy. Recently China's Education Ministry had also banned Western values in school textbooks, calling for a renewal of Confucian values. To some extent the values of Confucianism and Western liberal democracy have integrated, and where this overlaps, one can see the influence of the neoliberal capitalist ideology. This is beneficial in a way as it certainly serves the interests of national unity, given that the neoliberal capitalist ideology transcends barriers of language or ethnicity. In conclusion, my thesis advocates that the integration of both value sets as we see today is essentially a packaged lifestyle comprising legitimised tastes, which are marketed in tandem with the diktats of the global capitalist machinery.

8.5   MY THEORETICAL MODEL

In this section, I demonstrate my theoretical model with regards to my findings, and within the larger scope of past studies. While my thesis is not an introduction to a new theory, it is an exercise in the application of a theory, an innovation in the use of its commonly associated research method, and a localised interpretation of findings to fit the Malaysian context.
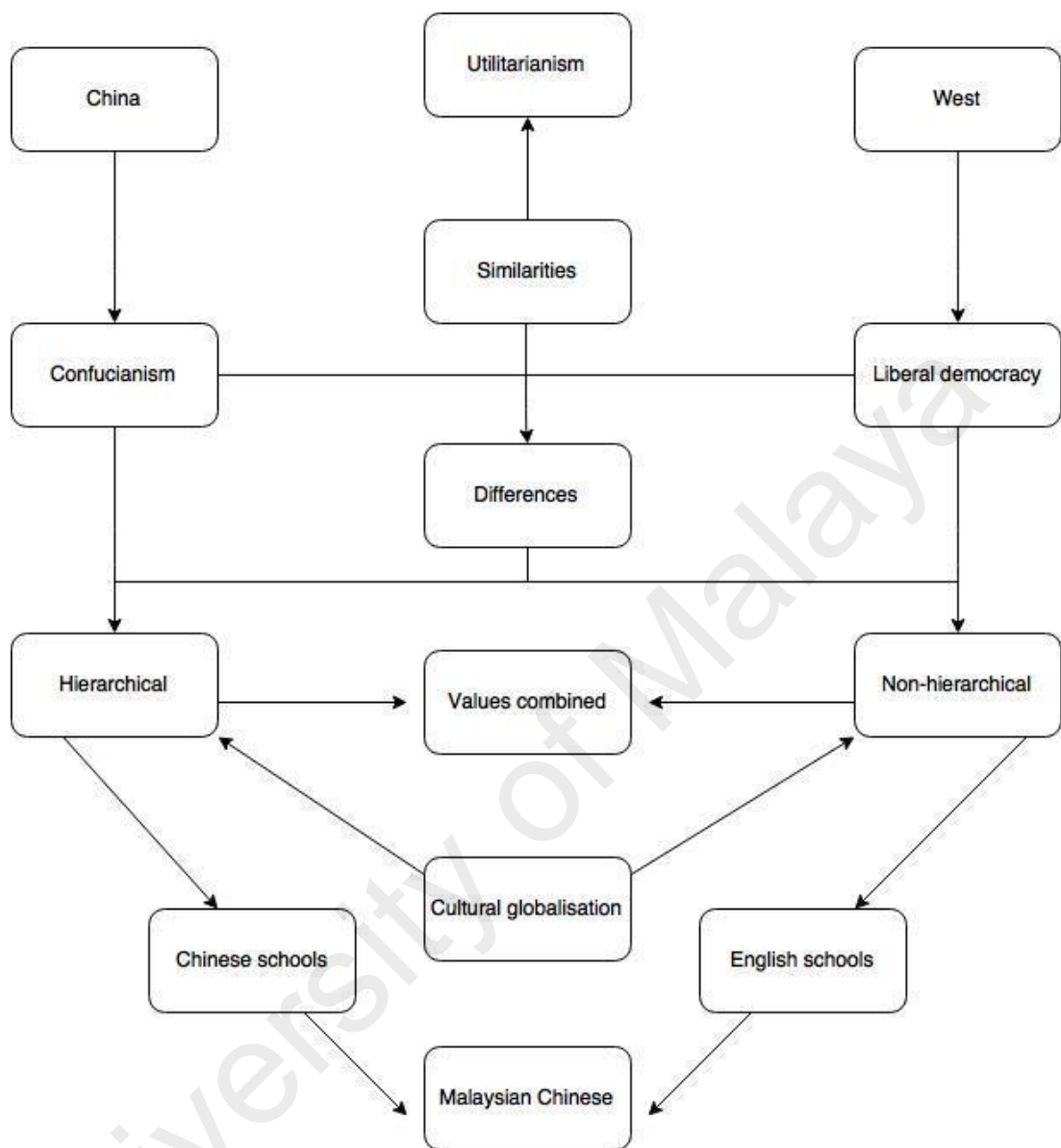
Figure 8.26 - Theoretical model explaining the acquisition of values by respondents

This study examined the possession of values by Malaysian Chinese youth with regards to their experienced system of language education. Malaysian Chinese youth who experienced Chinese-language education start out by possessing Confucian

values, which originate from mainland China. Malaysian Chinese youth who experienced English-language or Malay-language education (influenced by the British colonial era) start out by possessing Western liberal democratic values, which originate from the British colonial education legacy. Between these two value systems, there are similarities and differences. The similarity between Confucianism and Western liberal democracy is their concern for the greater good, or utilitarianism.

The differences between the two value systems is that Confucianism has emphasised the need to abide by rules, regulations, and social roles. Thus it is hierarchical in nature. Western liberal democracy which originated from ancient Greece, does not emphasise such hierarchy and views individuals as capable of performing any responsibility without fixed social roles.

These beliefs about hierarchy are transmitted to the students via schools as a socialisation agent. Chinese-educated students have thus been observed to possess more pragmatic worldviews, and possessing bonding social capital; while English-educated students possess more individualistic worldviews with bridging social capital.

However, with the advent of cultural globalisation, mass media takes over as a socialisation agent promoting neoliberal norms and values. Because neoliberalism is strongly aligned with liberal democracy and the free market, which is less hierarchical, the capitalistic norms and values promote cosmopolitanism as a desirable attitude. In the face of globalisation, mass media which are owned by

transnational companies tend to promote cosmopolitanism as an important value system, regardless of Confucianism or authentic Western liberal democracy.

As a result, the Malaysian Chinese who are part of a globalising nation-state are roped in to this experience. The norms and values which they have acquired from early education are often replaced with the norms and values which beckon from the global labour market. To survive, they need to reinvent themselves as cosmopolitan knowledge workers. This has resulted in a combination of prior and new values, and is institutionalised cultural capital.

This phenomenon has manifested itself through the Malaysian Chinese youths' tastes in objects, among which include mass media, food, fashion, and leisurely activities. These are objectified cultural capital.

Finally, the Malaysian Chinese youths' worldviews also become integrated with global values and norms, and informs their ambitions in life. It is found that students of both education systems possess a global phenomenology, which entails a curiosity about the outside world in the belief that they are able to transcend geographical and linguistic borders.

8.6   SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

8.6.1   INTRA-ETHNIC COMPARISON OF MALAYSIAN CHINESE IDENTITY

This study has enlightened me to the complexities within both the categories of "Chinese-education" and "English-education", noting that there are many overlaps between the two, as may be seen from the literature review. There is no clean-cut way to completely isolate one educational influence from the other, as individuals do not live in a vacuum. Thus the oft-cited comparison between the two groups as being either "individualistic" or "collectivist" is simplistic. Within the context of a multicultural and multilingual society, there are other possible flows of information, which may influence individuals' socialisation and identity development. These in turn are channeled through other socialisation agents like peers and mass media, which has been given much focus in this thesis. It is thus possible for integration of values and lifestyles to happen regardless of difference in prior education system.

This study has also broached the notion of Malaysian Chinese identity from a combination of materialist and idealist factors. As outlined in the literature review, scholars have tended to adopt one or the other as approaches in explaining Malaysian Chinese identity. While useful as a starting point, I have filled in the divide between the two approaches by implementing a mixed-method research design, which combined materialist factors such as personal adornment and possession of material

objects, as well as idealist factors which relate to reasons for consumption and ambition.

The other aspect which this study addressed is the gap in comparative studies of intra-ethnic diversity among the Malaysian Chinese. The experience of English-educated Malaysian Chinese, who may feel far removed from 'Chineseness' as promoted by social institutions, has not fully been explored. Thus I have included their perspective, in order to provide contrast against the Chinese-educated ones. Despite a slight language preference and worldview orientation towards Anglo-American education values, there is no discrepancy in their tastes. The experiences of this group remain an interesting area worthy of further study.

Given the focus on phenomenology, this study may be said to support the 'everyday-defined' approach in Malaysian Chinese identity studies. It takes the perspective of the subject, allowing them to elaborate on their choices in identifying with consumption preferences.

This study also provides some insight into the issues raised by the existence of multilingual educational systems in Malaysia. It has often been viewed as a possible dilemma in nation-building, because of the assumption that different school systems promote different values, different practices, and mistrust of the other. However, my study shows that values can converge, as do practices, and respondents indicate a desire to acquire bridging social capital. Of course, this remains to be an aspiration, because at the time of this study, respondents still maintained a bonding social

capital preference (spending time with one's own ethnic group). The reason for this deserves further study.

While Loh (1988, 2000), Hou (2002) and Ku (2003) examined education as a socialisation agent, most studies have ignored the role of family, peers, and mass media as socialisation agents in shaping 'Chineseness'. As noted by Haryati Abdul Karim (2010), young Malaysians shape their identity through media consumption, in which media globalisation allows young people to have greater agency and are no longer tied to their own local cultures. She also found that Malaysian Chinese tended to consume 'Chinese' television programmes from overseas (Haryati Abdul Karim 2010). Because of this, my study included these three other social institutions as factors influencing the value systems of the individual.

Within the globalisation perspective, existing studies have attempted to address the transnational links of Chinese overseas to that of mainland China, now a rising superpower. In my study, I have examined how my respondents view their position in relation to the dominant value systems that emerge from both China and the West. Law and Lee (2006) have noted that globalisation's impact on Malaysian education is especially strong, particularly where the links with mainland China are concerned. Because of this, the position of the 'English-educated' Malaysian Chinese youth which was formerly oriented towards the Western liberal democratic value system may be challenged. They now grapple with a need to orient themselves towards shifting global relations and embrace marketable aspects of each value system. In addition to this, there has of late been a Chinese transnationalism discourse which

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romanticises Confucian Chinese culture (Chan 2000; Weidenbaum & Hughes 1996; Redding 1993), engineering it as a form of cultural capital (Law and Lee 2006).

The findings show that both Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese urban youth pursuing tertiary education in Kuala Lumpur display nearly similar tastes. This contradicts much of popular literature which paints the two groups as disparate. It also supports Sim (2012)'s study on media consumption which finds that the Malaysian Chinese belonging to Generation Y (born between 1980 to 2000) are converging in their use of language. It is thus viewed that regardless of educational background, members of either group within Generation Y continue to make an effort to enlighten themselves with the cultural capital of the other.

According to Zawawi (2004), globalisation both homogenises and fragments. Because of this traversing of borders, the question of culture, identity, the media, and how they are intertwined arises (Embong 2011).

The capitalist-led transnational agenda of consumerism reduces differences in tastes, as a product of massification. Through the mass media as its channel, lifestyles and value systems are sold (Sklair 2000), rendering identities interchangeable. Major theorists of globalisation, such as sociologist Leslie Sklair with his global system theory have often attributed the process of globalisation to the transnational elite. Also known as the transnational capitalist class, this social group is divided into four fractions, which are the owners and controllers of transnational corporations and their local affiliates; globalising bureaucrats and politicians; globalising

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professionals; and consumerist elites which include merchants and media (Sklair 2000). The media which they control serves to project desirable images of the transnational elite as citizens of the world, as well as of their origin country or places of birth (Sklair 2000).

The mass media is one of the main platforms in spreading the awareness of globalising forces and its values. In today's globalised world, the media is all pervasive and omnipotent, and is a shaper of opinions, attitudes and beliefs (Embong 2011). It includes not only print forms but also electronic and new media, allowing us to access almost anything twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (Embong 2011). This accessibility to the Internet continues to increase, enabling one to learn about practically anything through it (Adlina Ab. Halim 2005).

The issue of values thus arises in the scope of culturally globalised mass media. Because cultural globalisation mainly spreads out from the West, the rest of the world is exposed to Western liberal democratic norms and values. Malaysian academicians and journalists have discussed the impact of global media on the local media (Adlina Ab. Halim 2005). For instance, Uthman (2003) writes about the "decadent values of the Western world through the global media" and Yaapar (2001) states that "most of the film, sitcom and drama series shows on TV in Malaysia are transmitted from the USA, UK Europe and Australia, embracing values that are familiar to the Western communities" (Adlina Ab. Halim 2005). This gives support to the debate whether cultural globalisation is essentially Americanisation. While the world may be considered "borderless" by some, most of the transnationally produced

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mass media do come from the USA, followed by the UK, and Europe. In general, the inculcation of western style and values on local food and fashion is considered as the assimilation of global culture into Malaysian traditions (Mohd. Pileh 2001, Zakaria 2001, Sulaiman 1998; in Adlina Ab. Halim 2005).

Haryati Abdul Karim (2010) states that within young Malaysians' identity construction through media usage, television programmes provide cultural resources in negotiating the global capitalist sphere. Hence we see a reduction in differences of cultural capital possession between the two groups. As individuals continue to peruse mass media throughout their life-course, this overrides the influence of primary socialisation agents, such as education. In the end, global consumerist values take precedence.

This may augur several implications. On the plus side, it enables integration of individuals within a community, regardless of sociolinguistic or educational background. This shows that past differences can be overcome with a coordinated mass media engine as a tool of value integration. However, in tandem with Ritzer's McDonaldisation hypothesis, this indicates that individuals are losing touch with meaningful social action and are instead buying into mass consumerism as a way of life. As can be seen from the in-depth interviews, respondents are career-oriented. This may mean that individuals are becoming more materialistic in their life pursuits. Thus the implications of these findings could flow in both directions.

8.6.2 CULTURAL CAPITAL AS A MEASURE OF INTRA-ETHNIC IDENTITY

In this study, cultural capital has been the framework used to indicate the tastes of individuals who have come from a Chinese-educated and a non Chinese-educated background. For the non Chinese-educated, this could include either a Malay-language or English-language education in primary and secondary levels, and tertiary education in English. In this section, I recap the ways in which tastes have become homogenised through the objectified and embodied aspects of cultural capital. Then its relation to the source of values, or institutionalised cultural capital is discussed.

Cultural capital has usually been used to study class differences in terms of tastes. In my research, I have used this framework in a novel way, to express the taste differences resulting in education as a socialisation agent. My findings demonstrate that while education plays an important role as a socialisation agent, the mass media has overtaken its influence in the globalised context. This case is unique because I do not look at class structure at all, given that Malaysia is not a class-based society. I have instead looked at an ethnic group, known for its great diasporic outreach across the globe, and noted for its intra-ethnic diversity. As ethnicity has been expressed in this case to be based on linguistic and educational associations, I have thus examined the influence of these two aspects among others on individual expression of tastes. Thus my study of cultural capital ownership among the Malaysian Chinese is unique in its approach and contribution to the field of Malaysian Chinese studies.

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Previous studies on the application of cultural capital have either focused very strongly on the objectified or institutionalised aspects and ignored the embodied; or have argued for the focus to be solely on the embodied. I have included all three aspects by designing a survey. Furthermore, my survey includes response options that takes into account the cultural nuances of the unique site of study which is Malaysia. Thus my survey differs from the bulk of large-scale cultural capital studies which have been conducted in Europe, using European cultural attributes as response options.

Past research on cultural capital has also tended to focus on large-scale social collectivities. The bulk of landmark studies on cultural capital have been based in the UK. To date, with the exception of the 2006 Asian Social Survey, there has not been many landmark cultural capital studies conducted in Asia.

In particular, this has not been done in Southeast Asia, nor Malaysia. This opens up the possibility to explore wider ground in this part of the world. Given the difference in cultural values in this region, cultural capital may take on new forms in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia. Most research which oriented itself towards Western highbrow versus middle and lowbrow values will indubitably be Western-centric. The way these values manifest within Asian society with different social systems and history may be different.

Hence my survey has attempted to address these issues. The three aspects of cultural capital, which are the objectified, institutionalised and embodied have been adjusted to accommodate the Malaysian experience, in an Asian context. Of particular note is the inclusion of the Confucian-Western liberal democratic value dichotomy, which is taught in schools and is thus passed down through education as a socialisation agent. Education as a form of cultural capital thus results in the attainment of either Confucian or Western liberal democratic values. The influence of cultural globalisation upon this possession of values can thus also be examined. If cultural globalisation is assumed to have a homogenising effect then surely it would entail the erosion of original values to be replaced by either Western liberal democratic values, or Confucian ones. With the rise of China as an economic, political and cultural power alongside the Anglo-American powers, this ongoing balancing act between possession of values can be observed.

As discussed in the theoretical framework, the concept of cultural capital has been problematised by many researchers. One major issue researchers face in operationalising this concept is that of cultural capital's embodied aspect. This aspect is the sense-making aspect that is related to the individual's consumption practices and may be obtained from the individual's experience at the institutionalised level. Goldthorpe has first highlighted how many researchers who tried to address the embodied aspect end up measuring it cardinally or ordinally, instead of nominally. Ambition has usually been used to indicate this embodied aspect, but rank is given to ambition, as though there is a hierarchy of stages to it. For van de Werfhorst, this has strayed from Bourdieu's original path. Still, the majority of large-scale cultural

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capital studies have tended to rely on parametric statistics. This is possibly due to the nationwide scope that these studies tend to take. As my study is small, I have managed to avoid this difficulty. In my survey, I have included all cardinal, ordinal and nominal measures; however only nominal measures have been used for the embodied aspect, thereby not attaching any rank. I have only used cardinal or ordinal measurements in variables such as age, or level of education. Thus my findings have been displayed here in simple non-parametric statistics. No prediction model has been generated as this study is specific and does not attempt to generalise. The findings are as they are – descriptive of the behaviour of respondents as it is.

There is one other study which also utilises the cultural capital framework in defining Malaysian students' experiences studying in the UK, by I Lin Sin (2014). However, while this study explores the identity formation of Malaysians who pursue UK degrees regardless of ethnic background; my study focuses on youth studying in Malaysia and who are from the Chinese ethnic group. Nonetheless, this shows there is use of such a framework in describing identity differences among individuals.

One layer of analysis which I use in interpreting this embodied cultural capital is a phenomenological one. Phenomenology was founded by Husserl (1901) as a critical philosophical practice of reflection about consciousness (Winkler and Botha, 2013). It remains a relevant approach to understanding individuals within their surroundings (Winkler and Botha, 2013). I delve into the ways in which respondents create meaning for themselves by the consumption of certain commodities. This meaning is in turn attached to the values they obtain from their institutionalised environment. In

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this analysis, I search for a visible Confucian-Western value dichotomy, and if there is, compare the possession of such values among the two groups. This Confucian-Western value dichotomy is a main thread that undergirds my three research questions, outlined at the start of this chapter.

Phenomenology is the study of how individuals ascribe meanings to symbols or social actions. Symbols are objects that are representative of other objects; and social actions are physical actions that are meaningful in communicating meaning to others with which we interact. Because of researchers' priority to retain the meanings of phenomenon, phenomenology has often been used in general education and higher education research (Randles, 2012; and Conklin, 2014) as well as studies of national influence on identity (Butler, 2005 in Randles, 2012). The bulk of phenomenological studies have focused on meanings of identity, which include perceptions of individuals of themselves, other people, society, and culture (Randles, 2012). In this way I explain the significance of the amount of respondents who attach Confucian-value meanings to their social actions; and those who attach Western-value meanings to theirs.

This part of my research has not been limited to my survey questionnaire. In attempting to delve into the phenomenological aspect of my research, I followed up with interview questions to the survey respondents who were willing to participate. In their interviews, they displayed a conflict in maintaining their own personal values which they had acquired from peers and mass media with that of their parents'. However, concerns of practicality often took over and respondents chose to

maintain the status quo – that of family harmony, rather than going off to pursue their own lone interests.

Phenomenology provides a rich understanding of the context which enables certain social actions to be fruitful. This context is known as the life world. The life world is defined by Schutz (who was responsible for furthering many of Husserl's ideas) as the "region of reality in which man [sic] engage himself and which he can change while he operates in it by means of his animate organism" (Schutz and Luckmann, 1973, in Bakardijeva, 2009).

In their research on student approaches to studying, Greasley and Ashworth (2007) found that each student had a unique approach to learning, based on their sense of self, orientations to others, personal projects and others. This was obtained from the students' phenomenological life world descriptions. The individuality of the learner was also demonstrated by the unique way their studying approaches were interrelated in the context of their life world (Greasley and Ashworth, 2007).

Even since the turn of the millennium, studies of the life world had become fashionable in theoretical discourse on China's education system (Tan Bin, 2002), of which Chinese education in Malaysia draws a lot from. This concern was important as there was an evolutionary belief that 'tools' such as language, communication, and other such activities in the individual's and community's everyday life - in other words, *context* - played a decisive role in creating people's subjective existence (Tan Bin, 2002). This life world discourse, in fact, changed schools' daily practice in China, in dimensions such as views on the nature of education, teacher-student

relationships, educational methods, and orientations (Tan Bin, 2002). These are all elements of cultural capital and the influence of the life world has been shown to play a part in its transformation. In my study, I have thus acknowledged the importance of the life world to mapping individuals with Confucian or Western liberal democratic values.

8.6.3 SOCIAL CAPITAL

One offshoot of my study is the issue of social capital, defined as a person's social networks and also introduced by Bourdieu. This issue crops up as an overlap in several of my survey questions, such as the ones on respondents' choice of peers in the offline and online realms. As Putnam refined Bourdieu's concept, he identified two kinds of social capital, the 'bonding' and the 'bridging'. The former is based on insular social networking while the latter is based on extending one's networks to go beyond. Respondents' choice of peers can be viewed as one instance of institutionalised cultural capital, which also provides them with norms and values, but is also influenced by other institutional socialisation agents such as the family. As it was, my study found that respondents desired to network globally but still retained a strong ethnic identification in their choice of peers.

8.6.4   CONFUCIANISM AND WESTERN LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC VALUE DICHOTOMY

This study has compared the presence of Confucian versus Western liberal democratic values within the institutionalised and embodied cultural capital of respondents. Beginning with the institutionalised aspect, the study examined the presence of values in respondents' primary, secondary, and tertiary schools; followed by the examination of the presence of values in the respondents' ambitions and reasons for choice of lifestyle preference.

While in the past, Confucian values have been linked closely to Chinese-medium schools, and Western values to English-medium schools, the difference is not significant now. There is no strong evidence that respondents from Chinese-medium schools obey strictly Confucian values; nor do respondents from English-medium schools display only Western liberal democratic values. In fact, when looking at the interviews, respondents claim that there is such a difference in primary schools, but this difference dissipates once they reach the secondary level. One may argue that this is because at the primary school level, education is more fundamental, emphasised particularly so in Chinese-medium schools. At the primary schooling age children are between the ages of seven to twelve and most are still acquiring very basic life skills such as spelling, reading, writing, counting, personal hygiene and basic etiquette. Thus at this level the schools may adopt a more heavy-handed approach to defining 'good' character. However, once the students crossover to secondary education, there is no need to come down so strongly upon them, and

students are given some degree of liberty to decide their own life paths. This is also the stage when students are to choose between pursuing the arts or the sciences. Thus some autonomy is certainly provided at the secondary school level. This is also a psychosocial developmental stage for the teenager, who is now between the ages of thirteen to seventeen, not only physically but also in terms of grappling with identity. They discover more facets to their character and are more interested in pursuing alternate paths of identity formation. They are more likely to peruse different channels of socialisation such as the mass media. The family may provide them with greater financial resources to do so. They may also have developed the ability to maintain 'front stage' and 'back stage' personas in the Goffmanian sense. They may choose to play the role of a law-abiding student at school, seemingly absorbing the norms and values of the schools seamlessly; but discard this appearance once they leave the school grounds. This itself involves an interplay of more than one set of values. This stage of socialisation becomes more complex and this is possibly why the clear-cut value difference between schools disappears.

The next and final chapter recaps how the research aims and objectives have been met.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The overall thrust behind this study is that cultural globalisation is bringing two formerly disparate value systems into the forefront, repackaging some of its attributes as desirable cultural capital (global habitus), and transmitting these values into Malaysian Chinese youth, who embrace it to remain competitively relevant, regardless of education background. This is done through the platform of the mass media.

To describe this process in a measurable form, I have applied the theoretical framework of cultural capital, which consists of institutionalised, objectified, and embodied aspects. Institutions socialise individuals, individuals develop material and lifestyle preferences, and attach meaning to these. These formed the research aims, while the research objective was achieved through the application of the cultural capital framework as a mixed-method survey and interviews.

The cultural capital survey which I have designed is useful to provide a comparative perspective within identity studies. It can also be applied, or readjusted to study comparisons within similar communities and across different communities. Variables such as age, gender, social class, and others can be used as the basis of comparison.

This thesis has also contributed to the study of Malaysian Chinese identities, given the divide between materialist and idealist approaches, as well a lack of intra-ethnic comparison within the ethnic Chinese in Malaysia. Finally, it also compares the position of Generation Y Malaysian Chinese youth within transnational links to China and the West.

This knowledge indicates that the existence of multilingual educational systems does not necessarily cause separation of values and behaviour, nor distrust. However, it also indicates that global consumerist forces are powerful in shaping individual behaviour.

Further research can explore the lacuna in studies of English-educated Malaysian Chinese, who are far removed from the culture of their ethnic origin. The experiences of this group of individuals is worthy of deeper exploration, as is the way they position themselves alongside the multiplicity of existing value systems.

With that said, it is also important to note that my findings suggest that perhaps there is no clear-cut way to isolate categories of purely "Chinese-educated" or "English-educated" Malaysian Chinese, as it demonstrates that some Malaysian Chinese may have experienced Chinese medium primary education despite continuing their secondary and tertiary education in English. Their family members or peers may also influence them with their own value systems. This problematises the notion of lumping the Malaysian Chinese into sociolinguistic or educational categories.

The contributions my study has made to existing knowledge have been outlined. However, this study also has its limitations. Scope-wise, this study focuses on a very

specific group, namely the Malaysian Chinese youth attending two higher education institutions based in Kuala Lumpur. Thus the findings are not generalisable to the entire Malaysian Chinese population, much less the rest of Malaysia nor the world. Method-wise, this study has employed a survey which is close-ended, and enables easy coding, but this also means that it does not enable respondents to elaborate. However, this has been addressed by including questions on respondents' reasons for their preferences. Limited response options were provided, but were indicative of themes that I wanted to flesh out, such as cosmopolitanism versus collectivism.

Because the study focused exclusively on the outcomes of multilingual education, it also did not focus on other social facts such as gender or social class. This may also be a limitation of cultural capital studies, as most landmark studies did not include the aspect of gender. As this cultural capital survey was designed for a comparative perspective on identity, perhaps further research can include aspects of gender into the existing survey design.

I would like to suggest that further research takes into account the differences between larger social groups, including a wider range of Malaysian Chinese, or even between two or more ethnic groups themselves. Besides ethnic groups, this may also be applied to exploring different mediums of education, including in foreign countries, but the response options would have to be changed to accommodate the local varieties of cultural artefacts.

Further researchers may also be able to develop the survey further, as it reveals cultural preferences and attitude differences. If a researcher adds on more variables

in the questionnaire, such as details on occupational choice, or even administers this survey in the occupational context, they may be able to discover reasons for employee tastes and its influence on their behaviour.

However, it must be noted last but not least that this survey is not a positivist one which seeks to establish causal relations. There is no attempt to link independent and dependent variables in explaining individual preferences, simply because my approach is realist, and I have sought to test theories rather than observations. As my belief is that science progresses through refutation of theory, I have sought to put the concept of cultural capital is explaining taste differences to the test. Thus I have only displayed my findings in a way that is straightforward and devoid of complicated statistics which tries to establish a degree of relation. In my research I have wanted to show that all variables can be stand-alone indicators of respondents' identity expression and no one variable is the deterministic cause of another. This may however not please the empiricists. In the end, I have demonstrated that the embodied aspect of cultural capital is indispensable and is certainly not possible to measure in any empirical way. Thus to establish causal relations would be entirely against the point. Hence the epistemology of this thesis has been from the start a realist one, and includes a phenomenological consideration of the free will of respondents. I thus conclude that in an increasingly borderless world, facilitated by transnational media flows, the Chinese-educated and English-educated Malaysian Chinese are experiencing a convergence.

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