

TELEVISION, LOCAL REPRESENTATION, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY NEGOTIATION AMONG BAJAU YOUTH IN SABAH: A USES AND GRATIFICATIONS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Cyril Modili^{1*}
Aisah Meri²
Haryati Abd Karim³

^{1,2,3}Communication Program, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Malaysia
Sabah, Malaysia

cyrilmodili@ums.edu.my*

Received: 6 Jan 2026 | Revised: 1 June 2026
Accepted: 28 June 2026 / Published: 30 June 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51200/ga.v16i1.7896>

ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper outlines a framework for examining how television consumption may influence the negotiation of cultural identity among Bajau youth in Sabah. It does not include primary empirical data. While research on the Bajau has mainly focused on traditional practices and their adaptation to modern life, little attention has been given to the role of television in young people's cultural experiences. Drawing on Uses and Gratifications Theory and studies on indigenous media representation, the paper views Bajau youth as active viewers who select, interpret, and sometimes challenge broadcast content, rather than passive recipients of cultural preservation or loss. Its core argument is that television's cultural importance for these youth is context-dependent. Where it hinges on what is shown, the language used, the creator and access conditions. Special focus is placed on local representation and its absence, distinguishing between mere visibility and respectful portrayal, and on digital inequality, which influences how rural and coastal youth can access culturally relevant content. Through a critical synthesis of literature on Bajau identity, Sabah and Malaysian television, indigenous media, and digital access, it proposes a framework and hypotheses for future research. The broader goal is to guide media production and policy that empower young people as creators of their own representation rather than passive audiences.

Keywords: Bajau Youth, Television Consumption, Cultural Identity Negotiation, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Indigenous Media Representation, Digital Inequality.

INTRODUCTION

Young Bajau in Sabah are growing up in a media landscape that is markedly different from what their parents and grandparents experienced. While television used to be a single, shared national broadcast in the evening, today it exists alongside satellite channels, streaming services, and a continuous stream of short videos on mobile phones. Meanwhile, the Bajau community's language, customs, and maritime lifestyle are only sporadically represented in the national media, and their access to digital infrastructure varies greatly among coastal villages, rural districts, and towns. This paper addresses the challenge that Bajau youth face in navigating questions of cultural identity within a media environment where traditional TV, digital platforms, and unequal access intersect, and where most cultural content available to them is created by outsiders.

Research on the Bajau has explored healing practices, rituals, *adat* and how the community adapts to modern life (Hussin, 2008; Kibong et al., 2017; Mahali, 2018; A'dam et al., 2023; Zakaria et al., 2023; Jusnih & Baco, 2024). While this work identifies cultural domains that support Bajau identity, it rarely considers television as a cultural medium independently or examines how young Bajau engage with broadcast content. Media studies in Sabah have started to investigate the digital transformation among indigenous youth (Modili et al., 2022) and the role of television news among Malaysians more broadly (Jerome et al., 2023). However, none of these studies focus specifically on the Bajau or link media consumption to how they maintain, adapt, or abandon their identity. This gap in scholarship is what these paper aims to address.

The conceptual gap is narrower and, for present purposes, more important. Where television and indigenous identity are discussed together, the relationship is often reduced to a single opposition: television either preserves a culture or erodes it. That framing leaves little room for what audience research has shown for half a century, namely that viewers choose, interpret and argue with what they watch. It also leaves several questions unasked. How do media gratifications connect an individual's reasons for watching to a collective sense of being Bajau? What difference does it make whether Bajau language and settings appear on screen at all, and who authors them when they do? And how does unequal access decide which young people can reach culturally relevant content before any question of interpretation arises? The relationship between media gratifications, language representation, broadcast authorship, digital inequality and Bajau youth identity remains under-theorised.

This paper addresses that gap by proposing a conceptual framework. It is a conceptual article: it does not report primary empirical data, but synthesises existing literature to build a framework and a set of propositions for future research on television consumption and Bajau youth cultural identity in Sabah. Rather than asking whether television is good or bad for Bajau culture, it asks a more tractable question, under what conditions television becomes culturally meaningful for young Bajau, and how those young people negotiate the representations they meet.

Aim and Objectives

This paper aims to develop a conceptual framework for examining how television consumption may relate to cultural identity negotiation among Bajau youth in Sabah, with attention to media gratifications, language representation, local content, family mediation, media authorship and digital inequality. The framework is built to serve five objectives:

1. To synthesise the literature on Bajau cultural identity, youth media use, television, and digital inequality.

2. To define television consumption, Bajau youth, cultural identity and media gratifications as these terms are used here.
3. To examine how language representation and local cultural content may function as identity resources.
4. To consider how broadcast authorship, cultural authority and institutional framing affect indigenous representation, including the effects of absence.
5. To propose conceptual propositions that can guide future empirical research.

Research Questions

These objectives translate into six questions that the framework is designed to open up for later study:

1. How can television consumption among Bajau youth in Sabah be conceptualised through Uses and Gratifications Theory?
2. What identity-related gratifications might Bajau youth seek from television?
3. How might language representation and local content shape the cultural relevance of television for Bajau youth?
4. How do broadcast authorship and cultural authority affect the meaning of Bajau representation, including its absence?
5. How might digital inequality condition access to culturally relevant television content?
6. How might Bajau youth negotiate, resist or hybridise the representations they encounter?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review starts by examining Bajau cultural identity and language, then expands outward to the medium itself and the conditions where they intersect. It proceeds with an overview of the Sabah and Malaysian television landscape, followed by discussions on indigenous representation and authorship. The analysis also covers youth gratification and audience agency, culminating in an exploration of digital inequality. A brief synthesis introduces the overall framework.

Bajau cultural identity, language and modernization

The Bajau group is diverse, not a single homogeneous community. It includes communities like the Bajau Sama, Bajau Laut, and Bajau Ubian, who live along coastlines and islands in Sabah and engage in maritime lifestyles to varying extents. Their position within the Malaysian political landscape is actively negotiated, as Majid Cooke and Acciaioli (2021) illustrate, highlighting how Bajau communities seek recognition as Bumiputera by emphasizing environmental rights and Islam. In this context, identity is actively asserted and continually reshaped rather than being a fixed inheritance.

Extensive research documents the cultural areas through which Bajau identity manifests. These studies detail traditional healing practices and herbal medicine (Kibong et al., 2017), the *Ngalai* healing ritual in Kota Belud (Mahali, 2018), the adat bertimbang of a Bajau community in Tuaran (A'dam et al., 2023), Bajau Ubian traditional medicine in Kudat (Jusnih & Baco, 2024), and both the tangible and intangible heritage of the Bajau Ubian along Sabah's east coast (Zakaria et al., 2023). Hussin (2008) explores how the Bajau Laut diaspora has

preserved and transmitted their traditions throughout Sabah. For this discussion, these practices are less about cataloging customs than about the cultural material that television might display, simplify, omit, or adapt. The key media concern is not whether Bajau culture exists but whether broadcast media bring these practices into view, reduce them to heritage spectacles, exclude them from public culture, or enable younger generations to reinterpret them.

Language is the area where change is most evident. Renddan et al. (2023) observe a shift in the Bajau Sama community of Kota Belud, with younger speakers increasingly using Malay for speaking, understanding, reading, and writing, while their heritage language diminishes. Zainuddin (2023) interprets this change as part of a broader adjustment where the Bajau balance traditional values with modern life demands. Language shift impacts television studies because the language used in programs influences whether young viewers see it as their own. If Bajau is rarely heard on screen and Malay and English dominate, TV may subtly reinforce the very shift Renddan et al. highlight.

Sabah and Malaysian television and media ecology

The phrase 'television content' needs clarification regarding which specific television it refers to. The Malaysian media landscape is complex, comprising various layers. The state broadcaster, Radio Television Malaysia (RTM), offers free-to-air channels and regional services, including content tailored for Sabah and Sarawak. Commercial free-to-air TV is limited to a few operators. Astro, the satellite provider, offers numerous local and imported channels. Additionally, a growing portion of broadcast material targets young audiences via clips on digital platforms. These different layers do not share a single cultural economy, where they differ in funding sources, preferred languages and the nature of their relationships with viewers.

The political background of the medium plays a crucial role here. Khattab (2006) notes that since Malaysia's independence, television has served as a tool to shape public culture, with RTM largely acting as a voice of the state that promotes a Malay-centric and relatively unified national image. This has often muted the diversity among and within the country's ethnic and indigenous groups. Indigenous communities in East Malaysia, such as the Bajau, are on the fringes of this portrayal. Research on local content emphasizes that domestic programs are vital to cultural identity and national unity in a diverse society (Rahim & Pawanteh, 2010), and studies on Malaysian TV content explore how different cultures are portrayed and exchanged on screen (Ishak & Firdaus, 2010). Despite this, local programming can still foster identity. For example, Idrus et al. (2016) find that young Malay viewers use local television fiction to reconnect with their local roots, even amidst global media influences. However, the representation and understanding of Sabahan indigenous identities within Malaysian television remain under-theorized.

Television remains relevant, despite the rise of social media. Malaysians still view TV as a trusted source (Jerome et al., 2023), and indigenous youth in Sabah are gradually shifting to digital platforms without completely abandoning traditional screens (Modili et al., 2022). Therefore, a study on the Bajau should focus on specific questions, including (1) which platforms reach Bajau communities, whether the content is from state, commercial, satellite, or rebroadcast TV, (2) the languages used, (3) the presence of Bajau language, (4) if Bajau environments, livelihoods, music, customs, and youth perspectives are depicted, and (5) who produces this content.

Indigenous media representation and cultural authority

It's tempting to think that showcasing local stories automatically boosts cultural identity, and earlier versions of this argument assumed as much. However, the literature on representation does not support this. Simply being visible isn't the same as being respectfully or accurately

portrayed. Indigenous groups can appear on screen but be depicted as exotic, backward, decorative, or folkloric. Fitzgerald (2010), referencing Clark's stages of minority representation, notes that portrayals of American Indians on U.S. TV have fluctuated between non-recognition, ridicule, regulation, and occasional respect, with characters often placed in the distant past or cast as enforcers of mainstream norms. Therefore, any study of Bajau representation should consider not just the presence of Bajau culture but also how it is created, framed, and interpreted.

Absence should be considered as significant as presence because media absences constitute a form of representation. Coleman and Yochim (2008) review symbolic annihilation and argue that leaving out or trivializing a group's portrayal in media is inherently meaningful, extending beyond simple stereotyping. Leavitt et al. (2015) demonstrate the consequences of such omissions: since Native Americans rarely appear in modern U.S. media, and when they do, it is often in narrow or historical contexts, their images tend to homogenize Native identities and limit how young Native individuals envision their futures. Similarly, for Sabah, the message is clear. If the Bajau language, settings, and characters are largely absent from television, young Bajau might conclude that their identity is confined to private family or village life rather than to the shared public culture represented in national media.

Authorship serves as the bridge between visibility and a sense of belonging. Hartley (2004) contends that the cultural significance of indigenous television largely depends on who has control over it. He suggests that indigenous media can influence national broadcasting to foster a more diverse understanding of citizenship, rather than promoting a singular national identity. Caswell, Cifor, and Ramirez (2017), in their discussion on community archives, introduce the concept of 'representational belonging' as a positive counterpart to symbolic annihilation, which refers to the recognition individuals feel when a community perceives complex, self-produced images of itself. The paper distinguishes between externally authored and community-authored representations, as these often hold different cultural authority levels for Bajau youth.

Youth media gratifications and active audiences

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) supplies the audience side of the framework. The approach treats people as active selectors of media who use content to meet specific needs, rather than as passive targets of media effects (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973; Rubin, 2009). Early work on television mapped recurring motives such as information, entertainment, companionship, escape and habit (Rubin, 1983), and the active-audience premise has carried over into newer media, where viewers move along a spectrum of attentiveness rather than dividing neatly into active and passive types (Steiner & Xu, 2020). The strength of UGT for this study is that it directs attention to why particular programmes are chosen and what satisfactions are sought from them.

UGT on its own, however, can stay at the level of the individual, and the earlier draft did not build the bridge from individual motive to collective identity that an indigenous study needs. That bridge exists in the literature. Harwood (1999) shows that viewers seek social-identity gratifications, selecting programmes that feature their own group and, in doing so, strengthening their identification with it. Harwood and Vincze (2015), studying Hungarian speakers in Romania, demonstrate that an ethnolinguistic-identity gratification helps explain why members of a language minority choose in-group-language television, so that watching becomes a way of maintaining a collective identity. Somani and Guo (2018) find a parallel pattern among Indian immigrants in the United States, who actively choose ethnic programming to reinforce a sense of who they are. Together these studies make the mechanism explicit, where an individual gratification, such as the wish to see one's own language and people on screen, can do collective work, sustaining or reworking a shared identity. This is precisely the link a Bajau study requires.

The active-audience theory must be seriously considered in youth agency work, extending beyond traditional protective appeals. If Bajau youth actively watch media, they likely critique, mock, remix, reject, or reinterpret what they see instead of passively absorbing it. McKenzie (2022) shows that Hmong American young adults use media to explore and reshape cultural values, sometimes balancing tensions between their heritage and the host culture. Similarly, Rofil, Md Syed, and Hamzah (2016) describe Malaysian women of Javanese descent negotiating their identity by interpreting television images, a process they call interpretive ethnicity. Bajau youth should not be viewed solely as vulnerable media consumers; they may evaluate what they see against family knowledge, challenge stereotypes, alternate between television and social media, and create hybrid identities that incorporate both local and national elements.

Digital inequality and hybrid media use

Access remains uneven, affecting the potential for change. Fang et al. (2022), using van Dijk's four dimensions of the digital divide—motivation, physical access, skills, and usage—found that the gap between rural and urban areas in Sabah is still wide. Physical access is particularly unresolved, even where communities are willing to adopt new technologies. Broader studies warn that the divide isn't solely about infrastructure: Salemink, Strijker, and Bosworth (2017) distinguish connectivity from inclusion and highlight the paradox that the most needy rural communities are often the least connected and included. For Bajau youth in coastal and rural Sabah, these factors determine who can access culturally relevant content, with television potentially having a greater impact where broadband is limited. Access influences how television and digital media relate, viewing them more as complementary rather than sequential. Young people often shift between a broadcast clip and its social media commentary. While television provides structured, widely shared stories, digital platforms enable more personalized and participatory interactions. For Bajau youth, any framework must consider both media types and explore how they navigate between them, rather than assuming digital media will simply replace television.

Conceptual synthesis and the gap

Pulled together, the literature establishes some things and leaves others open. It is reasonably clear that Bajau identity is carried through language, custom and livelihood and is actively negotiated; that Malaysian television has historically advanced a Malay-centred public culture in which East Malaysian indigenous identities are marginal; that representation can affirm or diminish, and that absence is itself meaningful; that audiences, including youth, interpret and contest what they watch; and that unequal access governs who can reach what. What remains unknown is how these strands combine in the specific case of the Bajau: how access conditions, viewing motives, the presence or absence of Bajau language and settings, the authorship of what is shown, and youth interpretation together shape the negotiation of Bajau identity. No existing framework joins these elements for this community. The rest of the paper proposes one.

METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts a critical theoretical synthesis. It identifies the main debates across Bajau cultural studies, Sabah and Malaysian television, indigenous media representation, Uses and Gratifications Theory and digital inequality and integrates them into a single conceptual framework for future empirical study.

Literature selection

Sources were gathered from Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar, supplemented by the catalogues of Malaysian and Southeast Asian journals, using combinations of keywords that included Bajau, Sabah, indigenous, television, broadcast media, media representation, cultural identity, language shift, Uses and Gratifications, audience, youth and digital divide. Literature was included when it spoke to Bajau identity, Sabah indigenous communities, youth media use, television consumption, media representation, Uses and Gratifications Theory, language shift or digital inequality.

Defining the television corpus

In this paper, television refers to broadcast or television-originated programming available to Bajau youth via national, regional, satellite or digital rebroadcast platforms. The framework keeps this object distinct from user-generated social media content, while recognizing that young people move between the two and that future research should follow them across that boundary. Marking the corpus in this way gives the framework an anchor, so claims about representation, language and authorship attach to a defined kind of content rather than to 'television' in general.

Building the framework

The framework was assembled in three stages. First, the literature was read to surface concepts that recur across these fields, clustering around media access, viewing motivation, representation and identity. Second, those concepts were grouped into access conditions, gratification categories, representational features and identity outcomes. Third, Uses and Gratifications Theory was combined with work on indigenous representation and cultural authority so that individual viewing motives could be connected to the collective negotiation of identity. The result is the framework set out in the next section, together with the concept definitions on which it rests.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR TELEVISION AND BAJAU YOUTH IDENTITY

The framework treats the cultural significance of television as conditional and processual. It runs from the conditions under which a young person can watch at all, through the motives and the content of viewing, to the representational and authorship features of what is shown, then to the interpretive work the viewer does, and finally to a set of possible identity outcomes. The key terms are defined in Table 1 and the framework is shown in Figure 1.

Table 1. Key concepts and their function in the framework

Concept	Working definition in this paper	Function in the framework
<i>Television consumption</i>	Engagement with broadcast or television-originated programming, whether watched on a television set, through a satellite service, or as a rebroadcast clip on a digital platform.	Fixes the object of study and separates it from general screen time and from user-generated social media.
<i>Bajau youth</i>	Young people of roughly 15 to 40 who identify as Bajau, including Bajau Sama, Bajau Laut and Bajau Ubian, living in coastal, rural and urban Sabah.	Names the population and signals its internal diversity rather than treating it as one undifferentiated group.
<i>Cultural identity</i>	A young person's sense of belonging to the Bajau community, carried through language, custom, livelihood and shared story, and treated as negotiated rather than fixed.	The outcome the framework sets out to explain.
<i>Cultural identity negotiation</i>	The active process by which youth accept, question, rework or combine cultural meanings drawn from media and from other parts of their lives.	Replaces the preservation-or-assimilation binary with an agentive process.
<i>Media gratifications</i>	The needs viewers seek to meet through media: information, entertainment, social interaction, and recognition of self and group.	Connects individual viewing motives to identity, following Uses and Gratifications Theory.
<i>Local representation</i>	The presence of Bajau language, settings, livelihoods, customs and people in television content.	A condition under which television may become culturally relevant.
<i>Absence (symbolic annihilation)</i>	The systematic under-representation or omission of a group from media.	Treats non-appearance as itself meaningful, not as a neutral blank.
<i>Broadcast authorship</i>	Who produces, frames and controls a representation: external producers, the state, or the community itself.	Separates mere visibility from respectful, community-grounded representation.
<i>Digital inequality</i>	Uneven access to devices, connectivity and skills across rural, coastal and urban settings.	An access condition that shapes which youth can reach culturally relevant content at all.
<i>Hybrid / transcultural identity</i>	An identity that combines local Bajau elements with wider national or global ones without simply swapping one for the other.	A possible outcome of negotiation, offered as an alternative to cultural loss.

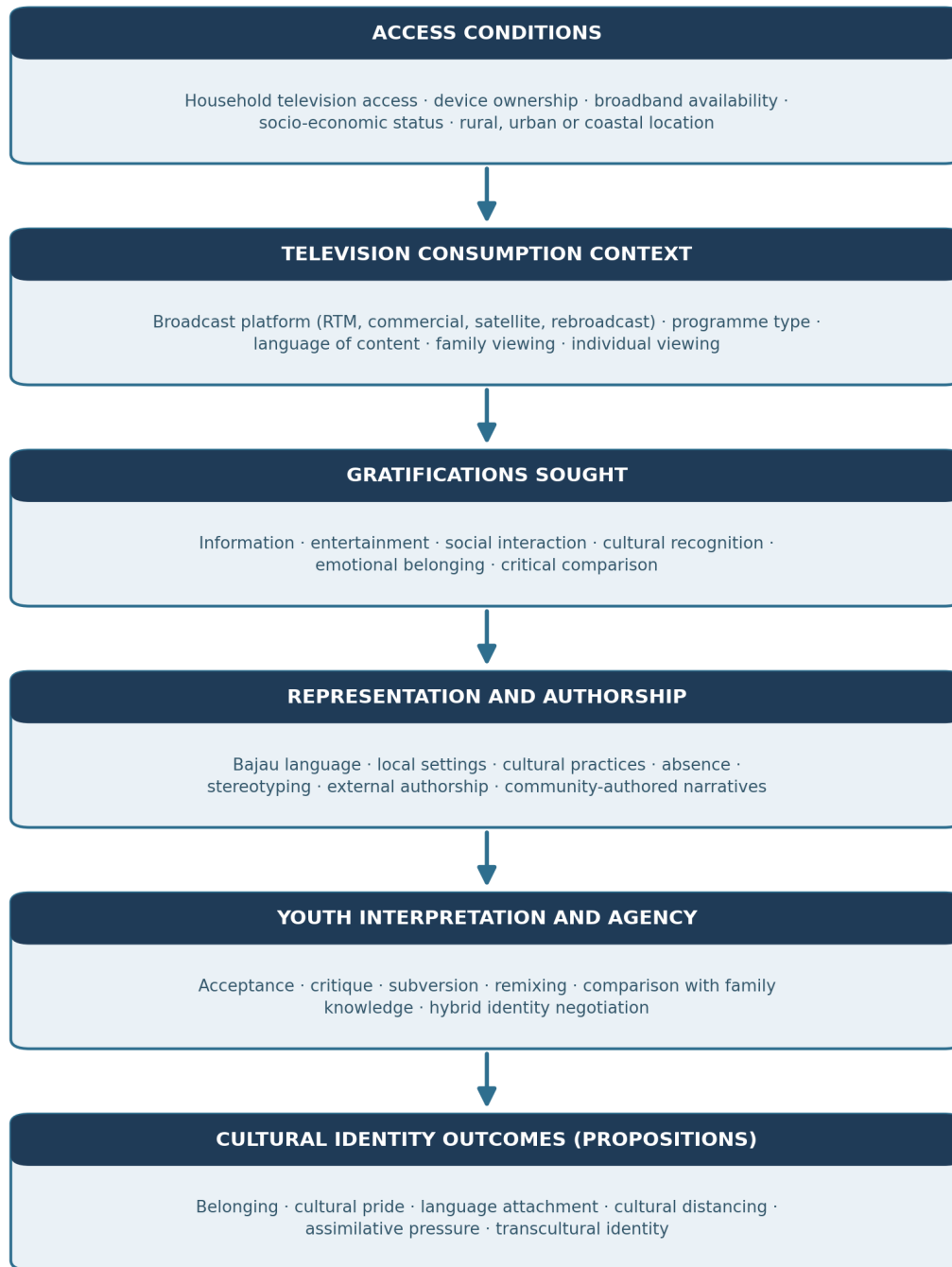


Figure 1. A conceptual framework connecting television access, gratifications, representation and authorship, youth agency and cultural identity outcomes among Bajau youth in Sabah.

Starting with access conditions such as household television access, device ownership, broadband availability, socio-economic status, and location. Whether along the coast, in a rural district, or in town, these factors set the outer boundary of engagement. They influence not only how much a young person watches but also which platform they use, thereby shaping all subsequent choices. The context of television consumption then defines the encounter: the broadcast platform, the type of programme, its language, and whether viewing occurs with family or alone. The gratifications sought refer to what the viewer aims to gain, from information and entertainment to social interaction, cultural recognition, emotional belonging, and the vital pleasure of comparing content with their prior knowledge.

The next stage involves representation and authorship, marking a significant departure from a basic content model. Here, the focus is not just on the presence of Bajau language, settings, and practices but also on their absence, stereotypical portrayal, and who creates them. Whether an external producer, the state, or the community itself. Youth engagement is also crucial, encompassing acceptance, critique, subversion, remixing, comparison with family knowledge, and negotiating a hybrid identity. Cultural identity outcomes only emerge at the final stage and are diverse ranging from belonging, cultural pride, and language attachment to cultural distancing, assimilative pressures, and transcultural identities that are neither purely retained nor lost. Since the model is conditional at each step, it does not predict a single outcome but rather clarifies the conditions influencing different possibilities.

CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Since this is a conceptual paper, the following are propositions rather than findings. They are presented to be tested, refined, or rejected by future research. Each is conditional by nature, aligning with the idea that television's cultural impact depends on factors like access, content, authorship, language, and interpretation, rather than simply resulting from exposure.

- P1. **Access.** Bajau youth with limited broadband or personal device access may rely more heavily on television for information, entertainment, and cultural narratives than peers with fuller access.
- P2. **Language.** Television content carrying Bajau language or locally familiar speech may strengthen cultural recognition and a sense of belonging.
- P3. **Representation.** Representation may support identity only when it is respectful and locally recognisable; tokenistic or exoticising portrayals may not and may even push youth away.
- P4. **Absence.** The absence of Bajau language, settings and characters from television may itself signal that Bajau identity is marginal to national public culture.
- P5. **Authorship.** Community-authored or co-produced representations may carry different cultural authority from externally authored broadcasts and may be received differently by youth.
- P6. **Family mediation.** Discussion within the family around viewing may turn television into an occasion for intergenerational cultural learning.
- P7. **Youth agency.** Bajau youth may critique, reject, remix or hybridise television narratives rather than simply take them in.
- P8. **Digital complementarity.** Television and digital media may work together, with youth using social platforms to supplement, discuss or contest broadcast content.

How assimilative pressure might work

Assimilative pressure generally does not stem from any one programme. Instead, it results from a consistent pattern where mainstream television portrays non-Bajau languages and lifestyles as modern and desirable, while Bajau culture is either absent, marginalized, or depicted as traditional and folkloric. When this pattern appears across the available content, it sends a cumulative message rather than a single insult. This message subtly sorts Bajau identity as something private, rural, or historical, rather than part of the shared national identity. In this way, assimilation can be seen as a pattern of representation and reception, rather than a simple slogan.

Implications for media and policy

If Bajau youth are active interpreters instead of passive receivers, it suggests moving away from a model that solely relies on providing the right programs to 'rescue' them. A more practical goal is to expand the opportunities for Bajau youth to encounter, question, co-create, and share their own identity representations across TV and digital media. Culturally responsive TV wouldn't just feature Bajau stories; it would involve Bajau youth and community members directly in writing, producing, and interpreting these stories. Similarly, addressing digital inequality should focus on increasing access, as it determines who can participate. The primary goal is to promote participation and authorship, rather than simply controlling exposure.

Contribution

The contribution of this paper is a framework that links television access, media gratifications, language representation, broadcast authorship, family mediation and digital inequality to the cultural identity negotiation of Bajau youth in Sabah, together with a set of propositions that make the framework testable. It reframes a topic that has been posed as a contest between preservation and loss into a question about conditions and agency, and it supplies the conceptual vocabulary, drawn from Uses and Gratifications Theory and from work on indigenous representation, with which that question can be pursued empirically.

LIMITATIONS

This paper is limited by its conceptual design. It does not measure actual television viewing among Bajau youth, nor does it claim to represent all Bajau communities across Sabah, which vary in language, livelihood, and access. Its propositions serve as starting points rather than definitive results and need empirical testing through audience reception studies, interviews, viewing diaries, content analysis of relevant television content, and community-based participatory research. The framework should be seen as a tool to be refined with evidence, rather than a conclusive account.

CONCLUSION

Television remains a key presence in Bajau youth's lives, especially for those with limited connectivity, serving as the most accessible source of structured information and cultural stories. Whether it reinforces or challenges their Bajau identity depends on factors such as what is shown, the language used, who produces it, and access restrictions that determine who can watch. Importantly, young people themselves interpret, contest, or reshape what they see. By integrating Uses and Gratifications Theory with studies on indigenous representation and cultural authority, this framework views Bajau youth as active negotiators of their identity, rather than passive audiences. It also outlines how this process can be examined. The next step is empirical, namely, to explore these dynamics within Bajau homes and communities, learning directly from young people how television influences their evolving identities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research is funded by a grant under the Skim Geran Dana Kluster (DKP0131) from Universiti Malaysia Sabah. This study adhered strictly to ethical standards, ensuring transparency and the absence of conflicts of interest.

REFERENCES

- A'dam, S., Razif Abang Muis, A. M., Hasbollah Hajimin, M. N. H., Marinsah, S. A., & Mokhtar, S. (2023). The survival of adat bertimbang in the Bajau community of Kampung Bolong, Tuaran. *International Journal of Law, Government and Communication*, 8(32), 444–459. <https://doi.org/10.35631/ijlgc.832034>
- Caswell, M., Cifor, M., & Ramirez, M. H. (2017). 'To be able to imagine otherwise': Community archives and the importance of representation. *Archives and Records*, 38(1), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23257962.2016.1260445>
- Coleman, R. R. M., & Yochim, E. C. (2008). The symbolic annihilation of race: A review of the 'Blackness' literature. *African American Research Perspectives*, 12, 1–10.
- Fang, Y. X., Gill, S. S., Kunasekaran, P., Rosnon, M. R., Talib, A. T., & Aziz, A. (2022). Digital divide: An inquiry on the native communities of Sabah. *Societies*, 12(6), 148. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc12060148>
- Fitzgerald, M. R. (2010). 'Evolutionary stages of minorities in the mass media': An application of Clark's model to American Indian television representations. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 21(4), 367–384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2010.519651>
- Hartley, J. (2004). Television, nation, and Indigenous media. *Television & New Media*, 5(1), 7–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476403259750>
- Harwood, J. (1999). Age identification, social identity gratifications, and television viewing. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 43(1), 123–136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838159909364479>
- Harwood, J., & Vincze, L. (2015). Ethnolinguistic identification, vitality, and gratifications for television use in a bilingual media environment. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(1), 73–89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12097>
- Hussin, H. (2008). Diaspora Bajau Laut dan pengekalan serta penerusan amalan tradisi di Sabah. *Borneo Research Journal*, 2, 149–163.
- Idrus, M. M., Hashim, R. S., & Mohd Mydin, R. (2016). Rediscovery of the Malay 'local': Youth and TV fiction in Malaysia. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 22(2), 210–225. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2016.1154876>
- Ishak, M. S. A., & Firdaus, A. S. (2010). Cultural exchange through broadcasting in Asia: A study of Malaysian television contents. *Jurnal Pengajian Media Malaysia*, 12(1), 25–36.
- Jerome, C., Hie, T. S., Hadzmy, A. J. A., & Raslie, H. (2023). Do you still watch the news on TV? Examining TV news viewing among Malaysians today. *International Journal of Business and Technology Management*, 5(2), 85–93.
- Jusnih, N. F. A., & Baco, Z. (2024). Amalan perubatan tradisional etnik Bajau Ubian di Kudat, Sabah: Penelitian terhadap kaedah perubatan tawal. *Jurnal Gendang Alam (GA)*, 14(1), 115–124.
- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). Uses and gratifications research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37(4), 509–523. <https://doi.org/10.1086/268109>
- Khattab, U. (2006). 'Non' mediated images: Public culture and (state) television in Malaysia. *International Communication Gazette*, 68(4), 347–361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048506065766>
- Kibong, S. B., Amat, A., & Abd Samad, L. (2017). Penggunaan bosoon dan herba bagi merawat sakit perut dalam masyarakat Bajau Sama di daerah Tuaran, Sabah. *MANU: Jurnal Pusat Penataran Ilmu dan Bahasa*, 26. <https://doi.org/10.51200/manu.v26i.1060>

- Leavitt, P. A., Covarrubias, R., Perez, Y. A., & Fryberg, S. A. (2015). 'Frozen in time': The impact of Native American media representations on identity and self-understanding. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(1), 39–53. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12095>
- Mahali, S. N. Hj. (2018). Ngalai: Ritual penyembuhan dalam kalangan orang Bajau di Kota Belud, Sabah. *Akademika*, 88(3).
- Majid Cooke, F., & Acciaioli, G. (2021). Positioning Bajau identities as Bumiputera: Challenges and potentials of leveraging environmental justice and espousal of Islam in Sabah, Malaysia. In *Discourses, agency and identity in Malaysia: Critical perspectives* (pp. 153–181). Springer.
- McKenzie, J. (2022). Digital media as sites for cultural identity development: The case of Hmong American emerging adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 40(2), 296–330. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07435584221116312>
- Modili, C., Abd Karim, H., & Abd Wahab, J. (2022). Television consumption patterns among Sabah's Kadazan-Dusun youth in the era of digital society. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 7(12), e001991. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v7i12.1991>
- Rahim, S. A., & Pawanteh, L. (2010). The local content industry and cultural identity in Malaysia. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 2(10), 215–220.
- Renddan, B., Seruji, Z., Abdul Aziz, A. Y., Dani, N. A., & Goyi, N. (2023). Media of language shift in Bajau Sama Kota Belud: Speaking, understanding, reading, and writing. *Issues in Language Studies*, 12(1), 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.33736/ils.4990.2023>
- Rofil, L. E. F., Md Syed, M. A., & Hamzah, A. (2016). Constructing interpretive ethnicity in between two nations: Television and diasporic discourses of identity in Malaysia. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(10), 1737–1753. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1110611>
- Rubin, A. M. (1983). Television uses and gratifications: The interactions of viewing patterns and motivations. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 27(1), 37–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838158309386471>
- Rubin, A. M. (2009). Uses-and-gratifications perspective on media effects. In J. Bryant & M. B. Oliver (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 165–184). Routledge.
- Salemink, K., Strijker, D., & Bosworth, G. (2017). Rural development in the digital age: A systematic literature review on unequal ICT availability, adoption, and use in rural areas. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 54, 360–371. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2015.09.001>
- Somani, I. S., & Guo, J. (2018). Seeing Indian, being Indian: Diaspora, identity, and ethnic media. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 29(1), 63–82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2017.1327376>
- Steiner, E., & Xu, K. (2020). Binge-watching motivates change: Uses and gratifications of streaming video viewers challenge traditional TV research. *Convergence*, 26(1), 82–101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856517750365>
- Zainuddin, M. F. (2023). When tradition meets modernity: The adaptation of the Bajau community in Malaysia amidst sociocultural transformation. *Jurnal Communication, Religion and Theology*. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jcrt.220>
- Zakaria, Z., Hua, A. K., Yusoh, M. P., Jamru, L. R., Jafar, A., Jambol, D. J. A., & Ridzuan, M. I. M. (2023). Menelusuri warisan budaya-ketara dan budaya-tidak-ketara etnik Bajau Ubian di pantai timur Sabah. *Asian Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences*, 5(3), 426–436.