



Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

**Presence of the Past through Photography: A case study in the
Kelabit Highlands of Sarawak**

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Master of Social Science

2024

Presence of the Past through Photography: A Case Study in the Kelabit Highlands

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A thesis submitted

In fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Science

(Anthropology and Sociology)

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

2024

DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.



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Date : 24 September 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, praise be to God for His Wonderful Grace upon the completion of this master's thesis journey. I give Him praise and the glory for this achievement.

I would like to convey my deepest appreciation to my mentor and supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Poline Bala, for her persistent mentoring, guidance and insightful feedback on this dissertation. I am eternally indebted to her kindness and compassion during the path of my master degree. I am really appreciative of her knowledge, insights, and tolerance for helping me advance both academically and personally. Indeed, she is at the top of her field in Sarawak, Malaysia.

This wonderful and profound journey would not have been possible without my father, Frankie Gian, and my beloved mother, Dora Nuuh and their unending support and love throughout the whole journey. I am extremely grateful to my dearly beloved, my family, and my friends. I would like to acknowledge the excellent assistance you all provided throughout my studies. A very special appreciation towards the support from the community members from Unimas's Faculty of Social Science and Humanities for their support and help. My unending prayers are to each individual who has supported me all these years. I pray that God will bless every one of you.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is focused on looking into photographs as a methodology tool to extract ethnographic information into the past and linking it with the present through the relationships between the field of photography and field of anthropology through the means of visual anthropology. With that, this dissertation turns to the Kelabit community whose traditional homeland is the Kelabit Highlands which is located in the northeastern part of Sarawak. The main target is photographs that were taken in Bario from the past. Using photo-elicitation as the main part of the methodology, the aim is to explore how photographs invoke a sense of melancholy or nostalgia for the subject by linking the past and the present, and how in turn this shape how the subject under study views their environment, identity, history and memories in contemporary world. The main finding is that as the community goes through the passage of time, so do their memories of being Kelabit people (Lun Kelabit), where the Kelabits must share this knowledge and to fill the gap. This is made evident through the social phenomena known as “generation of post memory (Hirsch, 2008)” who rely on photographs as a means by a generation (mostly younger) to make memories of generations before them as their own.

Keywords: Visual ethnographic methodology, collective past, Kelabit people, post memory generation, photographs and anthropology

Kehadiran Masa Lalu melalui Fotografi: Satu Kajian Kes di Tanah Tinggi Kelabit

ABSTRAK

Disertasi ini memfokuskan kepada imej fotografi bersejarah sebagai alat metodologi untuk mendapatkan informasi etnografik yang lampau dan mengantarakan dengan masa kini melalui hubungan antara bidang fotografi dan antropologi melalui kaedah antropologi visual. Dengan itu, disertasi ini menumpukan perhatian kepada masyarakat Kelabit di petempatan tradisi mereka adalah Tanah Tinggi Kelabit yang terletak di bahagian timur laut Sarawak. Fokus utama adalah gambar-gambar yang diambil di Bario pada masa lampau. Dengan menggunakan kaedah elisitasi-foto sebagai kaedah utama metodologi, perhatian utama adalah untuk meneroka bagaimana gambar-gambar membangkitkan perasaan nostalgia untuk subjek dengan menghubungkan masa lampau dan masa kini dan bagaimana gambar masa lalu membentuk pemahaman antropologi tentang isu seperti sejarah, identiti dan masa lalu dalam konteks dunia sosial yang berubah. Penemuan utama ialah apabila masyarakat tersebut melalui peredaran zaman, begitu juga dengan memori mereka tentang diri mereka sebagai orang Kelabit (Lun Kelabit). Ini terbukti melalui fenomena sosial yang dikenali sebagai "generasi ingatan pasca (Hirsch, 2008)" yang amat bergantung kepada gambar-gambar sebagai cara utama (kebanyakannya dalam kalangan yang lebih muda) untuk menjadikan kenangan-kenangan generasi sebelumnya sebagai kenangan milik mereka sendiri.

Kata kunci: *Metodologi etnografik visual, kolektif lampau, kaum Kelabit, generasi ingatan pasca, fotografi dan antropologi*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEM	Borneo Evangelical Mission
FB	Facebook
INS	Instagram
SNS	Social Networking Services

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction - Overview

This chapter highlights the background of this dissertation which is based on a sample of historic and ethnographic photographic images of the Kelabit living in the Kelabit Highlands. The dissertation sets out to determine in what ways historical and anthropological photographs can play significant roles in forming collective mediated recollections in the contemporary world. This is particularly about anthropological knowledge of the past, memory and identity. This raises questions: what ways can photographs link the past and the present? How photographs of the past shape the anthropological understanding about issues such as history, identity, and the past in the context of a changing social world. Drawing on the phenomena widely known as ‘A Generation of Post-Memory,’ this chapter reflects the dissertation’s research questions, its objectives and scope. It is a symptom where the generation born after that said period and era tend to take on the memories of the generation before them as their own. In other words, the dissertation sets out to determine in what ways photographs can play significant roles in forming collective mediated recollections. That is in what ways photographs can link the past and the present, which in turn can serve as evidence of social phenomena known as “ A Generation of Post-Memory.” It explores the possibility of the subjects exhibiting the symptoms of where looking back at the past through photographs would trigger a sense of nostalgia of those experiencing the said scene or era in the photographs. The chapter will also highlight the significance and limitations of the research.

1.2 Background of Study

The Kelabit Highlands, which is the traditional homeland of the Kelabit people, is located in the north-eastern part of Sarawak on the island of Borneo. The main settlement is located northeast of Sarawak and centres around on Bario, located just at the border of Kalimantan, Indonesia that lies between the Tama Abu Range and the Apo Duat Range. Bario is approximately 3000 feet above sea level and is mostly accessible by air due to the highlands being surrounded by mountains and deep rainforest. Fourteen (14) villages are located within the Kelabit Highland plateau while four other villages are located downstream along the Baram River. These upstream villages are Pa' Lungan, Pa' Ukat, Pa' Umur, Long Dano, Pa' Dalih, Ramudu, Pa' Ramapuh, Pa' Derung, Bued Main Beruh, Padang Pasir, Kampung Baru, Arur Layun, Arur Dalan and Bario Asal.

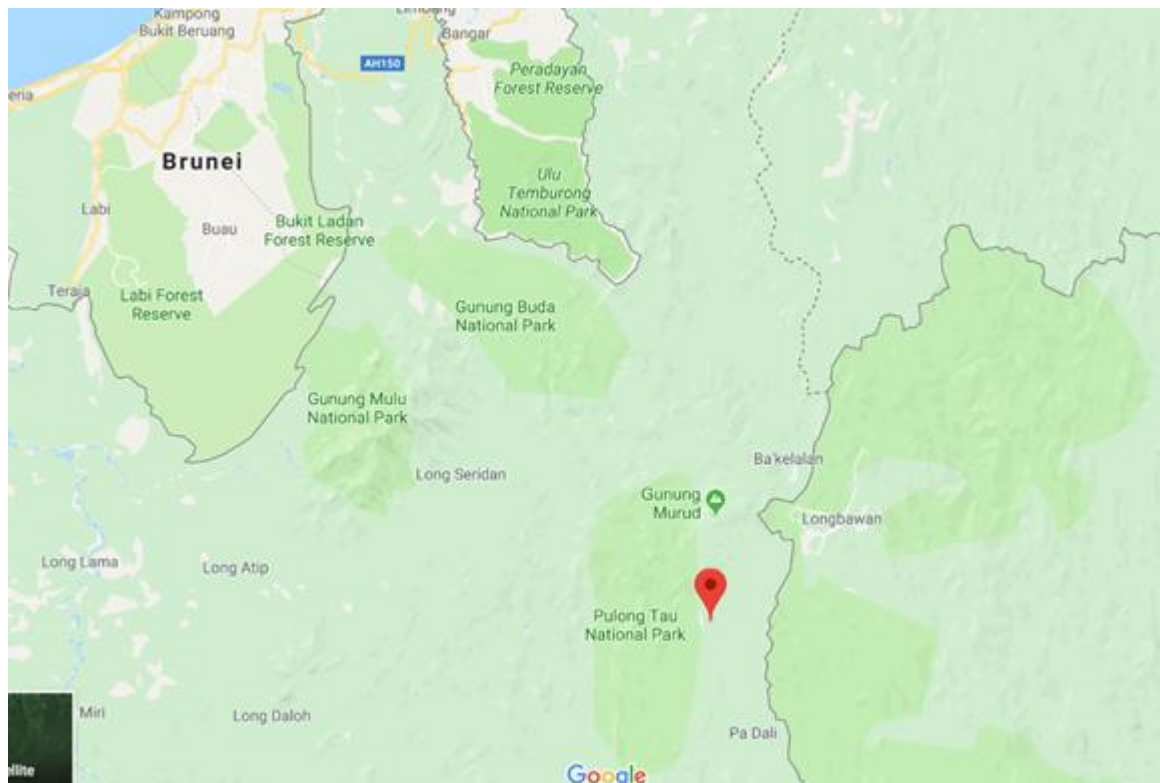


Figure 1.1: Location of Bario marked in red (Source: Google Maps)

The downstream villages are Long Peluan, Long Napir, Long Seridan and Long Lellang. The area is also home to the Lun Bawang and Penans. Only in recent 15 years have logging roads been built that lead towards the Kelabit Highlands. In the past most Kelabit settlements were longhouse-based and socially organised as a close-knit community. They were predominantly farmers, hunters and were once headhunters. They cultivate wet rice which is their primary agricultural produce. As the Kelabit Highlands is geographically located high in the mountainous region of 1000 metres above sea level, the region has an average cool tropical climate of 19 – 22 degrees Celsius all year round that gives the rice a name for itself for its excellent sweet and slightly sticky texture (Slow Food Foundation, n.d).

Grouped under the Apo Duat language group in Sarawak by scholars and with an estimation of 5000 people worldwide, the Kelabit were once self-sufficient. They were hunters, including once as headhunters. Besides cultivating their own rice, the Kelabit also produce their own salt. Known either as Kelabit Salt or Bario Salt, it is obtained by boiling and evaporating brined underground water from saltwater springs inside a big cooking pot. The salt that is produced by the Kelabits were often used for trading between the people downstream of the Baram River. As the salt naturally has a high content of iodine in it, it certainly prevented the Kelabits from contracting goitre (swelling in the neck due to iodine deficiency) in the community as compared to those group of people living in the middle of the Baram River as their food contains very low iodine and also compared to those living near the lower Baram that is closer to the sea (Mattu, 2015).



Figure 1.2: Aerial view of current day Bario Asal village taken by FongYeWin

1.3 The Kelabit Highlands and the Cosmopolitan Turn

One of the central arguments raised in recent years in the field of social science maintains that more attention should be shifted to the ‘cosmopolitan turn’ (Beck, 2003; Beck and Sznaider, 2006), the process that involves more openness to the transnational arena and the sensitivity to ‘universal values’ that become part of national societies. This is important to study in the context and amongst remote and rural communities on the island of Borneo and in this case in the Kelabit Highlands which Tom Harrison once described as “... one [of] or two places on the map of Borneo and, more widely, on the map of the world – where you can get farther away from a known place ..., from what most people call ‘the world’. There are fewer places where you (or I) are likely to be able to feel more remote, more ‘cut off’ from the great outside...” (1959: 5).

However, as will be described in Chapter 2, the remotest and smallest community of the Kelabit Highlands could not escape the clutches of globalisation. This has led to either adaptation to new surroundings and/or forsaking certain aspects of their traditional lifestyle as they come in contact with ideas, peoples, objects and institutions that originated beyond the Highlands (Bala 2008, 2010). To his surprise, Amster noted 39 years after Harrison's (*ibid*), that the Kelabits were not interested in their history and this is made evident by most of the people whom he had interviewed "who had very little knowledge of their collective past" (Amster, 1998:7). Amster's findings and claims were affirmed by other scholars and writers of Kelabit history and culture. Robert Lian, a Kelabit himself once wrote that the Kelabit have made a break with the past and that they are about to forget their history (Lian-Saging 1976/1977, 211, cf Mashman 2020. At times the separation of the past and the present is encapsulated through the notion of the past as "*ulun ma'un*" (old era) and the present as "*ulun beruh*" (new era). The Kelabit says Mashman (2020, pg.204) are reluctant to talk about warfare and belief systems from the time prior to their embracing Christianity in the late 1930s.

These trends of forgetting the past were escalated by Kelabit adoption of formal education into their homeland with the first school being established in 1946. Besides the school, the Kelabit also embraced Christianity to replace an oppressive animistic lifestyle. It has liberated them as they embraced the change en masse (Bulan, 2004). This is especially true in 1973 when a mass conversion to Christianity took place in the Kelabit Highlands because of a spiritual transformation commonly known now as the 'Bario Revival'. The most significant part of the event was the Kelabit young and old repented of their sins of the past (past life style) and devoted themselves to a new way of living as prescribed by the Christian Bible. . This has led to major social, economic, and political transformation

amongst the Kelabit. Most Kelabits that witnessed or have experienced the 1973 Bario Revival would mention that this significant event has since affected each one of their lives as they would remember it for the rest of their life be it young or old. As of currently, approximately 90% of the Kelabits are Christian and thus their three main celebrations are Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas. These are celebrated in accord with other Christians in different parts of the world. In other words, the Kelabit are now very much part of the global community.

Besides the coming of Christianity, another event which affected the Kelabit social world was the Second World War. It was during this period that Tom Harrisson who was a part of the Z Special Unit (also known as Z Force) along with 7 British and Australian men encountered the Kelabits as they were parachuted into the Kelabit Highlands in 1945. The Z Special Unit main objective was to use the natives of Borneo against the Japanese (Harrisson, 2008). This meant that the Kelabits did contribute to the effort in sabotaging the Japanese operations in Sarawak where they were trained as guerrilla troops and Bario served as one of the starting points of this operation.

Their on-going engagement with the “outside” world definitely has great influence on the Kelabit social world in the Uplands. In fact, it is important to note that the term ‘Kelabit’ did not originate from the Kelabits themselves. As will be described in Chapter 2, it was a term they have adopted which originated from Charles Hose, the Resident of the Baram Division where he heard numerous reports of people coming down to Marudi to pay their taxes and also to trade from the 1890's onwards (Janowski, 1991).

In the last three decades, the Kelabits in Bario have received an increasingly steady influx of tourists from both locally and internationally. This steady growth of tourists has

introduced them to the prospect of venturing into tourism as part of their main economy. This has sparked multiple tourism avenues such as ecotourism, cultural tourism, adventuring tourism and research tourism. Tourism certainly was not initially intended when the first airstrip was built in 1953 for missionary purposes by the Borneo Evangelical Mission near a headman's house. Focusing on the emphasis on 'made' as the first airstrip was made by clearing some bushes and field for the make-shift airstrip, unlike the current airport that was built out of concrete in 1996.

At the same time, as noted by scholars on Kelabit history and culture (Lian-Saging, 1976/1977, Janowski, 1991, Amster, 1998, Bala, 2000) the Kelabit like many other communities in Sarawak have experienced high rate of rural-urban migration as in search of higher education and new job opportunities. Many have inter-married with non-Kelabit spouses, and currently live in different cities and towns in Malaysia – Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Kota Bahru, Kuching, Miri, Bintulu including overseas in London, Rotterdam, etc. Unlike their parents and grandparents who still live in the Kelabit Highlands, many are now doctors, teachers, engineers, managers, company owners, government officials, entrepreneurs, and corporate leaders. They have embraced new lifestyles and ways of life.

It was through their engagement with peoples, objects, and ideas from outside that the Kelabit was exposed to the idea of photography and "photographs", and as objects of desire were adopted into their social world. A walk along the common gallery in the back of the longhouse (for instance the Bario Longhouse) provides evidence of this. Hanging on the wall of each family are photographs displayed for public viewing. Often, photographs of the old days (*gaber ngilad*) are also on display. They become important windows into a world that has changed so much yet continuities still prevail.

1.4 Problem Statement

The process of globalisation, often refers to the general dissemination of merchandise, technologies, news, political influence, and religious ideas across political and cultural boundaries, nations, empires, tribes, and states cohere in some way or other through political, economic, or cultural relations. According to scholars such as Reiser & Davies (1944), Hirst & Thompson (1996), Held et. al, (1996), the process has led to the integration of various, previously isolated zones into one system of interconnections and interdependencies. A concern that came out of this is its impact on collective memory, which refers to group representations of the past that inform action in the present (Stepnisky, 2012). In the context of globalisation, the situation is aptly described by Misztal (2010, p.24) as “problems of remembering in the global age whether remembering or forgetting is essential to ensure the condition of the global citizenship, to discover ways to balance the need for identity and the need to accept the difference in a global age.”

The scenario above resonates with Amster’s “rude awakening” when carrying out his PhD research amongst the Kelabit of Sarawak. As globalisation and modernisation catches up to every single civilisation in the world, even the small community of the Kelabit Highlands could not escape its clutches. As civilisation progresses, some aspects of an individual, society and communities evolve, may it be through adaptation to their new surroundings or forsaking certain aspects of their lives to suit the new technological age. To his surprise, Amster noted that the Kelabits were not interested in their history and most of the people he had interviewed “had very little knowledge of their collective past” (Amster, 1997, p.8). His observations affirmed Robert Lian Saging’s (1976 & 1977, p.211) findings much earlier, who suggested that the Kelabit are very keen to “break with the past”. Yet over

the years there are others who are keen to remember the Kelabit past (Mashman, 2018 & 2021).

This raised particular issue whether those who are supposedly repositories of Kelabit past and history still do remember histories of the community. In relation to this, whether historical photographs of the place and people can be used as external stimuli to trigger memories of the past. This is by showing subjects samples of photographs from the past. It is widely noted the importance of study of photographic images in the context of media study. However, the social uses of photographs as visual expressions of a culture and as constituents of collective memory has not been widely explored within established traditional anthropology intellectual exchange. In 2001, Heisley argues that “visual and particularly photographic methods must now move from accepting the role of augmenting textually based research to the centre stage, becoming an integral part of both research methodology and its outputs (p.45).”

In the context of this research is to address a generational gap between those who know about the past and history of the people of the Kelabit Highlands and those who don't, which could have been an effect of globalisation and modernisation. This dissertation would categorise those that knew about the past as the elders and seniors of the community while those who don't could be categorised as the young adults, specifically the millennial generation. The main question posed is what if there is a generation that exists in between the ones who know about the past and history of the people living in the Kelabit Highlands and between the ones who don't know about such information. In this study, this group of subjects are placed in between, and, by adopting a category mooted by Hirsch (2008), this generation will be referred to as the “Generation of Post-Memory (Hirsch, 2008).” In what

ways does this generation take memories of the generations before them as their own by using photographs as a means to do so?

1.5 Research Questions

1. How may the practice of photography shift ways of looking at oneself and at one's community?
2. Can photographs as visual narratives support reexamining the past, whereby old pictures and other objects gain new significance?
3. Is there evidence to suggest that when showing a historical and ethnographical photograph to the subject, does the subject exhibit symptoms of a 'Generation of Post-Memory'?

1.6 Research Objective

The main concern of this study is methodological, that is to explore the methodological dimensions and potential of photo-elicitation, particularly as a historical research tool for archival, oral and critical accounting of the past. That is, the ways in which visual narratives transmit and reflect on the past in the context of an indigenous social world. This is within a dynamic and fluid historical dialogue in the making and articulation of histories amongst the Kelabit people of Sarawak. In other words, the main objective is to

evaluate the effectiveness of historical photographs in a practical mediatory role in telling history from one generation to another. A secondary objective is whether photographs as visual history can be used to link oral history and their significance in the contemporary social world of the Kelabit. Lastly, this research will study the relational quality of these photographs over the ‘Generation of Post-Memory’ and their perception towards such photographs.

1.7 Significance of Research

In the context of indigenous cross-cultural histories, so far there is not much visual anthropology research being carried out in Sarawak. This research aims to fill this gap by turning to photo-elicitation, a little used as a research method in anthropological, historical and contemporary research agendas. Through this study, it critically explores the relational qualities of photographs as visual narratives that link spaces between people (generation to generation) and (the past and the present). This is very significant in the context of a world that is increasingly visually oriented (Edwards, 1992). Visual media, according to Edwards (*ibid*), have come to penetrate all manner of communications from business and conference presentations, to university lectures, to web-based learning, and to exhibitions. Imagery has arguably become the dominant mode of representation and communication in many of today's societies, with a considerable prior history. This is the first instance of photo-elicitation being employed within the Kelabit community, especially in the context of transmitting history intergenerationally and linking oral history to its contemporary societal significance.

This research provides a window of possibilities for some participants to relive experiences of the self in relation to place, community and beliefs. Otherwise the values of narratives behind the photos that were taken in Bario and stored, especially archival photographs, might be forgotten forever. For instance the moment when a person presents his or her story, sharing this reinterpretation with other participants means extending their stories with a wider audience. As argued by Edwards (2005) the nature of photographs as relational objects are important in the making and articulating of histories.

At the same time this research will show a unique perspective on cultural and historical preservation as compared to the usual techniques such as collection of cultural oral information, cultural tribal items and documentation through video and documentary. As these kinds of collections work best towards subjects that are still around or still living presently. There is a tendency to overlook looking to the past through the photographs of subjects either dead or alive and the little details that can be picked out from photographs such as location, time, attire, environment and also the relationship of the photographer and the subject. This is to note that through this research, it is possible to travel as far back towards the time when early contact was established between the outside world and the people of the Kelabit Highlands and explore the significance this has on the present time.

Arguably, imagery has become the dominant mode of representation and communication in many of today's societies. Through this study, by telling their stories through photographs the Kelabit are able to shift ways of looking at their past and history. There is a possibility that this will bring the community together and move forward with additional knowledge of their past. As a person with Kelabit roots, and who studied arts and film, connecting with the Kelabit past and the preservation of their history through

visual narratives is particularly significant. This is an important step towards ethno-historical accounting using photo-elicitation.

With the work done by Postill (2006) and Tan (2009) in exploring the influence of media in shaping cultural representation of the Ibans, there seems to be no other similar studies done on the Kelabits and thus this dissertation aims on how photographs shapes their perceptions and identities, in which this dissertation adopts the photo-elicitation method within the Kelabit community in the context of history transmission.

1.8 Dissertation Outline

Chapter 1 provides an overview of this research study. It includes the background of this study. It sheds light on the Kelabit people who hail from the Northeast of Sarawak who were involved during this research period. The chapter introduces the background of the study. It outlines the Problem Statement, Research Questions, Research Objective and the Significance of the Study.

The aim of Chapter 2 is to highlight and discuss relevant past studies and current research related to the subject of the thesis. It reviews the works of former scholars on the relationship between historical photographs and anthropology. This includes the emergence of photo-elicitation as a methodology for researching history and cultures. Aside from that, it includes an introduction to the concept of collective past and visual culture. In this chapter, it also touches upon a concept that is fairly new to the field known as “The Generation of Post-Memory”. It includes a quick review of similar studies that were conducted in Sarawak in accordance within the field of visual anthropology. The chapter also throws light on the Kelabits, who are the subjects of this research. It outlines how they have engaged with the

world outside because of their discovery of the world beyond the highlands. Eventually the chapter touches upon how the Kelabit Highlands encountered a Cosmopolitan Turn and the role of historical photographs towards the Kelabit as a window into the past.

Chapter 3 will bring to light the various techniques used to carry out this research. It explores the design of the data collection procedure. The chapter includes the steps and measures of selecting the photographs for the interviews. The chapter then highlights photo-elicitation as one of the main methods used during fieldwork and one-on-one interviews and group interviews during private sessions and a photo exhibition. Lastly in Chapter 3, this research paper introduces the execution of photo-elicitation via social media through two (2) main social media namely 'Facebook', and 'Instagram'.

Chapter 4 will reveal the findings obtained from conducting the research with the subjects of this study. From this chapter, it will investigate the theme of "What does it mean to be a Kelabit" in regards to the perception of the Kelabits in the past and present. Furthermore, this chapter unravels the findings of the photo-elicitation conducted during the photo exhibition session and the private sessions. Finally this chapter reveals the interaction amongst the participants of the photo-elicitation via social media.

Chapter 5 discusses the finding and analysis of this research. It begins with a discussion on methodological steps and discusses the patterns and differences from the data that was collected. Next part of this chapter will look into whether photographs are effective as a methodological tool to extract information. The next part will further explore how photographs become a link to the past and present and observe the impact it has on the participants and whether the past has any effect on the present day. This chapter also discusses whether photo-elicitation via social media is effective in extracting ethnographical information for future research. Next in chapter 5, this research paper will discuss the topic

of ‘The Generation of Post-Memory’ in which the original author, Hirsch (2008) wrote about the traumatic event that continues to live on and “leave a mark on the lives of those who were not there to experience them”. This research however suggests that a spiritual and religious event that has caused a mass repentance of the Kelabits in the 70’s has also left a mark on its people and even those who were born after that era till today. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of the weaknesses of photo-elicitation based on the methodologies that this study has utilised and discussion on improving said methodologies.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction - Overview

The aim of this chapter is to highlight and discuss relevant past studies and current research related to the subject of the thesis. This chapter is broadly divided into four parts. The first part will introduce the initial role of photography in visual anthropology and the effectiveness of this tool in the anthropology field. Through the introduction of photography and the strategies that involve the usage of photography in research, it focuses on the effectiveness of photo-elicitation methods, in which researchers conduct an interview with their subjects with the aid of photographs to enhance the data collected.

In the second part of the chapter, it touches on visual history and oral history in which the literature explores the collective identity and memory of the community. The third part will introduce the concept ‘The Generation of Postmemory’, by Hirsch (2008). He suggested that a traumatic event will trigger a sense of nostalgia and invoke memories of said scene or era and how it also will be inherited by the generation born after, even though the generation after them had never experienced it themselves.

The fourth part will introduce past visual anthropology research that was conducted in Sarawak as reference and homage to the predecessor before this paper, who had used photographs in their research. The next part of this chapter provides a brief overview of the Kelabit living in the highlands and the changes they have undergone over many years. Past ethnographic and historical research on the Kelabit will be highlighted.

2.2 Photography in Visual Anthropology

Photography, according to Mifflin (2012) came into acceptance in anthropology when early anthropologists were concerned with the uncertainty of verbal testimony and information. He suggested that this was caused by the suspicion of verbal data and personal observation that were not subjective but more susceptible to personal impression. Consequently, some early anthropologists became suspicious of the transparency of native informants. It was within this context that photography became important as a fixed record of incontrovertible fact and as a crucial mediator in anthropological research to transmit reliable data (*Ibid*).

However long before Mifflin mooted the idea of photography as a fixed record and crucial mediator in anthropological research Collier in 1957 has already stated that photography has long been established as a tool in scientific research and is widely used by anthropologists solely to support their findings by illustrations. Prior to this, Bateson and Mead's research in Bali (1942) marked a reevaluation of photography as a method of providing data for analysis rather than as a decorative tool for publications and articles. This led to a resurgence in the usage of images (Heisley & Levy, 1991; Torre & Murphy, 2015).

The Balinese Character was published in 1942 after Bateson and Mead conducted a photographic research project. Even though it was completed in 1942, the significance of this pioneering work remains relevant today due to its use of visual and written messages. Bateson and Mead (1942) specifically stated that words were insufficient for their investigation and relied on text and images to explain their findings: "We are attempting a new method of stating the intangible relationships among different types of culturally

standardised behaviour by placing side by side mutually relevant photographs...By the use of photographs, the wholeness of each piece of behaviour can be preserved, while the special cross-referencing desired can be obtained by placing the series of photographs on the same page.” Hall (1959) elaborated on Bateson and Mead's technique of merging visual and written texts when he emphasised the significance of photography in the development of his nonverbal communication theories.

In his book titled *Visual anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* (1967) by John Collier is currently recognised as an indispensable resource for anybody researching visual approaches. He emphasised that the usage of images can "establish your entrée to the interview". Twenty-eight years later, Collier and Collier (1986) recounted that “early ethnographers were enthusiastic photographers” as the camera was used to gather descriptive details and data for the material inventory phase of anthropology. They stated that most anthropologists agree that “photographic records are good” but some researchers would say that they are “too good, with more information that we can refine”. Collier believes that this may be the reason there are little research in anthropology that has been based on photographic data (Collier J. and Collier M., 1986; pg 10). According to them, the decoding of visual components into verbal (typically written) forms of communication is a component of image analysis. No analysis of images may neglect this essential translation step, but it is possible that some research insights and knowledge cannot be properly conveyed in language.

A photograph can open a window to the past through nostalgia or recalling a memory. Bay and Lowderbaugh (1979) wrote that photographs can reveal details of everyday life, the clothing that people wear, the tools that they use at work and the furnishing that they put at home just by looking at photographs. Nonetheless, it is important to

remember that although the camera does not lie, it does not tell the whole truth. This is because a photographer could set the scene according to his or her preferences before capturing the photo. Although photography captures a moment that exists briefly in the way the photographer wished to capture it (based on the equipment that he or she has on him), still a successful photo is one that captures part of one's everyday life (Bay and Lowderbaugh, 1979).

Much later Schrer (1990) wrote that historical photographs can be used as anthropological documents. This he suggests, as anthropologists look through photographs, they can extract ethnological data. For instance, from historical photographs, one can study the academic perspective of the photographer, one also can study the subject's influence over the image as well as the study of the subjects themselves and the audience construction of the image. Schrer (Ibid) also suggests that a photograph can seduce, amuse, or distract the readers, correlating it to the Chinese proverb, "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Favro (1992) suggests that, not only that photograph can reveal the archaeological stone of a person; it could also capture the surrounding environment. Photographs reveal a more realistic view of a subject as compared to past historians that only rely on drawing and painting records that may be distorted or sometimes imposed with artificial colouring, embellishment and altered scale based on the understanding and perception of the historians. In other words, photographs are more usually "read" as a source of information regarding aspects of material culture or also as "a record across time and space" (Kavanagh, 1994). Ketelle (2010) states that whatever the photographer wants to preserve in an image, photography catches the social construction of it.

Echoing Favro, Lizardi (2016) suggests that looking back into the past invokes nostalgia amongst people. Even though perhaps not always explicitly discussing nostalgia,

it advocates a healthy engagement with the past in a way where it informs the present but does not necessarily linger. This is true when we engage the past, it is best to learn from history than to live in it, although some may try to recreate the past by remaking the same scene in a movie or a photograph just to convert longing for bygone eras into lessons for the present. Lizardi's work was significant as he combines the work of photographers through the merging of both the past and present photo of a particular location into one photo. Images of the past do not cause an individual to forget but rather bring evidence of the past into direct contact with the present and provide a vision of the past that promotes learning by comparison (Lizardi, 2016).

He argues that through these images, one can learn from the past through photographs by looking directly at the loss, learning from it, and moving on (Lizardi, 2016; pg. 139). (See also Gyori. Z.). According to Harper (1994), images should not only reinforce assumed notions about people and places. As an alternative, photos can be utilised to comprehend the worlds of others. Becker (1974) asserts that a photographer must be aware of the idea that guides her photography. Both Harper and Becker emphasise the critical knowledge that images are ultimately both technically and socially produced. Although photographs appear to depict something "real" or "true" that was in front of the camera, they catch what may be more significant: the cultural background that underlies the acquired image. Understanding that photos are both technically and socially created guided this investigation. Pinney (1992) believes that "photography appears as the final culmination of a Western quest for visibility and scrutiny" to some. Instead of delivering a single, deterministic image of "reality" or "the truth," Pinney argues that a photograph offers various methods of knowing to a researcher. Photo-elicitation rejects any pretence of objectivity and acknowledges that photographs have the ability to evoke interpretations from humans.

Pinney adds further that the artistic aspects and reinterpretation of a photograph can facilitate new ways of comprehending and interpreting a single image.

Ketelle (2010) project taught her that we must ask ourselves questions about what we see rather than overanalyze an image's objectivity. Why was the photograph taken, and for whom? What can a picture reveal? How does the photograph appear? These questions may serve as a beginning point for a deeper examination of all images and a departure from the notion that every photograph must represent an objective truth. Perhaps both narrative researchers and photographers need an eye for composition (which is utilised in different ways), empathy (which connects them to humanity), and the capacity to capture the moment (which enables each to execute his/her job). It is challenging to combine these elements, which is why both narrative inquiry and photography are such compelling and challenging creative forms (Ketelle, 2010).

Meanwhile Schwartz (1989; pg. 120) argues that “the tendency to treat photographs as objective evidence ignores the convention-bound processes of both image making and interpretation.” He further asserts that to use photographs, as a methodology tool in social science is to ground the method in an interactive context where photographs acquire meaning to it, which is shaped by social context, cultural conventions, and group norms especially for the purpose of photo-elicitation in an interview. Schwartz concluded that “it is not the photographs themselves which inform, but rather the analysis of them” in which using photography as the medium for communication (Schwartz, 1989; pg. 152).

However, during the progressive era, when it became trendy to emulate "hard scientific" ideas and procedures and to seek a more "objective" comprehension of the sciences, the use of images in the social sciences went into decline (Torre & Murphy, 2015).

In fact, when writing on photography, Barthes (1981) reveals his attempt to find the essence of photography, but he was ultimately unable to do so. Instead, he could only write about his reaction to the photograph, specifically how the photograph made him feel. In his analysis of photography, Barthes examines three processes that contribute to the final image. These techniques involve the Operator or Photographer (to execute), the Spectator (to observe), and the Object (to undergo). Barthes takes delight in the fact that he is able to view an image of something that truly occurred. As Barthes insists, do all images genuinely occur in front of the camera? There is always the possibility of staging or even deceptive photography.

Having said that, it is important to remember that as early as 50's Collier (1957; pg 856) has already experimented with photo-interviewing his subjects and informants to extract and analyse the content of the photographs. Because of that he was able to prove his initial hypothesis where the materials that were obtained with photographs were precise as compared to his controlled verbal-only interviews with his subjects. Collier (op-cit; pg 857) again mentioned that those photographs dictated the content of the interview and the responsiveness of the informants more effectively than the verbal-only interviews. Collier (1957) also reversed the trend of the interviews and produced more material. He interpreted the situation as an indication that "photographs can be stimulating and can help to overcome the fatigue and repetition often encountered in verbal interviews" and safe to assume that photographs were an aid in opening the field of dialogue in gathering precise information on identification of geography and personality as compared to the controlled interviews where he sometimes had to "press against resistance and apathy" (Ibid). Researchers choose photographs to show experiences and insights relating to the circumstances and context of

each shot. In fact, when people take or display their photographs, they express their thoughts through a visual medium; this is the essence of the evocative power of images.

This technique is helpful for immediately developing rapport with participants, generating a deeper level of consciousness than words due to the fact that the brain interprets visual information differently than verbal information, and improving participant recollection during an interview (Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Creighton, Brussoni, Oliffe, & Han, 2015; Harper, 2002) The use of iconographic media makes it easier to get in touch with and build rapport with the interviewee. A photograph acts as a middleman between a researcher and an informant. This triangular configuration closes the gap between the parties involved and lessens the head-on nature of the relationship. Furthermore, utilising an image as the starting point for an interview is sometimes thought of as entertaining, as Collier (1967) remarks when he refers to a photograph serving as a "tin opener" (p. 12).

However, Heisley (2001) believes that the use of visual methods can be independent and should not be seen as extras in research. In fact, it is often the most important aspect of research technique. From a theoretical standpoint, a photograph can reflect and enhance theory in a variety of ways. In an effort to locate the visual within social, intellectual, and artistic activities, Hubbard et al. recognise the visual "as always embedded in multi sensoriality" and as "integral to the practise and experience of daily life" (Hubbard, 2010). Images are imbued with new (and possibly contradictory) meanings by varied audiences and at various stages of ethnographic investigation and representation (Niskac, 2011). Only in relation to the discourses folks use to characterise them and through representation do they take on a particular meaning (Hall 1997; Pink 2005).

2.3 Photo-Elicitation and Historical Photographs

Historical photographs were mostly used during photo-elicitation interviews as the focus of oral history. A quick review of the literature reveals that photo-elicitation was first conducted and classified as such in 1957 by John Collier, a Photographer and Researcher in a Cornell University multidisciplinary research team. The team was examining mental health in Canadian communities. Three years later he produced a text on visual anthropology that outlined further experiments in photography based on interviewing. An expanded version published in the 1980s (Collier and Collier, 1986) became an influential reference point for this type of research. But what is photo-elicitation? According to Prosser and Schwartz (200, p.34):

A single photograph or sets of photographs assembled by the researcher on the basis of prior analysis and selected with the assumption that the chosen images will have some significance for interviewees. The photographs are shown to individuals or groups with the express aim of exploring participants' values, beliefs, attitudes, and meanings, and in order to trigger memories, or to explore group dynamics or systems.

It was found out that at times some interviewees may feel a strong connection to the photographs as some may have gone through the events or period that took place when the image was taken, thus narrating the experiences they encountered as a part of history, therefore giving the researcher an account through the interviewee's verbal narratives (Parker, 2009). Thus, one of the most significant epistemological contributions of this method is that it restores symbolic authority to interviewees, as the discussion is based on their perceptions, experiences, and 'knowledge of life' (Ndione, et. al., 2018). According to Leal (1986), an epistemological lesson is the realization that one is individually accountable for the process of capturing reality while being the subject of that knowledge. Thus, the photographs may arouse subjects' awareness of their social existence, causing them, as

Harper (2002) explains, to "deconstruct their own phenomenological hypotheses" and prompting them to create a new image of their social life.

Harper (1994) observes that when his subjects were fed with images:

“A shocking thing happens...the photographer, who knows his or her photograph as its make (often having slaved over its creation in the darkroom) suddenly confronts the realisation that he or she knows little or nothing about the cultural information contained in the image. As the individual pictured...interprets the image, a dialogue is created in which the typical research roles are reversed. The researcher becomes a listener and one who encourages the dialogue to continue. The individual who describes the images must be convinced that his or her taken-for-granted understanding of the images is not shared by the researcher, often a startling realisation for the subject as well.” (p. 410)

In a photo elicitation research conducted by Laws, Hunt and Antin (2018) which aimed to investigate whether there were still gender-specific meanings and contexts associated with drinking and intoxication for young men and women, as well as how gender affected young people's experiences of intoxication through traditional interview and social media photo elicitation. In their research through ‘Facebook’, during their usage of open-ended questions, Laws et al. (2018) discovered that using photo elicitation was a helpful tactic with participants, specifically those who were generally hesitant or unwilling to disclose any significant differences in drunkenness between men and women. During the initial rounds of the interviewing process, photographs proved effective at eliciting responses that were more difficult to obtain using other techniques in the interview guide (Laws et al., 2018). Laws et.al. explained that using social-media-based photographs enabled them to ask participants about their membership in online groups, thereby eliciting extra data regarding their actual activities and experiences as members and users.

Through their study of social media and photo elicitation, Laws et al. noted that this topic of online normative behaviour and the potential for social implications evolved

naturally from their usage of images integrated in social media, with participants discussing a wide variety of demographic categories as potential members of the online community. Concerns over work challenges and keeping a "professional" appearance arose swiftly throughout these discussions. Laws et al. participants showed great concern for a person's job status or capacity to get employment while publishing images or videos of their alcohol consumption or intoxicated behaviour on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram, which are thought to be at risk for being viewed by employers. The social media images elicited concise and descriptive narratives regarding gendered disparities in drunkenness, despite the participants' frequent expressions of reluctance to discuss the various effects and perceptions of men's and women's drinking behaviours.

Discussions sparked by social media-embedded photographs revealed the idea of "classy vs. trashy" as a particularly prominent issue. Participants talked on how women are frequently discouraged from drinking much, in part because it's crucial to preserve their femininity. The amount to which female participants appeared to judge other women the harshest was also extremely remarkable. This result agrees with studies conducted in New Zealand by Moewaka-Barnes et al. in 2015. According to their research, women are often "more attentive in ensuring that their online identities were appropriate, underlining values around self-presentation and performance in SNS (Social Networking Services)," making them more conscious of their online image than men. In actuality, using social media for daily leisure activities is just one of many aspects that their participants engage in. Given the age range of the sample (19-29 years old) and their use of social media, the viability of integrating social media platforms into their interview techniques to produce a more thorough approach to the study of intoxication came into sharp focus.

Using social-media-embedded photographs as part of a photo-elicitation exercise may be an excellent alternative method for examining yet another aspect of people's daily lives. In lieu of overcoming legal concerns of access and consent to get admittance to private pages and online material, researchers can gain insight into the online social lives of participants by analysing images contained inside various social media platforms. Consequently, correct procedures must be followed to guarantee that photographs are collected and altered with the consent and confidentiality of the photographed individual(s) in mind (Laws et al., 2018).

Guided by observations made by Collier (1957), Parker (2009) and Lizardi (2016), this experimental study amongst the Kelabit sets out to determine in what ways photographs can play significant roles in forming collective mediated recollections. That is in what ways photographs can mediate their past with their contemporary situation being dispersed, widespread, and global. The aim is to use photographs to extract anthropological data with regards to how the Kelabit themselves view their collective past and history in the contemporary world. As noted by Stepnisky (2012) collective memory is a social construction that embodies a group's identity.

2.4 Collective Past and Visual Culture

In his paper titled *Collective Memory: The Two Cultures*, Jeffrey Olick examines two contrasting concepts of collective memory. This contrast is rooted in two different cultures which are individualist and collectivist, which in turn produce two contrasting concepts of collective memory. In other words, the main conflict that arises when addressing collective memory is the seeming conflict between the personal, internal qualities of memory

and the societal, collective elements of memory. (Olick, 1999). Socially motivated approach to collective memory is largely based on Halbwachs' social frameworks strategy, which states that "groups offer the definitions...by which particular events are subjectively defined as consequential" and that "these definitions trigger separate cognitive and physiological processes of storage" (Olick, 1999, p. 341).

According to this perspective, the collective, as represented by symbolism or commemorations, has its own identity separate from the accumulation of individual memories and is more than the sum of its parts (Halbwachs & Coser, [1925] 1992; Confino, 1997; Olick, 1999). This idea is reinforced by (a) aggregation consequences that cannot be expected from individual responses and (b) societal structures and organisations that appear to determine what a society or group can and should remember (Olick, 1999). These societal structures include rules that govern behaviour, educational systems, and religious beliefs. In theory, collective memory can be divided into two complementary parts: on the one hand, the mnemonic signifiers that can be found in our surroundings, such as memorials, museums, and media coverage. On the other side, the phrase refers to people's knowledge of and perspectives on a society's past (Bar-On, 2001; Olick, 1999). Robert Bellah has suggested that true communities are communities of memory, and that these communities of memory create constitutional narratives that are recounted and retold in such a way that the individual and communal identities of group members are inextricably intertwined.

The second method to the study of collective memory relies on the "aggregated individual recollections of group members" (Olick, 1999, p. 338). This method is founded on the premise that only individuals can recall; memory is an individual phenomenon that occurs in the brains of unique individuals. Olick thinks that "collected memory" is a more appropriate phrase for the individual approach to memory research than "collective

memory." This technique "locates shared memories in the brains of individuals and views collective results as aggregated individual processes," leaving the collected memory approach "open to the study of psychological or even neurological aspects in social memory outcomes" (Olick, 1999, p. 339-340).

The major drawback of the collected memory methodology is that it encourages researchers to "consider the human mind as something of a black box" (Olick, 1999, p. 340), and the methodologies employed to investigate the memories of individuals frequently exclude the effects of natural environments on remembering (Neisser, 1982). The collected memory method places an emphasis on the individual, the psychological, and the neurological, but fails to include social settings and societal impacts on memory.

Olick asserts, that we can use the term "collective memory" to refer to a wide range of neurological, cognitive, personal, aggregated, and collective processes and outcomes, and that "we need an enterprise that not only allows neurological, cognitive, attitudinal, and cultural work to occur concurrently, but also brings these enterprises into dialogue with one another" (Olick, 1999, p. 346). As noted by Stepnisky (2012) "The concept of collective memory allows social scientists to describe the way that the constructed past can direct the formation and development of groups and institutions. This also distinguishes collective memory from related terms such as history. Unlike the concept of history, which in some sense stands outside of human action, collective memories are generated by groups and institutions. They orient action in the present, but they also construct the past so as to embody the concerns of the present. For this reason, both the form and the content of collective memory changes across time and place."

Because we cannot talk of the collective without individual memories, and we cannot speak of individual memory without the vast influences of community and environment, we

cannot speak of the collective without individual memories. Since an infinite number of social and neurological networks are continually interacting, it is impossible to examine memory in its entirety without analysing the person, the context, and the group (Aldis, 2020).

Aldis highly recommended the approach of using social interactionism when studying collective memory. Although bottom-up "collected" memory techniques and social-interactionist approaches are structurally similar, they differ significantly. The main distinction is that collected memory approaches only examine the overall impact of individual memories without taking conversational influences into account. In contrast, social interactionist approaches include the attenuation and facilitation of cognitive phenomena in social settings as well as how the phenomena spread across large social networks.

The first stage involves identifying significant cognitive processes, such as the impact of selective retrieval on memory (Weldon, 2000; Marsh, 2007; Murayama et al., 2014; Roediger & Abel, 2015; Vlasceanu et al., 2018b; Geana et al., 2019). The attenuation and facilitation of individual cognition in social contexts are examined in the second stage. Measuring the amount of reinforcing or forgetting of things following selective, conversational remembering in dyadic talks is an illustration of the procedure at this level (Vlasceanu et al., 2018a; Vlasceanu et al., 2018b). In the third stage, social network research is done to determine how social influences on memory spread throughout a society (Epstein, 2006; Vlasceanu et al., 2018b).

It has been demonstrated that epistemic motivation, or the motivation to build an accurate representation of the world, influences the extent to which listeners concurrently retrieve with the speaker (Cuc et al., 2007). However, relational reasons or motivations that "induce people to affiliate and feel connected with others" (Echterhoff et al., 2009, p. 500)

might also urge listeners to recover concurrently with the speaker, especially if the speaker belongs to the same social group as the listener (Coman & Hirst, 2015). People are more motivated to form relationships with members of their in-group than with members of their out-group (Echterhoff et al., 2009).

Context and a person's pre-existing level of knowledge have profound influences on what and how we recall, as demonstrated by our discussion of individual memory. Therefore, we conceptualise new information within the perspective of our prior life experiences as mentioned by Aldis. If the collective, or the standards dictating how members of a society behave, exists within the person, the person is controlled by the collective even if they are unaware. All societal attitudes and acts are governed by norms, taboos, or collective consciousness. It is really challenging to escape something that resides within you.

Because these societal influences and institutional limitations are fundamental kinds of context, they must be accounted for in our study of collective memory. Aldis proposes incorporating these factors into the social interactionist methodology. The study of collective memory may have significant practical applications. Collective memories are substantial because they influence people's attitudes, choices, and problem-solving strategies (Coman et al., 2016). Although the potential of conversational influences to shape both individual and collective memory can be perceived as a drawback, some suggest that these qualities are adaptively advantageous in encouraging socialisation (Hirst et al., 2014; Schacter et al., 2011).

Convergent collective memories promote community social bonding. They could aid in the resolution of social problems such as rapid information sharing in public health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, avoiding stereotypes, and promoting social justice, among many other possible applications (Aldis, 2020). The impact of social media on the spread of

knowledge would also be an appealing topic for research. Individuals engage in frequent discussions with one another through social media, maybe even more frequently than in person. Aldis predicts that this increased level of interaction with other members of one's community will accelerate the convergence of collective memories but also produce an increasing amount of divergent collective memories with greater strength depending on the kind of content and accounts with which one interacts most frequently.

Media memory scholars consider the media a powerful weapon in influencing how people view the past. According to Edy (1999), the media's significant influence is due to their capacity to simultaneously reach broad audiences and offer interpretations of the past that are difficult to reject. The Sage handbook of qualitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), a chapter on "Visual methodology," quotes Prosser as saying, "Visual researchers are well aware that technology transforms what and how they study. The qualitative-quantitative interface is being expanded, improved, and transformed with the arrival of new technology for storing, organising, and presenting research. As a result of ongoing technological breakthroughs, the transition from film to digital photography has enabled people to produce and share visual information in ways that are always evolving (Graham, Laurier, O'Brien, & Rouncefield, 2011; Van House, 2011)

The impact of generational identification on the creation of communal memory was studied by Schuman and Scott (1989). The authors used a survey to ask Americans which national and international events they believed to be most significant in order to operationalize the concept of collective memory. A generational effect was observed, with people placing the greatest importance on experiences from their youth.

2.5 “The Generation of Post-Memory”

It is widely accepted that looking back into the past will trigger a sense of nostalgia and invoke memories of those who have experienced the said scenes or era in the photographs. The work of Koskinen-Koivisto (2016) affirms the power of nostalgia. In her doctoral research, she argues that nostalgia functions as a narrative strategy to highlight the importance of values such as social responsibility and togetherness. By examining the life narrative of a female labourer, she found out that nostalgic narratives can be seen as reclamation of agency, an attempt to control change within an intergenerational context. Her discovery echoes Hirsch (2008) notion of “Generation of Post-Memory”, which refers to the generation that was born after that said period and era tend to take on the memories of the generation before them as their own. Hirsch (2008:103) suggests this as a generation of post-memory which she describes as “the relationship of a second generation towards a powerful experience that preceded their births but was nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.” It is also considered as the study of collective memory which may extend towards the memory of the Holocaust, traumatic memories, or repressed memories.

According to Aristotle, memories are a person's private property and cannot be transferred to another person's memory. Memory, according to Aristotle, is a product of the past, which is made up of an individual's impressions. Aristotle claimed that memories ensure one's identity as a person by providing a way for people to travel across time while also "assuring the temporal continuity of the person" through memories of the past. The history of memory is essential and intriguing for considering not only how the past is represented in, for example, a single museum but also the historical mentality of people in

the past, the ideas, practises, and symbolic representations that make up people's impressions of the past (Confino, 1997).

There are numerous varieties of memory that are frequently investigated in various ways. Short-term memory and long-term memory make up the two primary categories of memory. Because it is the memory for information that a person is immediately aware of, short-term memory is frequently referred to as working memory. Working memory is demonstrated by the ability to recall a recent phone number. However, long-term memory is stored in the brain for a longer period of time than the present moment. Explicit and implicit long-term memory are separated; explicit memory contains conscious memories, whereas implicit memory contains unconscious ones. The capacity of a person to recall how to carry out a skill, such as riding a bike, is an illustration of implicit memory. Declarative memory, also known as explicit memory, is the conscious storage of experiences and facts.

Declarative memory, which can be further broken down into episodic memory, or the remembering of events and experiences, and semantic memory, or the memory of facts and concepts, is the subject of this thesis. Endel Tulving introduced the concept of episodic memory in 1972, defining it as "the form of memory that allows us to associate the many different types of information constituting an event into a spatiotemporal context and to subsequently use the content of the event to retrieve its context" (Tulving, 1972, p. 385). It's crucial to keep in mind that episodic memory does not serve as a neutral narrative of events. Episodic memory is a timeline-based representation of a certain person's subjective experience. Retrieving an episodic memory is similar to travelling across time; while remembering something, one also remembers oneself.

According to John Locke, memory and consciousness are synonymous concepts and that consciousness alone constitutes human identity. According to Husserl, memory is a

distinct type of consciousness. Memory, according to him, is the "flow of awareness," which is inherently unified throughout all phases (Ricoeur, 2004).

Due to their inward orientation, these early explanations of memory do not place enough emphasis on the social components of memory. Emile Durkheim (1912) was one of the first academics to discuss a collective presence in society. In his book "The Elementary Forms of Religious Life", Emile Durkheim described collective awareness before the word "collective memory" was coined. He is arguing that society offers an external framework that establishes how individuals live and see their reality. The collective ideas and deeds of all people make up society, which is more than just that. Durkheim says that "collective representations are the result of immense cooperation...to make them, a multitude of minds have associated, united and combined their ideas and sentiments" for many generations (Durkheim, 1912, p. 29)

But Durkheim brings up interpersonal cooperation, which is crucial for creating collective memories. Collective memory and awareness are fundamentally related but distinct from one another. All of a group's shared conscious and unconscious ideas are referred to as collective consciousness. A community's collective memory is a component of its collective consciousness, but memory only pertains to representations of the past, whereas the latter can also include predictions for the present and the future.

A fellow Durkheim student, Maurice Halbwachs, discussed collective sociological phenomena. According to Halbwachs' theory, a society can have a collective memory, and that memory is reliant on the "cadre" or social context of the group, or, to put it another way, the sociological context of the group. According to Halbwachs, there is a group memory in addition to individual memories that are separate from and last beyond the individual. According to Halbwachs, this collective awareness has a significant impact on how each

individual perceives the past. According to him, people typically pick up memories from society, and they also recollect, identify, and localise those experiences there (Halbwachs & Coser, [1925] 1992).

When considering the narrative of collective memory, we could deduce that it is transformed by the “knowledge structures that serve to narrate the story of a people” (Roediger & Abel, 2015, p. 359). In an experiment examining possible narrative templates of younger and older American adults for the Civil War, World War II, and the Iraq War, the majority of participants identified the attack on Pearl Harbor, the D-Day invasion, and the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as significant events in World War II. These events provide a beginning, a middle, and a finish to the story of the United States' engagement in World War II.

Although older and younger Americans recalled the same incidents, they assessed the experiences differently, which was another surprising conclusion of the research. For instance, older persons assessed the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan favourably (8.0 on a scale of 10) whereas younger Americans rated the event unfavourably (3.4 on average) (Zaromb et al., 2014). This research indicates differences between generations in the collective memory.

Post-Memory, however, distinguishes itself from memory insofar as it is generally a heteropathic phenomenon, in that it threatens to usurp the identifying subject's own personality, yet it is simultaneously filtered through familial or other group relations. In the case of traumatically based postmemories, enormous distances must be spanned and, Hirsch explains, “in the specific case of catastrophic memory—such as the memory of slavery or the Holocaust—that distance cannot ultimately be bridged; the break between then and now, between the one who lived it and the one who did not remains monumental and

insurmountable, even as the heteropathic imagination struggles to overcome it” (Hirsch 2012,p.86).

2.6 Past Visual Anthropology in Sarawak

The introduction of visual anthropology especially in Sarawak has been largely attributed to the works of Tom Harrisson who was the curator of the Sarawak Museum from 1947 to 1966. It is very obvious that Harrisson’s interest in photography has led to the increased use of the medium to record and document research work and conservation projects. (Horn, 2013). In fact, Harrisson later created the position of staff photographer in the early 1950’s that resulted in the mass collection of photos for the museum. This is possibly driven by Tom Harrisson’s obsession with the Mass-Observation project which began in 1937. Harrisson himself describes that the project “attempts to represent everyday life. The project displayed information in an archive format of books and photographs. The group was formed of artists, poets and scientists; depending on your vocation, you may have given factual and accurate data, or descriptive, emotive data.”

Echoing and mirroring Mass Observation, Harrisson “has collected more and more data rather than try prematurely to draw out underlying principles and patterns” (Heimann, 1999;257). Highlighting the connection in 2013 Horn writes, “The photographic archive of the Sarawak Museum was established in the early 1950s in Sarawak, a Malaysian state under British colonial administration on the island of Borneo. Together with his staff, the curator Tom Harrisson documented the work of the museum through photographs taken in the various indigenous communities in the region. Over time, the archive developed into an extensive collection containing thousands of images. Before becoming the curator, Harrisson

had been involved in a research project called Mass-Observation, which he and two other researchers launched in the late 1930s in order to investigate the views and habits of British citizens.” result, “the collection at the museum archive became a repository of diverse material awaiting future analysis” (Horn, 2010).

Other significant works on the visual anthropology in Sarawak include the work of Lau (1999) who published two books that combine the ethnography and photojournalism that captures the essence and presence of his subjects from the past (Steinmayer, 2001). According to Steinmayer Lau’s work is superb as it portrays personality through his images. One other important work on visual accounts of Sarawak and Borneo which needs to be highlighted is A.C Haddon’s photographic collections of Sarawak 1898-99. Charlie & Guntarik (2013, p. 438) provides a glimpse into the collection as:

Early photographic and anthropological processes produced specific forms of colonial knowledge. Images of Borneo captured during the colonial period thus offer a snapshot of the emerging field of anthropology. British explorer A.C. Haddon played a role in shaping early anthropological theory, from his 1898 expedition in Torres Straits and Sarawak to the subsequent analysis of his findings upon his return to Britain. During this time, the study of exotic people and places was the object of a new form of empiricism; the period also coincided with the circulation of a range of images of Asia. These images played a crucial part in constructing popular assumptions about colonized peoples and their social positions in the colonial hierarchy. Haddon’s photographic collections were connected to a larger process of colonial knowledge production in which various images — including other photographs, early film footage, paintings and etchings — wrestled with competing representations of the region. His photographs of Sarawak convey the struggle in the emerging discipline of anthropology to distill objective “truths” while competing with the subjective experiences afforded by social relations with local communities.

One of the first attempts to use photo elicitation to “make sense” of the photographic collection at the Sarawak Museum was Appleton (2011). She gathered old negatives of the Melanau tribe from the Sarawak Museum that was captured during the 1950’s and 1960’s, and conducted photo-elicitation in Mukah in late 2006’s. During her research, Appleton was met with several setbacks. Foremost was the massive amount of old photographs. As

a result she had several strategies to overcome the problems. The first step was to identify the 'physical/geographical' location of each photograph. That is to retrace the journey of the original photographer. This was especially useful when she encountered conflicting information about the photo subject when interviewing informants.

Secondly, for an effective viewing and elicitation she printed most of the photographs to A4 size and had them laminated. With that, the informants were able to hold and focus on one image at a time. Finally, Appleton chose nearly 20-25 photographs for the elicitation. She deemed the number was the optimum number in order to avoid time wasting. And to deviate attention from searching through photographs one by one of the entire collection.

The main findings of Appleton out of the exercise are: (1) informal occasions such as photo-elicitation can produce new information as well as new leads for further follow ups, and most significantly "they generated conversations and renewed interest among those present – about the past and people of the past. " (2) The occasions trigger social recall whereby she would be frequently someone else about photographs in the collection which more often be within the same village, including at times to someone in another village and on several occasions to another person living in the state capital, Kuching. (3) Besides acting as a trigger for social recall, she found the photographs to be important "communication bridges between strangers" which reduced the reticence and self-consciousness often produced by cultural and linguistic boundaries (Collier & Collier, 1986:99). This is made clear during the photo-elicitation sessions where by while in the sessions families of the subject will show the family keepsakes such as medals and old photographs. (4) Most importantly the involvement of her research subjects with the photographs. For instance when Appleton struggled to understand an explanation in Melanau, someone would take out

apen and notebook and draw her a diagram to explain. This in turn suggest they have become her teachers. This is moreso so when her interviewees directed her to take “then and now” images. These are identical images to the ones that she brought from her collection together with themselves or a family member as well as one of researchers and informants. Appleton’s interpretation of these actions is that they highlight the strength and value of family and intergenerational connections. In some cases the informants were adamant in insisting her (Appleton) to be included in the recreation of the original photographs along with a treasured family object. This points to a collaborative nature of the occasion. In fact she describes an occasion during one of the recreations of an original photograph, the informant went off to his room to change into a more formal attire. This further cements the significance of the event and the production process.

One most important dimension highlighted by Appleton was the ways in which the photo-elicitation process has led to local elicitation which emerged and became crucial due to the nature of the differences and changes towards the surrounding area and cultural differences of her research site in accordance to the original photographs that she had brought. This was most interesting for an outsider, the cultural differences between the many various Melanau villages and communities near the Mukah and Oya rivers are much less visible or noticeable. In actual fact, historically, each of the Melanau villages were independent unit with each their own *adet*, or customary law which was passed down from one generation to the next (Morris, 1991).

As boundaries between villages began to fade, so did these perceived cultural differences. This breakdown was accelerated in recent years as efforts were made to promote the “Melanau Culture” in fostering the notion of a collective Melanau identity within Sarawak. However, Appleton noted that throughout her elicitation process, some individuals

were able to identify details of cultural difference in the photo-decoding process where some markers were obvious while others were not such as the informants were able to identify where the person in the original photographs were from by the comment: “I can tell by the face” in which she noted that these deductions were proved correct. Another proving point to this was when her informants were able to pick up the historical differences of the boats in the original photographs.

Throughout her research with photo-elicitation, Appleton noted that most of her collaborators were interested with photos of people, where they talked about families and intersections between generations. Horn (2010) has a similar methodology as this research in conducting photo-elicitation interviews towards the orang ulu communities located along the Baram and Tinjar rivers, north of Sarawak. Horn's research on photo elicitation in Sarawak is a fascinating and informative study that sheds light on the region's culture and history. She discovered that through these interviews and discussions with the communities, it provided valuable insights into the local historical narratives which certainly differs from the colonial records. Through the photographs that Horn introduced to the communities, it enabled the local cultural heritage to be narrated, performed, and recreated by the communities thus embodies the contextualising cultural heritage. This furthered her case as she introduced the photographs from the Sarawak Museum to the source communities in which they were eager to look at the photographs and talk about them as only few had seen them before. This sparked the community's interest in the material which made it easy for her to find interviewees that were willing to take part in her research.

What most intriguing was the photos were utilised to inspire feelings of nostalgia and pride, as well as memories of the past. This was a significant discovery because it demonstrated that images were utilised not just to provide a visual portrayal of the culture

and history of Sarawak, but also to evoke memories and feelings in the people. In addition , Horn's findings suggest that the images were utilised to foster a sense of identification and belonging in the individuals she interviewed. At another level, as a visual depiction of Sarawak's culture and history, the images were utilised to foster a sense of identification and belonging among the population. This was an important discovery because it demonstrated that the images were important to not just to provide a visual depiction of Sarawak's culture and history, but also to foster a sense of identification and belonging amongst the communities of the Kelabit Highlands in Central Borneo which is the field site of this study. Their location and situation provides a good case study to employ visual anthropology and photo elicitation in particular to examine their impact on a community who for years has been widely known to have had a desire to “forget the past.” The section begins with a brief ethnohistory of the area and its inhabitants - mainly the Kelabit.

2.7 A Brief Ethnohistory of the Kelabit Highlands

The Kelabit Uplands was once described by Tom Harrison as “one [of] or two places on the map of Borneo and, more widely, on the map of the world – where you can get farther away from a known place ..., from what most people call ‘the world’ ” (1959: 5). Their remoteness perpetuates the persistent view that upland people such as the Kelabit are innocent tribes, living in “...a sort of no-man’s land on the borders of Sarawak and the Dutch territory” (R.S. Douglas Quoted by Harrison 1959:18). The Kelabit, numbering approximately 6000 today, are thought to have lived in a solitary existence from most of the world, perhaps similar to perceptions about the Indonesian Uplands as noted by Tania Murray 1999. At an altitude of approximately 1000 metres above sea level, the highland plateau, situated above the rapids found at the headwaters of the Baram River of northeast

Sarawak, was once described by Tom Harrisson, like “a great bowl.” It is surrounded by some of the highest peaks and rugged mountains in the middle of Borneo. To reach the place from the coast, one had to navigate these peaks, pass through the dense jungle, cross, and recross hundreds of streams that cascade down the mountains, running in all directions. For many ‘outsiders’, the Kelabit homelands were beyond reach. If one did penetrate them, one couldn’t help but feel its imposing remoteness, well-described by Harrisson to be “... in one of those few places where you (or I) are likely to be able to feel more remote, more ‘cut off’ from the great outside...”(Harrisson, *Ibid*).

In fact prior to early contact with the bigger outside world in the 1920s, the Kelabit like many other tribal communities on the island of Borneo practised headhunting. The Kelabit in this respect have been perceived as distant mountain people. To some, they were deemed lost and, on the way, out (Lees, 1979). For others like the lowland communities, the Kelabit are terrible, troublesome, and apathetic drunkards. The Kelabit were thought to be of “another world:" with their big men, sexy women, cold nights, rich harvests, irrigation, inaccessibility, cattle and goats' ' (Harrisson 1959:152). They were therefore on one hand to be feared, and on the other to be admired for their ‘exotic’ ways of life. The only means of communication to the closest town was by foot, climbing mountains, following the mountain ridges, and crossing and recrossing rivers and valleys on a journey that took days (Bala, 2002).

Located far remote, they were deemed self-sufficient by cultivating their own rice and producing their own highlands salt which is obtained by boiling and evaporating salty underground water from salt springs inside a big cooking pot. The salt that is produced by the Kelabits were often used for trading between the people downstream of the Baram River. As the salt naturally has a high content of iodine in it, it certainly prevented the Kelabits

from contracting goitre (swelling in the neck due to iodine deficiency) in the community as compared to those group of people living in the middle of the Baram River as their food contains very low iodine and also compared to those living near the lower Baram that is closer to the sea (Mattu, 2015). Since the Kelabit Highlands is geographically located high in the mountainous region of 1000 metres above sea level, the region has an average cool tropical climate of 19 – 22 degrees Celsius all year round that gives the rice a name for itself for its excellent sweet and slightly sticky texture (Slow Food Foundation, n.d).

The Kelabits however are similarly related culturally and linguistically to the people along the Apo Duat range especially with those over the Kalimantan border. It appears that there are other communities that live in the Apo Duat range that share the same language group where Hudson (1977) has proposed a group naming for these people that live among the Apo Duat range that borders the Sarawak and Kalimantan border. At one point, the term ‘Murut’ was widely used previously and sometimes still being used to name a large portion of these groups of people living along the Trusan and Limbang river basin in Sarawak also in Mengalong in Sabah and at the headwaters of several rivers in Kalimantan. Although some writers (Crain, 1970 and Langub, 1987) argue that the term Murut may not be suitable as it also refers to another unrelated group of people in Sabah. Later on, Janowski (1991) notes that linguistically and culturally, the Kelabits are similar to those larger groups of people living near the Trusan river, namely the ‘Lun Bawang’. ‘Lun’ refers to ‘people’ while ‘Bawang’ refers to ‘country’. She states that as a whole group, the Kelabit is also a “part of a larger linguistically and probably cultural group which we shall, following Hudson (1977) call the Apo Duat group”.

2.8 Forget the Past and the Cosmopolitan Turn in the Kelabit Highlands

The remotest and smallest community of the Kelabit Highlands could not escape the clutches of globalisation. This has led to either adaptation to their new surroundings and/or forsaking certain aspects of their traditional lifestyle as they come in contact with ideas, peoples, objects and institutions that originated beyond the Highlands (Bala 2008, 2010). To his surprise, Amster noted 39 years after Harrison's (*ibid*), that the Kelabits were not interested in their history and this is made evident by most of the people whom he had interviewed "who had very little knowledge of their collective past" (Amster, 1998:7). Amster's findings and claims were affirmed by other scholars and writers of Kelabit history and culture. Robert Lian, a Kelabit himself once wrote that the Kelabit have made a break with the past and that they are about to forget their history (Lian-Saging 1976/1977, 211, cf Mashman 2020, 204). At times the separation of the past and the present is encapsulated through the notion of the past as "*ulun ma'un*" (old era) and the present as "*ulun beruh*" (new era). The Kelabit says Mashman (2020, pg.204) are reluctant to talk about warfare and belief systems from the time prior to their embracing Christianity in the late 1930s

These trends were escalated by Kelabit adoption of formal education into their homeland with the first school being established in 1946 by Tom Harrison. He started a school in the highlands which encouraged many to witness the importance of formal education at an early stage. Many students would leave their homes as young as 7 years old, would walk for days to get to the school as back then the communities are much more spread out further as compared to the current days where many have moved closer to central Bario. Today there are two (2) schools built in Bario, a primary school (Primary 1 to Primary 6) and a secondary school (Form 1 to Form 3) complete with dormitories while another primary school is currently still open in another village called Pa' Dalih. As the children of the

Kelabits continued to enrol into school, many would then leave the highlands and into the urban towns to complete their Form 4 to Form 5 education and some went on to further their studies to universities.

Besides the school, the Kelabit also embraced Christianity to replace an oppressive animistic lifestyle. An ethnohistorical analysis indicates that Christianity entered through the works of different missionaries. The first were those from the Borneo Evangelical Mission in 1939 led by Frank Davidson and joined by C. Hudson Southwell that ushered in Christianity to one of main settlements then known as Pa' Terap which is located upriver of the present village of Pa Lungan but on the right side of the Debpur River . Its arrival has brought in a wave of change to the people (Law, 2015). One of the first noticeable transformations was when the headman, Tama Bulan decided to give up “drinking” *burak* and animist worship and encouraged the others to join him. This was a momentous decision as the Kelabits and their ancestors were fervent animists where they appeased spirits and observed bad and good omens. Some of these taboos and bad omens required them to either abandon their crops (which could be on the verge of being ripe), the dissolution of one's marriage and to the extreme of to abandon one's newborn infants.

For the Kelabit their conversion to Christianity has liberated them as they embraced the change en masse (Bulan, 2004). This is especially true in 1973 when a mass conversion to Christianity took place in the Kelabit Highlands because of a spiritual transformation commonly known now as the ‘Bario Revival’. The most significant part of the event was the Kelabit young and old repented of their sins of the past (past life style) and devoted themselves to a new way of living as prescribed by the Christian Bible. the God of the Bible. This has led to major social, economic, and political transformation amongst the Kelabit.

Most Kelabits that witnessed or have experienced the 1973 Bario Revival would mention that this significant event has since affected each one of their lives as they would remember it for the rest of their life be it young or old. As of currently, approximately 90% of the Kelabits are Christian and thus their three main celebrations are Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and Christmas. These are celebrated in accord with other Christians in different parts of the world. In other words, the Kelabit are now very much part of the global community.

One global scale event which affected the Kelabit social world was the Second World War. It was in this period, Tom Harrisson who was a part of the Z Special Unit (also known as Z Force) along with 7 British and Australian men came into contact with the Kelabits as they were parachuted into the Kelabit Highlands in 1945. The Z Special Unit main objective was to engage the natives of Borneo against the Japanese (reference). This meant that the Kelabits did contribute to the effort in sabotaging the Japanese operations in Sarawak where they were trained as guerilla troops and Bario served as one of the starting points of this operation.

Another military conflict that has altered the social world of the Kelabit in their traditional homeland was the Confrontation 1963-1965. For security reasons and with the agreement of the Council of Elders, the British Military then decided to move the villagers living along the borders closer to Bario so that they would be safe at one place and well within the reach of the military. Many who lived along the borders would agree to the move due to safety concerns and although the local government was silent on the matter regarding land allocation for these new people, the people of Bario made an agreement to allocate their own land to accommodate the Kelabits who were evacuated from the border into Bario. As most of the Kelabits in the 1940s were settling much further away from current day Bario Asal, moving closer to the centre of Bario would have not happened weren't for the

Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation incident where two Kelabit villages located along the Kalimantan-Sarawak border were attacked and razed by fire (Bala S.B. , 2014).

Their on-going engagement with the “outside” world definitely has great influence on the Kelabit social world in the Uplands. In fact it is important to note that the term ‘Kelabit’ did not originate from the Kelabits themselves. It was a term they have adopted as their own, with the word originating from Charles Hose, the Resident of the Baram Division where he heard numerous reports of people coming down to Marudi to pay their taxes and also to trade from the 1890's onwards [reference].

Mashman (2020,p.210) aptly described the scenario as:

The Kelabit came to be so called, supposedly, through a misunderstanding on the part of Charles Hose, a Brooke administrator, who was told through an interpreter that they were “Lun Pa Labid,” and he heard “Kalabit.” Thus, they came to be labeled and classified as Kalabit, in line with the Brooke administration’s policy of identifying the tribes under its jurisdiction by name (Lian-Saging 1976/77, 4). When Kelabit leaders came to Marudi to seek allegiance to the Brooke government in the interests of security, they accepted a common identification as Kelabit.

Mashman further noted that,

“they actually represented groups speaking a common language with mutually intelligible dialects from different river systems flowing out of the highland plateau, some of which were in what was then Dutch Borneo. This common identity was a convenient way for them to come together in larger groups to negotiate terms of peace with the Brooke government. They inherited from Brooke-era cartography the convenient equation of being Kelabit with occupying the highlands. This began when the term “Kalabit Country” appeared on the first map of the area by R. S. Douglas (1912) and the phrase “the Kelabit Highlands” became a legacy. This meant that being Kelabit was synonymous with living in the highlands as their territory.” (*Ibid*)

According to oral history Pa’ Labid’ a former settlement outside of the Kelabit Highlands) was an important spot for barter trading between the Kelabit and the other communities in the area. Hose misunderstands that Pa’ Labid’ would be ‘Kelabit’ (Harrison, 1958) or ‘Kalabit.’ Since then it is a term for the whole group of communities living around

the Kelabit Highland and including those that lived near the Pa' Labid River which has now been abandoned. In fact, in late 1980's Janowski's informants have mentioned that the term 'Kelabit' had been long used by the Kayan and Kenyah to refer to the people now known as 'Kelabit'.

More importantly the narrative above reflects that, "The Kelabit [were] anxious to improve their status in relation to peoples more 'fortunately' placed. They have, indeed, led Sarawak in abandoning restrictive *adats* without throwing over their whole past and becoming Christians. And they now enthusiastically support the school they opened and built themselves at Pa Mein. They are not parochial. They are tirelessly interested in aeroplanes, Europe, the solar system, other people's customs, wars, clothes and belongings. Night after night I have sat till the early hours swapping Kelabit information for English" (Harrisson 1946:56).

An example of this is represented in Harrisson's above description of "swapping" information with the Kelabit. His observation reflects the Kelabit's open disposition towards newcomers entering their social world, and their self-understanding of being part of a wider and more diverse world. This open cultural disposition and their 'global' self-understanding, is reflected through how the Kelabit have responded to Malaysia's development agendas as a force of change, their encounters with the phenomena of world religion, a formal schooling system and modern government structures.

In the last three decades, the Kelabits in Bario have received an increasingly steady influx of tourists from both locally and internationally. This steady growth of tourists has introduced them to the prospect of venturing into tourism as part of their main economy. This has sparked multiple tourism avenues such as ecotourism, cultural tourism, adventuring

tourism and research tourism. As more and more visitors arrived in Bario, the locals started to build their own guesthouses, and this led to the rise in popularity of 'Homestays' in the area. Visitors would then hire a local guide, and this ushered in the formation of a guide's association which introduced to a more organised and wonderful tour experience in Bario. In order to attract more visitors into the Highlands, over the past 15 years the Kelabit have organised a celebration of food and culture dubbed as the 'Bario Slow Food Festival' (or known locally as 'Pesta Nukenan' where 'Nukenan' means food in the local language) as part of their yearly main activities in Bario in the month of July. Hence putting the Highlands within the global food pathways.

Being located far away from any local electrical power plant, the Kelabits have lived their lives without any running 24 hours electricity and clean treated piped water. Those who are wealthy may be able to afford owning a petrol or diesel electric generator at their own home and most would only turn it on as evening falls and will leave it on just before bedtime or until the fuel runs out. However, in the last 5 years, Bario has been electrified with the introduction of a hybrid solar system power plant (a combination of energy production between solar panels and diesel generator) by the state's electrical generation company, Sarawak Energy and currently a water filtration system project is being built.

At the same time, as noted by scholars on Kelabit history and culture (Lian-Saging, 1976/1977; Bala, 2002) the Kelabit like many other communities in Sarawak have experienced high rates of rural-urban migration in search of higher education and new job opportunities. Many have inter-married with non-Kelabit spouses, and currently live in different cities and towns in Malaysia – Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Kota Bahru, Kuching, Miri, Bintulu including overseas in London, Rotterdam, etc. Unlike their parents and grandparents who still live in the Kelabit Highlands, many are now doctors, teachers, engineers, managers,

company owners, government officials, entrepreneurs, and corporate leaders. They have embraced new lifestyles and ways of life. One of the central arguments raised in recent years in the field of social science maintains that more attention should be shifted to the ‘cosmopolitan turn’ (Beck, 2003; Beck and Sznaider, 2006), the process that involves more openness to the transnational arena and the sensitivity to ‘universal values’ that become part of national societies.

It is possible that it was a cosmopolitan turn amongst the Kelabit that has led to Amster’s big surprise almost 40 years after Tom Harrisson’s account of the Kelabit Uplands. Amster recounts that the Kelabits were not interested in their history and most of the people he had interviewed “had very little knowledge of their collective past” (Amster, 1998:7). Robert Lian, a Kelabit himself once wrote that the Kelabit have made a break with the past (Lian-Saging, 1976/1977, 211; Mashman, 2020, 204).

2.9 Historical Photographs in the Kelabit Social World

It was through their engagement with peoples, objects, and ideas from outside that the Kelabit was exposed to the idea of photography and “photographs.” Objects of desire - originated from outside their social world in the Kelabit Highlands - were adopted into their social world. This is made evident along the wall of *tawa*’ or common gallery in the back of the longhouse (for instance the Bario Longhouse). It is akin to museum wall pictures. Visitors to the longhouse often stop to view these photos on the walls. Hanging on the wall of each family are photographs displayed for public viewing. The wall of photos can become entry points into gaining understanding of the social world of the village: how many doors (*pintu*) in the longhouse, how many families per *pintu*, who are the grandparents, parents

and the children, family links and kinship system, and some of the photos most likely will convey information on careers, education, marriage status, etc. (See Figure 4:14)

A notable element is the presence of the old days (*gaber ngilad*) photographs, which are often found displayed on the wall. In fact, there are some very unique photographs. For instance a photograph of a rhinoceros (Kelabit: *tamadur*) found roaming in the Highlands decades ago. Today, the animal is completely extinct in the Kelabit Highlands and neighbouring region. It is intriguing to note that visitors and locals can be found spending time to look and talk about these “old” photographs. There are occasions when older people are seen to be explaining the scenes found or displayed in the photographs to a group of young people. Everyone looking up to the hanging photographs as the older person provides a narrative. The photographs become important windows into a world that has changed so much. Figure 2.1, Figure 2.2, Figure 2.3, Figure 2.4, and Figure 2.5 are some samples of these historical photographs.

These figures are examples of windows into the Kelabit past. They provide a unique way to communicate dimensions of Kelabit history and their contemporary world. It is widely noted that windows into the past are an intriguing approach to learn about a location's history. They exist in various forms, from ancient objects to contemporary images. Windows into the past can give us a glimpse of how people lived, worked, and interacted with their surroundings in the past. Archaeological artefacts are the earliest sort of window to the past. These might range from stone tools to fragments of pottery, and they can reveal a great deal about the people who used them. Archaeologists can learn about a culture's technology and way of life, for instance, by examining the objects they left behind. By examining the

artefacts, we can acquire insight about the beliefs, customs, and way of life of a specific population.

Written records are the second form of window into the past. These can include diaries, letters, and other materials that provide us a glimpse into people's life in the past. Written records can tell us about historical political and social events, as well as people's daily lives. They can provide us a unique perspective on the culture and beliefs of a specific location and time. The third category, oral histories, can offer a glimpse into the past. Oral histories are stories given by people who have lived in the past, and they can provide us a unique perspective on the culture and beliefs of a specific place and period. Oral histories can provide information on the daily lives and beliefs of individuals in the past.

Finally, photographs provide a window into the past. Photographs may create a vivid depiction of a location and its inhabitants. They can demonstrate how people dressed, what they ate, and how they interacted with their surroundings. In addition to written records, archaeological relics, and oral histories, photographs can offer a unique window into the past. This research paper will cover the role of historical photographs in the Kelabit Highlands.

The portrait is the first category of photograph that can offer us a peek into the past. Portraits provide us a look into the lives and personalities of people who have passed on by allowing us to view their faces. In addition, they can tell us about the customs and fashions of the day, including what people wore and how they style their hair. The landscape is the second category of photograph that can offer us a peek into the past. Photographs showcasing the natural world's beauty from earlier times might help us understand how things have changed over time. They can also inform us about historical architecture and infrastructure,

enabling us to investigate how cities and villages have changed over time. The documentary photograph is the third category of photograph that can offer us a window into the past. We may learn a lot about the past through the use of documentary photography, which gives us a window into the lives of those who came before us. They can also tell us about the political and social concerns of the day, enabling us to investigate how the world has evolved over time.

Over the years as more visitors go to Bario, many of them come with their cameras to capture the moments that they experience. Photos become a way to relive the moment and to remember the memories that they captured. Bario and its people have become a part of these visitors' memories, especially through photographs. This is the same for the Kelabits who live there. Back then, having their photos taken was considered a rare occasion as not many could afford to own a camera, let alone on how to operate one. Many would consider having their portrait photos taken to be a luxury and even if they want one, they have to go to a photo studio in the urban towns such as Marudi or Miri to get one.

In its essence, photography is considered one of the ultimate tools in capturing a moment and its surroundings as evidence with a realistic approach. Just being able to remember things of the past has a significant impact on how we remember them. This is relevant today in the lives of the Kelabits as remnants of the second world war is still visible in the surrounding area, albeit those remnants are being swallowed by the elements, some of the old photographs from the war serves as a reminder of the involvement of the Kelabits in aiding the war efforts where history is being reinforced with visual evidence and goes further as compared to oral tradition.

Some of the older photographs were taken by explorers, researchers, and missionaries. As years go by, some of the Kelabits will go on to take pictures of their own from their own cameras. Through photographs, one can even experience the feeling of nostalgia whenever we see photographs from the past. Some of these photos include a portrait of themselves or their loved ones whether they are still alive or have long passed away. It portrayed how the people used to dress themselves whether it be for leisure or formally, social, and communal activities and the landscape of an area that is familiar to them. Photographs also record significant social and family events. Through these old photographs, many Kelabit today reminisce about the old days as they recall the memories of when they were younger which ties in the visual history with oral history.

Clear blue skies, golden fields of paddy, the beautifully abstract colours of the traditional clothing gears, tall strong mountain range as far as the eye can see; this will definitely tickle the curiosity of any traveller looking for a new experience. Bario is indeed a picturesque location in the northeast of Sarawak as it is one of the highest settlements in the state, where the skies appear much bluer than the coastal urban cities. Bario was dubbed the 'Land of a thousand handshakes' by several adventuring bloggers and is actually being heavily promoted by the state tourism ministry (Sarawak Tourism Board) as part of Sarawak's ecotourism and cultural tourism destination.

Photographs that are aesthetically pleasing to the eyes will definitely capture the attention of the viewer as even the state's tourism board included beautiful photographs to promote the Kelabit Highlands. As the folks in Bario are moving their economy towards ecotourism, many of the guesthouses and homestay owners use stunning photos as part of their marketing strategy to attract visitors. It is evident that one can see the beauty that the

Kelabits experience through photographs, yet at the same time one can also see these images may convey the challenges that the community face; one which resonates with a description by Misztal (2010, p.24) as “problems of remembering in the global age whether remembering or forgetting is essential to ensure the condition of the global citizenship, to discover ways to balance the need for identity and the need to accept the difference in a global age.” The Kelabit, writes Mashman (2020, p.203), “are about to forget their history. This is because they have made a “break with the past” (Lian-Saging 1976/77, 211) and are reluctant to talk about warfare and belief systems from the time prior to their embracing Christianity in the late 1930s.”

2.10 Social Media

According to the online Oxford dictionary, social media refers to a variety of online communication tools that enable individuals to interact with one another in a virtual space. It consists of websites and applications that allow users to create and share content such as videos, photos, and text. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn are examples of social media networks that permit users to communicate with one another.

Social media is fundamentally a platform for people to exchange knowledge, concepts, and viewpoints. It is a way for people to communicate with one another no matter where they are physically located. It is also a platform for businesses to reach out to potential customers, as well as a tool for individuals to build their own personal brand. Social media now has become integral in every aspect of our lives. The way we interact, communicate, and share information has changed as a result. It has also changed the way we consume news

and entertainment, as well as how we shop and make purchases. Additionally, it has developed into an effective tool for companies to connect with and establish connections with prospective clients. Additionally, it has altered how we interact with one another especially over large distances with our loved ones and also getting to know new people. Reacting or commenting on another's post plays a crucial part in the fundamentals of how social media is enjoyed. Some use it strictly for business while others use it for leisure and keeping in touch. For that alone, photographs play a major role in consuming content or interacting with others in social media.

Photography is a significant tool for social media, as it is a visual medium that can be utilised to transmit messages and ideas. Photography can be used to record moments, tell tales, and share experiences with others. It can also be utilised to generate a sense of community and connection between people. People are able to capture and share moments, which is the first reason why photography is vital for social media. Weddings, birthdays, and vacations can all be documented via the use of photographs. Photos can also be used to document ordinary occasions, such as a meal of the day or a sunset. Photos can be used to communicate experiences and tell tales in ways words could not and social media is the platform to share those photographs for your friends or followers to interact.

One study that used photo elicitation through social media was conducted by O'Brien and Wright (2018). They explored the experiences of mothers with postnatal depression through the use of Instagram. They asked mothers with postnatal depression to share photos that represented their experiences, and then conducted interviews to discuss the photos and the emotions they conveyed. The study found that photo elicitation through social media provided a valuable tool for exploring the experiences of mothers with postnatal depression.

The photos provided a visual representation of the participants' emotions and experiences, which helped to create a more in-depth understanding of their perspectives.

The use of photo elicitation through social media has also been explored in the field of tourism. Scott and Maitland (2018) used Instagram to explore the experiences of tourists in Scotland. They asked tourists to share photos that represented their experiences and then conducted interviews to discuss the photos and the emotions they conveyed. The study found that photo elicitation through social media helped to create a more in-depth understanding of the tourists' experiences and perspectives. The photos provided a visual representation of the tourists' experiences, which helped to create a more nuanced understanding of their experiences.



Figure 2.1: Historical Photograph of Kelabit Elders donned in traditional attire of loincloths (*ebpar*), ancient beads for necklaces (*baney*), and elongated earlobes. All important indicators of a man's social status in the society

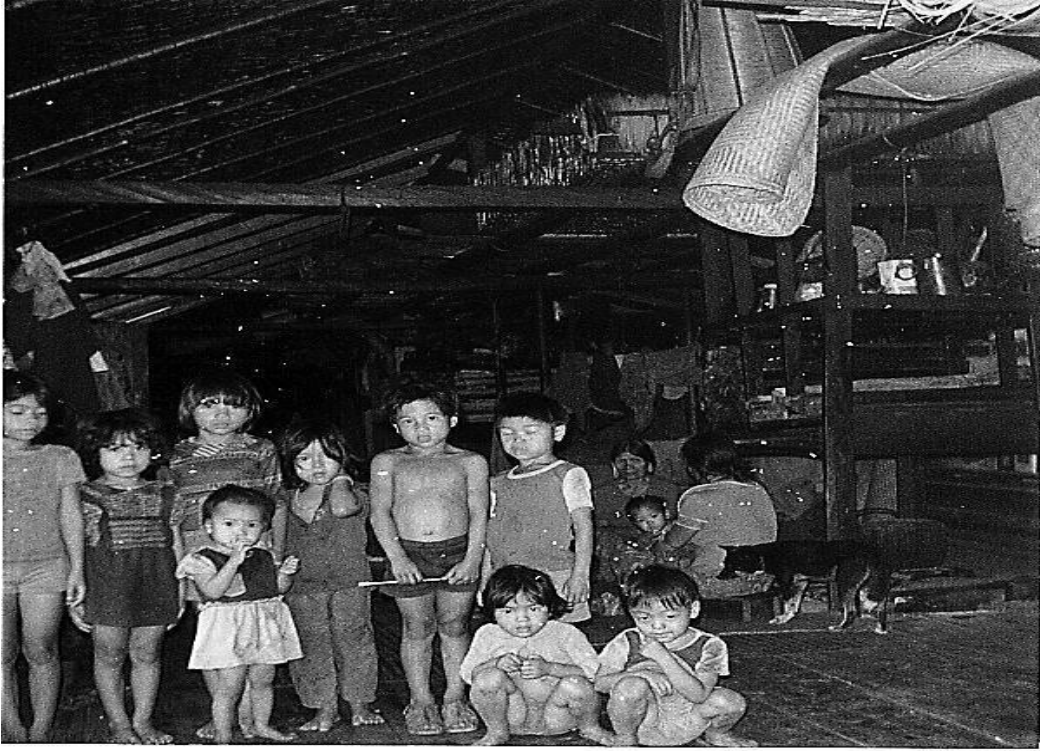


Figure 2.2: Historical Photograph of Pa Ukat long house. This is the *dalem* (kitchen) with the hearth at the centre of the space.



Figure 2.3: Historical Photograph of Kelabit students at the first airstrip built in the Kelabit Highlands. Observe the crashed Twin Pioneer aircraft at the background

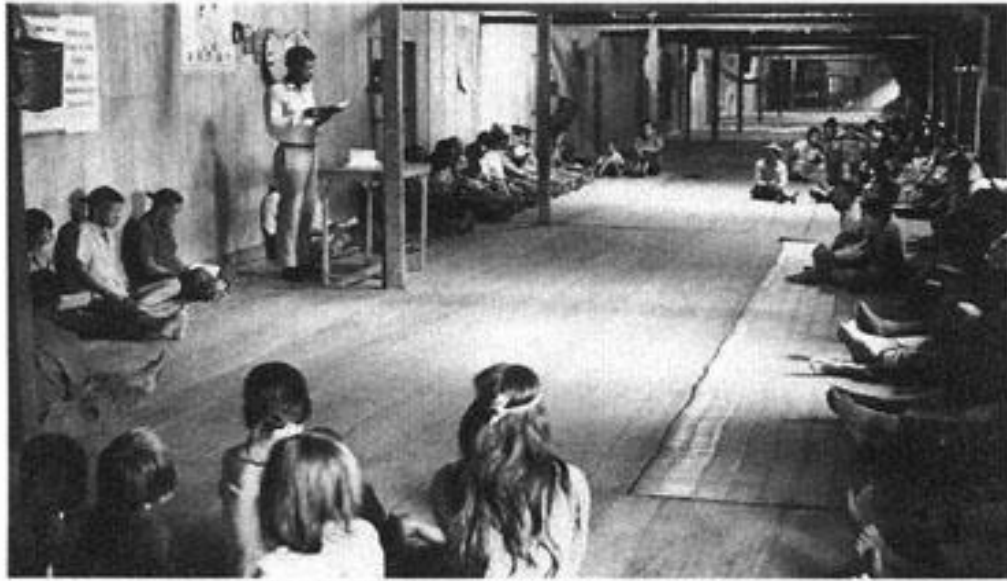


Figure 2.4: Historical Photograph of the Common Gallery (*Tawa'*) of the Bario Asal Longhouse in 1960's. The space is used for public meetings and gatherings. The wall is clear of any photograph on display



Figure 2.5: Historical Photograph of Kelabit who Travelled Down River as a result of the 1973 Christian Revival in Bario, an event which lasted until 1976. The Kelabit left the Highlands to evangelise the other tribes in Sarawak.

Chapter 3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will depict the details of the methodologies used in conducting the research of this study. It aims to introduce the design of this research where this research explores the use of photography as a tool to extract information. This chapter will also reveal the data collection methods especially when selecting the desired and suitable photographs to be used during the photo-elicitation interviews at a photo exhibition in which the author of this paper was given a chance to hold and also the private sessions with the participants whether it be one-on-one or in a group setting.

With regards to the photo-elicitation interviews, this research paper will give an in-depth reveal of the steps taken to stimulate the interview process and also introduce a new methodology to conduct a photo-elicitation interview via social media such as ‘Facebook’ and ‘Instagram’. The significance of this research is that this is the first instances of photo-elicitation being employed within the Kelabit community as the Kelabits must share this knowledge to fill the gap.

3.2 Research Design

This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of photography as a tool to extract information in visual ethnographic methodology. Secondly, this research aims to explore the possibility of using photographs as visual history to link the oral history. And lastly, this research seeks to study the influences of these photographs over the concept of “Generation

of Post-Memory” and their perception towards such photographs and how it impacts their contemporary lives.



Figure 3.1: Map of the whole area of Barrio Highland (Source from Google Map)

This research will be using primary data through multiple interviews and will be qualitative. The research takes place mostly in the field site of Bario over the course of nearly 2.5 years with slight delays towards data collection due to the movement restrictions implemented by the government due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. There are fourteen (14) villages located within the vicinity of the upstream Kelabit Highland plateau and three (3) are downstream villages. Within the fourteen (14) villages, I focused my research towards six (6) villages which were called kampung Bued Main Beruh, kampung Arur Layun, kampung Arur Dalan, kampung Bario Asal, Kampung Baru, and kampung Padang Pasir.

The research period spanned over two and a half trips over to Bario. The reason being why there is a half trip was that during one of my extended period trips, my house in Miri caught on fire the day I was supposed to fly to Bario. Due to the urgency of my situation, I've decided to hold off my trip down to Bario and went over after a week later and only spent about 5 days there.

3.3 Photo Selection and Photo Exhibition

In order to collect my data, I needed to head down to the field site in Bario, located in the highlands of Sarawak. I needed to fly over there and spend a couple of weeks to further get acquainted with the location and its people. In July 2019, I departed from Kuching, the capital city of the state of Sarawak via air and landed in the city of Miri. It is essential that all travellers who wish to go to Bario, must depart from Miri whether by air or by land. Miri is also dubbed as the gateway to rural Sarawak. I went over to Bario for 3 weeks to get an understanding of the geography and the inhabitants. I went there just right before the start of the local food festival which was held every year in the month of July. Through the introduction of my supervisor towards the event organiser, I was graciously given a space within the food festival to conduct a small exhibition of photographs. Within the festival area, there is a building which was built as the local Kelabit museum in 2015 as to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Bario Food Festival, and it was there where I had made my preparations for the photo exhibition.

In order to prepare for the photo exhibition, I had collected several old photos from various sources, where 11 photos were displayed. These photos would be from public and private collections. The number of photographs that I have searched on regarding the

Kelabits were considerably adequate and diverse although surprisingly in good condition, collecting the photographs proved to be a challenge as they were scattered from multiple sources. I am thankful that I have managed to procure some digitally scanned photographs from public and private collections. I have selected up to 60 pieces of photographs from various sources that includes some taken by previous early researchers such as the Earl of Cranbrook, Nooteboom and Pringles and I had further converted these photographs into digital copies to be used and shared amongst the participants.

I have also obtained some photos taken by the Sarawak Museum that were supplied to me through Datin Valerie Mashman, a fellow researcher who also shared to me some of her private photo collections which were captured by her over the years. These printed photos that I had acquired would then be scanned using a printer scanner and digitised as part of my collection. Amongst the collection of photographs that I had looked through, there were some that were taken outside of Bario, such as Long Banga and Long Lellang. I have decided to anchor my research based on photographs that were taken in Bario only which meant that I would disregard any photos I had acquired that were taken from the aforementioned villages.

Photos would be from public and private collections that contain one or more elements from the following criteria:

- I. Any photographs must either have one or more subject (portrait) present
- II. A group of people within the photographs
- III. A photograph that depicts the everyday life of the subject

- IV. A photograph of a location such as a house, villages, fields, and nature that is located within the boundaries of Bario in which is recognizable by the subject(s)

All of these photos must be images that were photographed in Bario and its surrounding vicinity. There are no restrictions to the age of these photographs as this allowed me to organise the photos according to their respective timeline. To define the timeline of said photographs, ideally these photographs qualify as the research material would be photographs that are taken as recent as a year old and all the way back as old as 60 years back. Any photographs that were found to be older than 60 years old will be considered a bonus if it is useful for the research.



Figure 3.2: A section of the wall dedicated to the photographs of the whole family.

Before embarking my journey to Bario, I had set aside a budget of RM 2,000 for the photo exhibition of which I had accumulated from my own funds in preparation for this trip. The RM 2,000 will cover the costs of travelling, accommodation, food and beverages and materials for the photo exhibition all within a span of one month. The Kelabit museum which was a double story building constructed mainly from wood, has both modern and traditional touches incorporated into the designs and outwards visual accents. Inside the museum, it is filled with infographics on the Kelabit and their cultures as well as a dedicated section on the involvement of the Kelabit's during the liberation of Sarawak from the Japanese occupation of World War II. The space that I was given to conduct my exhibition was in a corner on the top floor with about 7 feet of wall space. The photos that I procured were then selected and printed out in sizes ranging from 2R up to 4R.

In order to prepare the exhibition space that I was given, it had taken me nearly 2 days to construct my space. I moved 3 moveable wooden walls that were 7 feet tall into a straight formation. On each of the wooden walls, I installed a down-facing spotlight that shines a bright warm yellow light. In the centre of these 3 walls, I placed 6 backlight signs that have the following numbers in an increasing order: 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000. All 6 of these signs were aligned on a straight string that I had placed horizontally on the center to create a timeline on a straight line. Once the signs were up, I placed photographs that I had earlier printed out and placed inside a picture frame, I proceeded to place them according to the year they were taken on either above and below the timeline string. This signifies a visual timeline to journey through time from the past to the present day.



Figure 3.3: The exhibition space and visual timeline during the 2019 Barrio Food Festival

During the 3 days of the festival, I had all the necessary preparations to interview my guests while leaving some interesting remarks and comments and I was informed that there will be a few distinguished visitors coming to visit the museum. The total amount of visitor turnouts to the museum was not as I had initially anticipated, nevertheless I am still grateful of the visitors that were willing to be interviewed. There are a total of 18 visitors that has responded to the interviews during the photo exhibition.

Every day within the span of 8 hours, from 9am till 5pm, I waited in the museum. On the first day, I managed to get hold of 5 individuals for an interview. For each individual, I will start with my greetings and will proceed to ask them if they have seen any of these displayed photos before. If they have answered 'YES', I would proceed to ask them where they have seen the photo(s). I would also proceed to ask them if they knew the person or the

landscape personally or through a third-party introduction. If instead they have answered 'NO', I would proceed to ask them if they can identify any one of the person in the photos or any place of the landscape. This is to observe the interaction of the guests towards the photos with me while contributing information regarding the photos. Unlike Horn's (2010) approach of adding in information that she had next to the photos that she was showing in her exhibition, I opted for an on-site oral and face-to-face approach. On the second day of the festival, I managed to interview 5 guests. Similar to the previous day, I started off with a question whether they recognized any of the people or landscapes that were being displayed.



Figure 3.4: Creative way to mount a timeline for the photographs to create engagement to the viewers in understanding the progress of time as the Kelabit goes through changes

Due to the fact that the second day I did not have many guests that I could interview during the photo exhibition, I decided to go around the festival ground and try to persuade some guests to come over to my photo exhibition on the third day. True enough, by being proactive in going around to pull guests over to the museum, I managed to end the day with 8 interviews with the visitors interacting with the photos with me. The following are some samples of the photographs that were displayed during the exhibition.

Photo from the 1950s :

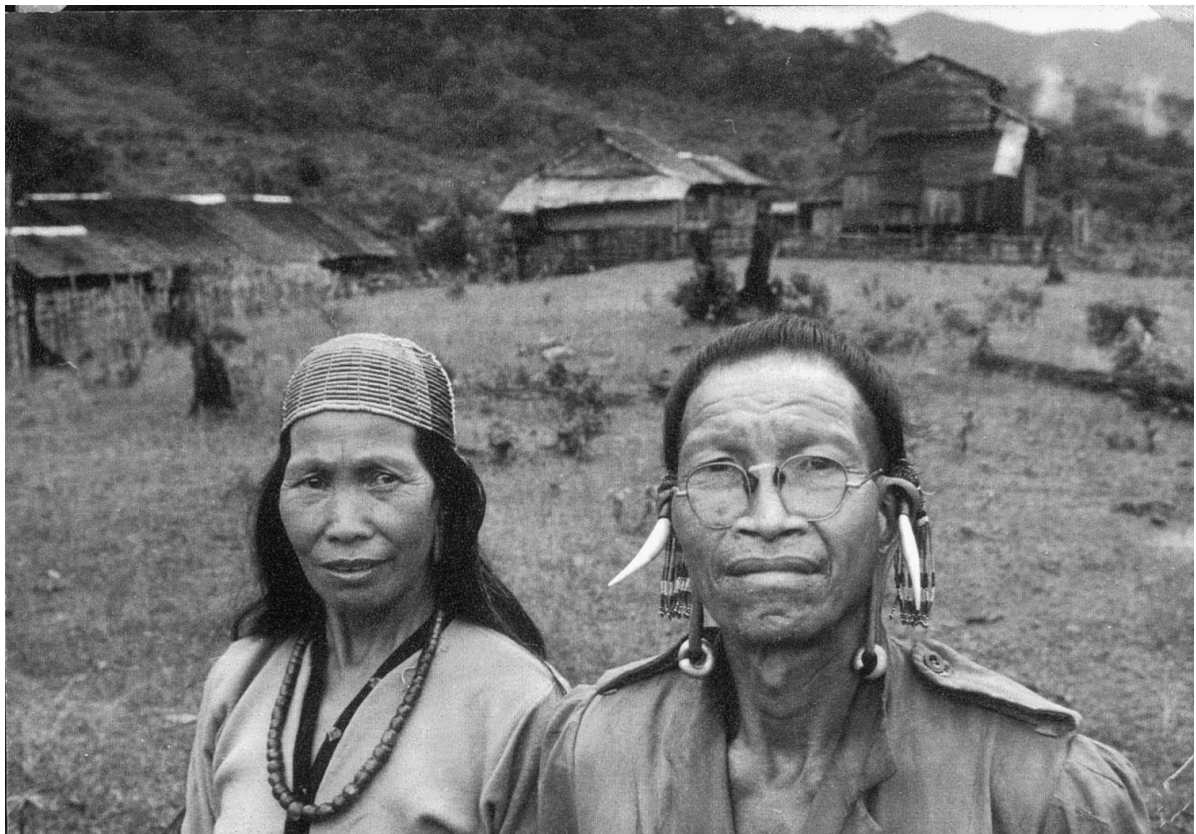


Figure 3.5: Repet Ulun and his wife seen here wearing the traditional accessories with modern attire which reflect the transition of the Kelabit into the world of modernity. Repet Ulun was also depicted with using reading glasses

Photo from the 1960s :



Figure 3.6: Kelabit women preparing food for the community during an irau (party) under a Sedayan, a temporary shelter built outside the church during easter sunday celebration

Continuation of Photos from the 1960s:



Figure 3.7: Kelabit women and the crowd waiting around the plane. The airport in Bario is a social place to meet and exchange information between villages in the highlands and also between Bario and the outside world. Hence the arrival of an aeroplane is a much awaited occasion where people assembled at the airport and around the aeroplanes to either send off or receive someone

Photos from the 1970s :



Figure 3.8: Pa' Umor Salt Spring. A salty spring where locals will come and make their own salt



Figure 3.9: Prayer meeting at the common area (tawa)

Photo from the 1980s:



Figure 3.10: On top of Mount Murud, one of the tallest mountain in Sarawak. Captured by Ushi Trosch



Figure 3.11: Evening meal of worm grubs (kelatang) cooked in bamboo

Photo from the 1990s :



Figure 3.12: Golden fields of paddy ready for harvest



Figure 3.13: The main church in Bario (Gereja Umum) captured in 1992

Photo from the 2000s and Beyond :



Figure 3.14: Aerial view of the Bario town. Captured by waamirzal.blogspot.com



Figure 3.15: Kelabit ladies holding the pineapple juice, a tradition that has been practised by the Kelabits as a warm gesture when welcoming distinguished guests

3.4 Photo-Elicitation Interviews

Throughout this research, this study has conducted one-on-one interviews and group discussions with sixteen (16) participants based on the photographs that this research had procured from various sources. Harper (2002) referred to this method as 'Photo Elicitation'. Through these photographs, many of the participants were eager to talk about them, and in a few instances, were the trigger to extract some information and 'get the ball rolling' because some of the photos that were shown were ones that they had never seen before. During these interviews, this research tried to acquire in-depth information and they were semi-structured accordingly which would last approximately under an hour. During a group interview session, the sessions may last up to an hour or more. Participants' thoughts and feelings regarding the exhibited images and how they represented their experiences were explored through the use of prompts.

During this research in the Kelabit Highlands, this study mostly focused on private individual interviews and group discussions regarding the photographs. Before starting an interview, the researcher would introduce the participants on the nature and objectives of this research and would conduct the interviews or group discussion in a more casual setting and interview tone. As the researchers have made some acquaintances in the villages, approaching them to establish other contacts was made possible for this research as they redirect me to the appropriate informants. During the interview session, participants were shown a couple of photographs from the collection on the laptop as we scrolled past the photographs. If we do come across the photograph that they can relate to, they were asked to describe the photographs which may include naming the people or group and continue to discuss about the captured scene or objects within the photographs.



Figure 3.16: One of the outdoor group photo elicitation session with the participants with photographs being displayed through the laptop

Apart from the main village of Bario in the centre of the highlands, several smaller villages were difficult to reach as they are either too far to reach via foot or no longer inhabited. Most of the smaller villages in the centre of town are closer and are well within walking distance while those that are much further such as Pa' Main, Pa' Berang, Ramudu, Pa' Dalih, Pa' Lungan, and Batu Patung requires a journey by an off-road 4X4 vehicle which has to be arranged with private transportation companies and owners. With the lack of personal funding and transportation, it has presented the researcher with some limitations

with the range of villages that could be covered for this research and thus had decided to not travel to the aforementioned villages.

As the author of this study, I consider myself as someone who is not originally a part of the community, nor am I someone who is not a stranger to the community, I would position myself as an outsider and insider. This unique take was introduced by Mashman (2018) as neither the definition of being an outsider or an insider could fit her situation, given her relationship with the community. (Mashman, 2018: 60). For these reasons, I am able to position myself in this unique situation where during the research, I am either an outsider or an insider towards my respondents. Positioning yourself as both an insider and outsider in your research can provide a nuanced and multifaceted perspective. As an insider, you possess an intimate understanding of the cultural, social, or organizational context under study, allowing for deeper insights and access to insider perspectives. Simultaneously, adopting an outsider stance enables you to maintain objectivity, critically evaluate assumptions, and avoid potential biases inherent in being too deeply embedded in the subject matter. This dual positioning allows for a more comprehensive and balanced examination of your research topic, enriching the overall quality and depth of your findings.

As I conducted the photo elicitation amongst the respondents in the longhouse, these interactions took place in the common area or the dining area. Most of the time, the discussions take place over meals where the Kelabit's like to interact over food. During one particular period during my research, it was not easy to find and bring together a number of informants, as those times occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic and even though Bario was far from any large cities and towns and was not directly affected by the global pandemic, the locals were well aware of the movement restriction that was imposed and mandatory

social distancing that was in effect. Naturally, keeping in mind social distancing and the fears that the locals had towards those who came from outside of the highlands were taken into consideration. Due to these circumstances, getting into any local residence were the subject of invitation from the homeowner while exercising utmost adherence to safety protocols.



Figure 3.17: Another group session of photo elicitation was conducted amongst the younger group during a night gathering at one of the villagers house

During these group discussions, this study methodology switched to digital. That meant the researcher did not bring any printed photographs of the samples that will be shown to the group discussion. Instead, the photo-elicitation used the laptop to show through the

photos. This allows the interview session to have a brighter photograph to show to the one-on-one and group discussions especially when most of these discussions happened during the evening and indoors, where there is not enough light. By using the laptop, researcher and participants were able to ‘zoom’ in to the photographs when the participants needed to have a closer look on the photographs.



Figure 3.18: Using the laptop for a bigger zoomed in view of each photograph allows for an in-depth photo interview

3.5 Social Media Elicitation

This methodology was initially not part of my research methodology, however due to the Covid-19 pandemic that swept the nations all around the world, this also affected Malaysia and also the state of Sarawak, where this research was conducted. With the researcher initial plans of going down to Bario in the second half of 2020 and the first half of 2021 being disrupted with the movement restrictions in place by the government, this has hampered the efforts to collect adequate data for this research where at the time during the initial pandemic season. I have decided to approach the remaining part of my research data collection through the use of social media. It is a method of collecting data that can be used to gain insight into a person's thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

According to the online Oxford Dictionary website, social media is defined as "Websites and software programs used for social networking in which most of the most frequently used social networking sites in Malaysia are mostly 'Facebook', 'Twitter', 'Instagram', 'WhatsApp Stories', 'WeChat' and 'Tik Tok'. Before conducting a photo-elicitation study through social media, it is important to identify the target audience of this research. Taking in consideration the age, gender, interests, and other demographic characteristics of the subjects we want to reach. As this methodology is targeting the younger adults, this study needed to focus on social media platforms that are popular with that age group such as Facebook and Instagram. The next step is to create a list of photos that the participant can post on their social media accounts. These photos should be related to the study's topic and relevant to the participant's experience. It is critical that the photographs are appropriate and do not contain any offensive or inappropriate content.

Therefore, this research will be focussing on two (2) main social media for the data collection: 'Facebook' and 'Instagram'. As this research placed the focus on photographs, it makes absolute sense to focus on these two (2) social media platforms as photo-sharing capabilities are part of these social media platforms features. This research will be observing how the Kelabit organise themselves on social media especially in the aspect of their history, memory and identity as a Kelabit. It is essential to ensure that the participant understands the purpose of the study and the implications of posting the photographs. Additionally, it is crucial that the participant is aware of the privacy settings on their social media accounts.

In Facebook, members build their network by adding and inviting other users to be their "friends" using profile pages as their primary interface. Once a member is authorised, they can access their "timeline," a user interface that functions as a newsfeed and lists posts in chronological order, to receive updates on all content that has been "posted" (i.e., made publicly available on the user's profile if the setting is set to public). Users are also capable of communicating in a more private manner through methods such as personal messaging, event sharing, and group creation. This information is only accessible to members who have been granted access.

Through the use of 'Facebook', this research uses the researchers personal Facebook account to conduct data collection. For a period of three (3) months on Facebook, the researchers had observed and collected data from 12 informants of formal interviews and observations. The researchers approached this methodology with a new angle, which was through interviewer-generated photographs and user-generated photographs. As the name implies, interviewer-generated photographs means that the researcher as the interviewer will be providing the sample photographs to the interviewees. User-generated photographs as the name suggests, is when the photographs that will be the focus of the discussion is provided

by the interviewees. The researcher would also explain that they(researcher) will not be using their photos for any commercial purpose.

To conduct photo elicitation through social media platforms, the researcher should first create a post that includes a photograph and a brief description of the research topic. The researcher should then encourage followers to comment on the post and share their thoughts and opinions about the topic. The same could also be said regarding photos uploaded by the research informants. To conduct photo elicitation through Facebook, the researcher created a Facebook group specifically for the research project. After identifying the appropriate subjects, the researcher invited fourteen (14) participants to join the group and post photos that are related to the research topic. The researcher asked participants to comment on the photos and share their thoughts and feelings. Once the photos have been posted, the researcher would use the comments to further explore the research topics and ask participants to explain why they chose the photos they did, or to elaborate on their thoughts and feelings. The researcher also asked them to share stories or experiences related to the photos. When possible, follow up questions or interviews through Facebook were necessary to carry the research forward or to gather more information from the participants.

Instagram is a social networking service (SNS) that allows users to upload and display their photographs on a profile, facilitating conversation through photo sharing in which the users “follow” other users in order to receive updates of one’s user Instagram activities. Even though platform's default settings make photographs accessible to the entire Instagram network, many users choose to set their accounts to private, making photos accessible only to those who approve their online request. The social media platform also has messaging tools that enable users to share and receive texts and photographs directly with other users in their network, hence facilitating user-to-user engagement. Through

Instagram, the researcher also used a personal account to conduct data collection which they also had spent a period of two (2) months.

Instagram has a unique feature to search for content that was uploaded to the social media platform through hashtags (#). In order to search for participants, this research needed to find the right sets of pictures that are associated with the research and participants who were also Kelabit. For this research, there were 10 participants chosen to go through the interview. Secondly, the researcher turned to search through public Instagram posts through hashtags (#) where the author also considered using hashtags to make my post more visible and to attract more responses. The hashtags that were used needed to be specific to the research and thus several hashtags were used such as #Bario, #Kelabit, and #Sarawak. Additionally, this study monitored the comments and responded to any questions or concerns that arise to further add more interactions to the post.

Through Instagram, this method will also interview the participants regarding the engagement of the related photographs that they have uploaded onto their account. This study will gauge the effectiveness of those photographs based on the engagement each photo receives such as amount of likes, amount of comments or amount of shares. Even while it is relatively simple to acquire images from a social media account for research purposes, it is necessary that any personal identifiers and messages are removed or altered. With such a variety of personal data available on a single platform, researchers will still need to be attentive to preserve confidentiality in their research designs. This research will focus on why the participants uploaded these photos and the interviews will be based on photographs that is related to Kelabit.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

In conducting a research study utilizing photo elicitation, a paramount commitment to ethical considerations is imperative to ensure the integrity and respect of the participants involved. Ethical adherence involves obtaining informed consent from participants, clearly outlining the purpose and potential implications of using their photographs in the research. Respecting confidentiality is crucial, and thus this research must implement rigorous measures to safeguard participants' identities, especially in sensitive topics. Ultimately, an unwavering commitment to ethical principles ensures that photo elicitation research contributes valuable insights while prioritizing the well-being and dignity of those involved.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will cover the findings and results of this study. It includes secondary and primary data. The first refers to findings from literature review and the later from findings from fieldwork especially from the photo-elicitation interviews. Throughout these data collection from the fieldwork, most of the photographs were captured by explorers, soldiers, researchers and even the locals themselves. This chapter will dive into the methodology steps and the differences and patterns of the data collected. Through this research, this study set out to determine whether photographs could be used as a methodological tool to extract ethnographic information that does not fit within the established traditional anthropology intellectual exchange.

This chapter will focus on the discussion upon three main objectives: firstly, to evaluate the effectiveness of photographs to be used as a tool in visual ethnographic methodology to extract information, followed by if photographs can be used as a link to bridge the past and the present and finally to identify is there evidence to suggest that when showing a photograph to the subject(s), does the subject(s) exhibit symptoms of ‘Generation of Post-Memory’?

4.2 The perception of the Kelabits regarding Past and Present

One common theme that emerged from literature in the Kelabit and their attitudes to the past is that - the Kelabit are about to forget their history (Mashman 2021, p.127). As suggested by (Lian-Saging 1976; 1977), this is because they have made a “break with the past” and are reluctant to talk about warfare and belief systems from the time prior to their embracing Christianity in the late 1930s.

Instead the Kelabit have seen various changes over the past decade from the first contact with the outside world while playing a role in the retaliation against the Japanese occupation during the second world war, experiencing a religious and cultural transformation and finally embarking on a new pathway to promote the highland as an appealing ecotourism-based economy of the present.

The Kelabit got their name by chance through a misunderstanding by a Brooke administrator whose name was Charles Hose, and it was when the Kelabit leaders came to Marudi to seek allegiance to the Brooke government (Mashman, 2020). Back then, the interpreter told Hose that they were “Lun Pa Labid” (The People of Labid River) and he misheard the word “Kalabit”. From henceforth, they have been classified and labelled as Kalabit and has since accepted Kelabit as their common identification. Thus, R.S. Douglas (1912) included the term “Kalabit Country” in his map which birthed the phrase of “Kelabit Highlands” which has been used till this very day and was synonymous with living in the highlands. According to one participant, those living up on the highlands were known only as groups of people living at a certain area or river. Only through this classification as being called Kelabit that has given the group a collective name.

Traditionally the Kelabits have been rice farmers up in the highlands and are well known in Sarawak as cultivators of the famous Bario rice. During one of the group discussions with the participants, this study asked them about what it meant to be a Kelabit. In order to steer their focus on the main theme, these interviews would be specifically steering the participants towards their past and present as a Kelabit. There are no doubts that the Kelabits have a strong connection to their past and believe that it is an integral part of their identity. They believe that their ancestors are still present in their lives and that they can be called upon for guidance and protection. This connection to their past is reflected in their traditional ceremonies and rituals, which are often based on stories and legends passed down through generations.

The Kelabits also believe that their past is a source of strength and resilience. They view their ancestors as role models and strive to emulate their courage and strength. This is reflected in their traditional values, emphasising respect for elders, hard work, and self-reliance. This instils every Kelabits a strong sense of place and community. They believe in the importance of family and community, which is reflected in their daily lives. The Kelabits have a strong sense of loyalty and respect for each other, and they are very supportive of one another.

They also have a strong sense of responsibility and accountability to their community, and they take pride in their work and contributions to the community. Even at the present, the Kelabits are still practising “gotong-royong” (work party) whether it is to clean the church after sunday service, or to gather together and help to cook whenever someone in the village has passed away, or even to help the Rurum Kelabit Sarawak to clean up and set up the event site during the Bario Food Festival that happens every July. A

conversation that occurred during one of the photo-elicitation session with a group of the older folks went as follow:

“Renga inan lun dengeruyung tauh mate kele, ame tauh gotong-royong nulung keluarga ideh. Paad tidih ngi laud nange, kapah mado teh tauh, renga tauh kereb, ame tupu teh tauh mikak ideh. Neh dieh tauh adet Kelabit, lat ngilad tetepuh tauh mada adet sinih”

“Tuuh belaan tepu ineh boy. Renga tauh am kereb nolong ideh ngi ruma, renga tauh inan linuh, doo teh tauh nudul ibal usin ngen ideh”

“If there is any relative of ours that had passed away, we would go work party (gotong-royong) to their family house. It’s the same as over in the towns, even how far apart we are and if we are able, we would go and visit them (funeral). That is our Kelabit custom which was taught by our grandparents”

“That’s correct young boy. Even if we are unable to go and help them at their house and if we are considerate, we would hand some money to the family”

Respondent SB & SA, 86 & 68 years old, Bario

The Kelabits have a strong sense of living in the present while remembering the past. They strive to preserve their culture and customs because they are proud of them as mentioned by the participants and were evident by their use of traditional attire and preparation of local cuisines. Additionally, they are proud of their accomplishments and try to better their life. They are resilient and resolved to overcome any obstacles they encounter. They are also welcoming and receptive to new ideas and lifestyles such as the use of synthetic hornbill feathers for their traditional dance as compared to a real feather, mainly due to the protection of the hornbill by the conservation law.

They consider their land precious and it is their responsibility to safeguard it. This is evident in their traditional land management practices, which prioritise resource conservation and environmental sensitivity. Finally, the Kelabits have a deep appreciation for their culture and traditions. They believe their culture is a source of pride and identity

and should be preserved and passed down to future generations. This is reflected in their traditional arts and crafts, which are often used to tell stories and celebrate important events such as the practice of playing the Sape, a traditional musical instrument.

4.3 Photo Exhibition Findings

During the 3 days of conducting the photo exhibition, a majority of those who came over to have a look were mostly guests under the age of 60. 40% of which were females and the remaining 60% were males. As this exhibition have placed some considerable amount of photos on the walls with a theme of “The Journey Through Time”, where a long string was tied indicating a timeline from the 1950’s until the 2000’s and also placing the photos accordingly to the year they were taken, around 20% of the respondents has find that particular effort this study had put in actually helped them imagine the era of those photos and have instilled in them a sense of time and space. 25% of the correspondents were able to know that the photos on display were of Kelabit people due to the fact that they actually know the subjects of the photos personally.

*“Kereb wih kiti tesinah kudih lem gaber sinih, kadi wih keli gaber sinih lebih kadang dih lat gaber iko suk ineh tabi. Kayu setengah tupu the gaber mudih inih. These are quite cool”
(I could identify my mother in the photo, however as far as I remembered, this photo was actually much wider than what you had placed here and it seems like you have had half of the photo. These are quite cool.)*

Respondent AK, 41 years old,

Kuala Lumpur

*“Hey, doo sekenan kuh ideh lem gaber sinih. Peruyung kamih sekolah ngilad”
(Hey, I know some of them!! I actually grew up schooling with them.)*

Respondent DGG, 52 years old, Kuching

Oh, baru the wih petulu ngen yeh nih ngi luar naah. Naam keduwih pasti ken yeh teh ineh naah kadi wih nier gaber sinih kayu pengeh 30 laak neh , kadi wih keli raben nier lalid nedih kadang. Nih adceh gaber beruh man wih nier, kayu gaber ngalap ngi luar pasar nih kan.

(Oh, I had just met her outside the museum. I was not sure if it was her at first in this picture since it looks to be from 30 years ago, but I knew it was her since I noticed her long ears. And isn't this taken outside of the market, right.)

Respondent SG, 21 years old, Kuching

During the photo exhibition, there was one respondent whose family actually had some large quantities of these older photographs that were similar to my collection. He noted that since he grew up looking at those photos, he immediately knew that these photos were of Kelabit or were taken in Bario even though he was not raised in Bario but he did indeed return to Bario often during his school holidays. Although he could not identify some of the subjects in the photos, he could deduce that they were Kelabit, due to the fact that in some photos, the subjects were wearing the traditional Kelabit headgear called ‘Peta’. He explained to me how only the Kelabits are the only ones in Sarawak that use that specific style of headgear.

I can relate to some of the photos because I personally know some of them and have seen some of them. I can clearly figure out that these people are Kelabits, because they are wearing the ‘Peta’ (traditional headgear) due to it being unique and exclusive only to the Kelabit. I can relate to this because I used to go back to Bario for school holidays because I was raised in Kuching.

Respondent ZL, 42 years old,

Kuala Lumpur

In another instance, the photo of the 'Peta' was indeed a factor for some of the visitors who had never seen or met any of the subjects that were shown during the photo exhibition. Most of these visitors are young adults below 30 years old. They mentioned that being familiar and having personally worn the traditional Kelabit headgear instantly made them recognize it through the photographs.

RH: Oh! I know her. And I supposed these other people are also Kelabit right? I mean, look at their long earlobes and that 'Peta'. Only Kelabit has them. I've worn them on occasion too.

LB: These 'Peta' are certainly expensive now aren't they?

Yes they are indeed - Me

Respondent RH & LB, 26 & 27 years old,

Kuala Lumpur

CP: Yeah, I don't think we know all of them in these photos. I mean they look so young here. Probably our parents would recognize them. But for sure maybe my parents would know.

ER: I mean for sure they all are kelabit here right?

GD: Look at their long earlobes.

EA: This is a 'Peta' right? So it must be Kelabit then.

JH: Isn't this outside this building? What a change compared to back then. Gravel roads back then and cemented road now.

Respondent CP, ER, GD, EA, JH, OL, JL, RJ, 22 – 24 years old, Miri

One of the visitors exhibited an extraordinary response during the exhibition. Looking through the photos that depicted the changes in the landscape over the past 20 years,

specifically the photos of the gravel roads of Bario, he proceeds to share his story of riding on a motorbike with his father during his childhood. The photo triggered a bad memory of his past experience where he and his father fell into the drain while riding the motorbike.

Looking at the old dirt roads that Bario used to have, I am reminded of the time during my childhood of a bad memory of when me and my father rode a motorbike and because the roads were so bad, we fell into the drain. What a bad experience.

Respondent SG, 21 years old,

Kuching

There was one special instance, where two (2) respondents immediately mentioned that they initially could not tell if the subject of the photos were of Kelabit nor whether the location that was captured was of Bario. However, they could immediately relate to ONE (1) particular photo. It was an old photo of a group of people that would seem to be farming in the wet paddy fields, which their actions point towards a work party effort. The respondents told me that before they made their way to the main town Bario, they were previously from Pa' Lungan, where they were spending their school holidays there with their grandparents. The work party photo immediately caught their attention because prior to their journey to Bario, they were helping their grandparents in the field, in a situation that mirrors the old photo.

Hey, are these people Kelabits?

'Yes they are' (Me)

No wonder, actually I was not sure if these were Kelabits or this photo is of Bario. I could not recognize anyone or the landscape but I do suspect they were Kelabit from this person's long earlobes. It was when I saw this photo of this "Kerjasama" (work party) that I immediately called FA to show her this. We both just got back from Pa' Lungan, visiting our grandparents. We did some "Kerjasama" work while we were there.

Respondent ER and FA, 24 years old,

Miri



Figure 4.1: "Kerjasama" (Work party) working in the field

The photo exhibition clearly has shown some interesting findings to this research. Most of the correspondents were able to relate to the photos that were shown. About 70% of the respondents could immediately identify that the subject in the photos was indeed a Kelabit person or was taken in Bario. Although there were several respondents who noted that initially they could not determine whether it was a Kelabit just by looking at their faces,

they were able to confirm their deduction when they saw some photos of a lady wearing the traditional attire, especially the 'Peta'. While there was one respondent that stated that he was familiar with one(1) particular photo because he had seen it on the internet before, that stated that the person in that photo was a Kelabit.

4.4 Photo Elicitation Findings

This section on the findings on the method via photo elicitation were conducted upon multiple timeframes in the span of 3 years which included 2019, 2021 and 2022. Due to the global pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, on-site data collection was halted temporarily during the whole year of 2020 due to the movement restrictions imposed by the Malaysian government and also restriction of entry by the locals at Bario which is the site for the data collection.

During this research of using photo elicitation with a group discussion, this study have observed that whenever the respondents does know of the person that is shown in any of the photos whether they personally knew them or heard of them, they will state the name of said person and where that person is from or the current place the person has settled in. Besides that, they sometimes know who their parents were or how many siblings they have or whether they are related to them. Furthermore, the group will go on to state the occupation that the person is currently doing or had done before, some examples being as either a "Ketua Kampung"(Head village chief), medical dresser, school teacher, clerk, lawyer, or a pastor.

When discussing amongst themselves regarding the photos, there were times when the group would try to pinpoint the general geographical location of where the said photo was taken which was whether it's beside the paddy fields, behind the church building or alongside the mountain range. Such an example entails during the group discussion would be:

Nih teh gaber padang maun ngilad. Nih the opis inan ngalap tiket kapal dih. Ken keli muh ngapeh nih taih? Nih teh iring ruma homestay Raja Siwa.
(This is a photo of the old airstrip. And this is the old office to buy the flight ticket. Do you know where this was, young man? It is next to Raja Siwa's homestay)

Respondent BS, 72 years old, Bario



Figure 4.2: One session conducted at the living room of the participant's house

Looking through the photos, some informants will share their recollection of their past memories that are associated with the photos that this study has provided. During one of the interviews, this study author was treated to a hearty bowl of rice porridge that contained a wild fungus that the locals called ‘Kecip’. The author decided to pursue the conversation by asking the interviewees about the ‘Kecip’ fungus and later start by asking them how one finds or forages for some ‘Kecip’. One by one the interviewees went on to mention that this ‘Kecip’ fungus is very important and integral in defining the Kelabit delicacy.



Figure 4.3: Photo elicitation interview conducted often during meal times at the fireplace. The dapur (kitchen) plays a big role in the Kelabit household. It is where the family members gather most of the time and it is also the place where guests are brought to and this is also where business usually happens.



Figure 4.4: The *Dapur* (kitchen) area is one of the most important spaces in a Kelabit home. It is where the hearth (*tetal*) is located. The heart is the centre of the home where small and intimate gatherings are carried out: from family meals to prayer meeting and at time where village level court hearing are carried out.

As they stated that rice is one of the integral foods that make up the local society due to the dependence of the local Kelabits on rice consumption and wet paddy cultivation which resulted in a diverse variety of rice based dishes being consumed by the Kelabit people which also includes the rice porridge. Janowski noted that rice is central to the Kelabit staple as it is the centre of every meal whether on a daily basis or during feasts (Janowski, page 51, 1991). This led the conversation further where one of the interviewees pulled up a photograph from his smartphone and presented to myself and the rest of the interviewees a photo from his backyard of a ‘Kecip’ that was growing on a dead tree. He later on extended an invitation to the author to visit his house to have a look at the ‘Kecip’. The author accepted his invitation and went over to his house one evening on a different day.

Even when conducting this research by starting the interview without the aid of photographs, it takes a lot of imagination sometimes to imagine what the participants are trying to explain. An example would be when interviewing the female participants regarding their school days in Barrio, they would most of the time say that their female dormitory is on top of the school hill. When probed further if they remembered any detail of the dormitory building, most of them would say they can't remember it all. However when shown a photograph of the current site of the old female dormitory on the school hill, the majority of the participants excitedly share stories of their time staying in the dormitory which is in line with what Favro (1992) suggests that not only does photograph reveal the archaeological stone of a person but it could also capture the surrounding environment. This is evident when even during the group interview sessions, there were participants who were just silently listening in on to the discussion of others and responding very little to the photographs, but instantly perked up when shown a photograph that raises a connection with them personally. Participants will share examples such as who were their classmates, who were in the class next door, the name of their teacher, the food that they ate during boarding school as well as who amongst their classmates that had passed away. This further cements the notion that Bay and Lowderbaugh (1979) wrote regarding photographs does aid in revealing details of everyday life, the clothing that people wear, the tools that they use at work and the furnishing that they put at home just by looking at photographs, in which this case is the details of the participants school days and boarding school at Barrio.

“Staying up on that hill was real challenge because at night it gets really cold whenever the wind blows in through the slacks of the woods”

SDR, 53 years old, Barrio



Figure 4.5: The old site of the female dormitory on top of the Bario Secondary School hill

After touching on the subject of the female dormitory, this research continues to try

After touching on the subject of the female dormitory with the participants, this research continues to try and get the participants to share photographs that they hold dear. While still on the topic of school, the interview then steered towards asking the female participants if they were in the same batch during their school days. There was one group of participants that had three (3) of them noted that they were not in the same class but were together in the same year, only being in different classrooms. One of them stated that before the Covid-19 lockdown, in 2019 they organised a Class Reunion for their school year. One of them proceeds to show the researcher photographs that were taken during the class reunion dinner, where they all dressed up as cowboys and cowgirls. The interviewer then steered the

conversation in finding out what are the occupations of the people shown in the participant class reunion photo which further supports what Bay and Lowderbaugh (1979) wrote on.

“You see this person went on to bible school and is now a pastor. She went on to marry someone from KL and came back to visit us during the reunion. She’s a housewife. This fellow went on to be a teacher, he is retiring soon. ... ”

The use of photo-elicitation gives an understanding in discovering an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences that gives an insight and encouragement to collect ethnographic information even when traditional interviews seem to not bring out the desired outcome. Even when presented with photographs by the participants, there were many varieties of photographs. Most notably images portrayed familial and intimate relationships as well as close friendships, as well as interior and exterior places.

In my research, I sought to compare the effectiveness of traditional interviews with the innovative approach of photo-elicitation interviews. The traditional interview method has long been a cornerstone of social research, providing a structured platform for participants to articulate their experiences and perspectives verbally. However, recognizing the potential limitations of relying solely on verbal communication, I introduced the photo-elicitation interview as a complementary technique to enhance the depth and richness of the data gathered. Photo-elicitation interviews involve presenting participants with visual stimuli, such as photographs, to evoke discussions and reflections. This method harnesses the power of imagery to access a more nuanced and layered understanding of participants' experiences. By incorporating visual elements, participants are prompted to engage with their memories and emotions in a different way, often leading to insights that may not emerge through traditional verbal prompts alone.

4.5 Social Media Photo-Elicitation

Social media photo-elicitation is a method for gathering data and understanding people's experiences, opinions, and behaviours through collecting and analysing photos uploaded on social media platforms. This technique is frequently employed in social science research to investigate a broad range of themes, including communication, culture, identity, community, and relationships. To conduct social media photo elicitation, researchers often select a social media platform and a relevant hashtag or group of hashtags. Additionally, they may search for specific accounts or profiles pertinent to their research. Once a collection of photographs has been found, the images can be analysed using numerous techniques, such as content analysis, visual analysis, and interpretation.

One of the primary advantages of social media photo elicitation is that it enables academics to access an extensive and diverse sample of photographs published by individuals in a wide range of situations and settings. This can offer vital insight into how individuals see and experience specific challenges or phenomena. Moreover, because social media photo elicitation relies on individuals' own photographs, it might provide a more personal and genuine perspective on a particular topic. This chapter will cover the findings during conducting photo-elicitation interviews through the use of social media.

Through social media, the respondents were more open to the questions that this study has directed towards them. As this method was not as direct as compared to a face-to-face interview, hence the method was slightly tweaked. This method required this study to actively search the interviewees through mutual friends and looking through local Kelabit contacts from the researcher's personal social media accounts.



Figure 4.6: A crashed Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer next to a paddy field in Bario. A must see and photographed site when tourists come to Bario. Today a favourite spot for the locals to bring their guests. As an object, the wreckage has a moving, disturbing yet remarkable history to tell about the Kelabit and the formation of Malaysia. Source: Photo by Motoasia.com

4.5.1 Facebook Photo-Elicitation



Figure 4.7: Worm grub which the Kelabits call (*kelatang*) a delicacy for the locals

To start off the photo-elicitation for the participants on Facebook, this research started off by posting a very striking yet controversial photograph for the participants in the group as shown in Figure 4.7. It did not take long for the group to respond by clicking ‘Like’ or ‘Love’ on the post, however the participants were only reacting to the photograph and not responding nor commenting on the post. After a short while, a set of texts were added to the photo of the *kelatang*, which reads as follow and the rest of the participants were tagged:

“Kelatang, a favourite for many, a horror for some. By the way I think they taste like soap. What do you think?”

Soon after, the participants were quick to react to the photo and started to comment on it. There was a few of the participants that mentioned sharing the photo around as well. Some of the comments posted were as follow:

“Yum, delicious”

“Can’t find these here at my place”

“Yes, I agree with you, it does taste like soap”

“A real Kelabit will eat this, no problem”

“(Nih suk doo keleh) This is the good stuff”

It is evident from these interactions, not all of the participants agree on what was mentioned on the photograph title nor do any of the participants who disagree with the statement. In one instance, even after the next day, there were still short interactions towards this photograph, mainly to reply to other comments that were given earlier such as towards the participant that mentioned “Yes, I agree with you, it does taste like soap”. The other participant replied to that comment by saying, “You need to dip them in salt and just swallow them”. Despite that, the majority of the participants seem to enjoy eating the *kelatang* and would have collectively agree that it is indeed delicious, although I beg to differ.



Figure 4.8: A group of villagers in a work party (gotong-royong) to harvest the paddy

Another set of photographs that was well received was Figure 4.8. This photograph depicts the villagers working together to harvest the rice. Most of the participants reacted positively to the photograph and some of the comments were as follow:

“Such a golden harvest”

“Miss those days where we all kerjasama (work party) together to harvest the rice”

“No machines, all by hand back in the days”

“Bario rice is the best”

When looking through the comments on Figure 4.8, there is a glaring pattern clearly visible. Majority of the ones commenting on the photograph were of those participants that were above 40 years old, while there were none from those younger ones. This clearly indicates that working in the fields does not strike any nostalgia for the younger ones as

when probed further, most of the younger ones explains that most of them have never done any harvesting work before. On the other hand, the folks above 40 years old have mentioned that they did follow their parents to the paddy fields when they were younger growing up in the Kelabit Highlands. One of the comments made by a participant who was above 40 years old shed light on the steps to harvest rice. Many of those participants who were older than 40 years old tend to share their personal stories, experiences and descriptions of emotions that were evoked by harvesting. Even amongst the various tribes and communities in Sarawak, the Kelabits are known for their cultivation of wet paddy and where rice has been their main staple food.

“We used to harvest rice with our parents and sometimes would skip school to go to the field. We would cut the rice stalks and place them in our basket. Later we would trash it out and dry the grains on a hot day. Sometimes our parents would tell us to go back to school even when things are still busy at home”

FB_001

“You are right my cousin. Indeed our parents will send some of that rice to us when we are far from home at school. Hand planted rice in Bario is still the best”

FB_002

Through that participant's comment, soon more comments were added to reply towards participant FB_001 with their own experiences during their childhood and would even begin to start tagging their friends or family members onto the comment. The comment made by participant FB_002 garnered more 'Likes' and reaction from the participants as they probably agree with their statement. Even as the researchers continue to press on for

responses from the younger participants, one question was brought upon the participants by the researcher:

“Is Bario Rice the best rice there is?” - **Researcher 01**

Many participants would respond positively and would seem to imply that there is indeed no other rice as great as Bario rice which the participants themselves, whether young or old, would agree that one cannot separate a Kelabit from their Bario rice. This statement is made true even as Stepnisky (2012) noted that the collective memory is a social construction that embodies a group's identity, especially when the participants associate the Bario rice as part of their identity:

“Whenever I go back to Bario, I would always bring back some Bario rice to KL”

“Even when the rice is cold, it is still soft and delicious”

“My friends always asks me to buy Bario rice on their behalf, they love it too”

“That is why the best rice is planted by the Kelabit, and only grown in Bario”



Figure 4.9: An overview of the paddy fields on top of a hill in Bario

Figure 4.9 did not experience many interactions as compared to previous photographs, nevertheless it still received a decent amount of reaction such as ‘Likes’ or the ‘Heart’ reaction but with less comments than other photographs. Despite that, one particular participant decided to reply to this photograph with a photograph that he had captured using a drone. The photograph as seen in Figure 4.10 has seen reactions and comments from the other participants.



Figure 4.10: A photograph of a rainbow in the background taken on a drone flying above Bario, which was taken by a participant and posted as a reply to the photograph that this study initially posted

Even when the initial photograph did not bear any more response from the interview, but with an addition of a photograph with similar elements that is present in the newly introduced photograph but with an interesting twist to it, this further drives the narrative that collaboration allows the exchange of knowledge that builds upon another's ideas.



Figure 4.11: Kelabit men playing a traditional game of climbing up an oiled bamboo pole to grab special prizes on top of the bamboo pole

Figure 4.11 sees more responses and comments from the younger participants under the age of 40. The statement that this research would include with this photo was “*Does anyone know who they are?*” In less than thirty (30) minutes, one of the participants would comment first by tagging the names of which is presumed to be those pictured in the photograph, even though they were not participants of this research, they were excited to see that there is a photograph of them climbing up the bamboo pole. This shows that through social media, someone would be able to identify a photograph of an unknown person and further strengthen the notion that social media photo-elicitation is a collaborative effort.

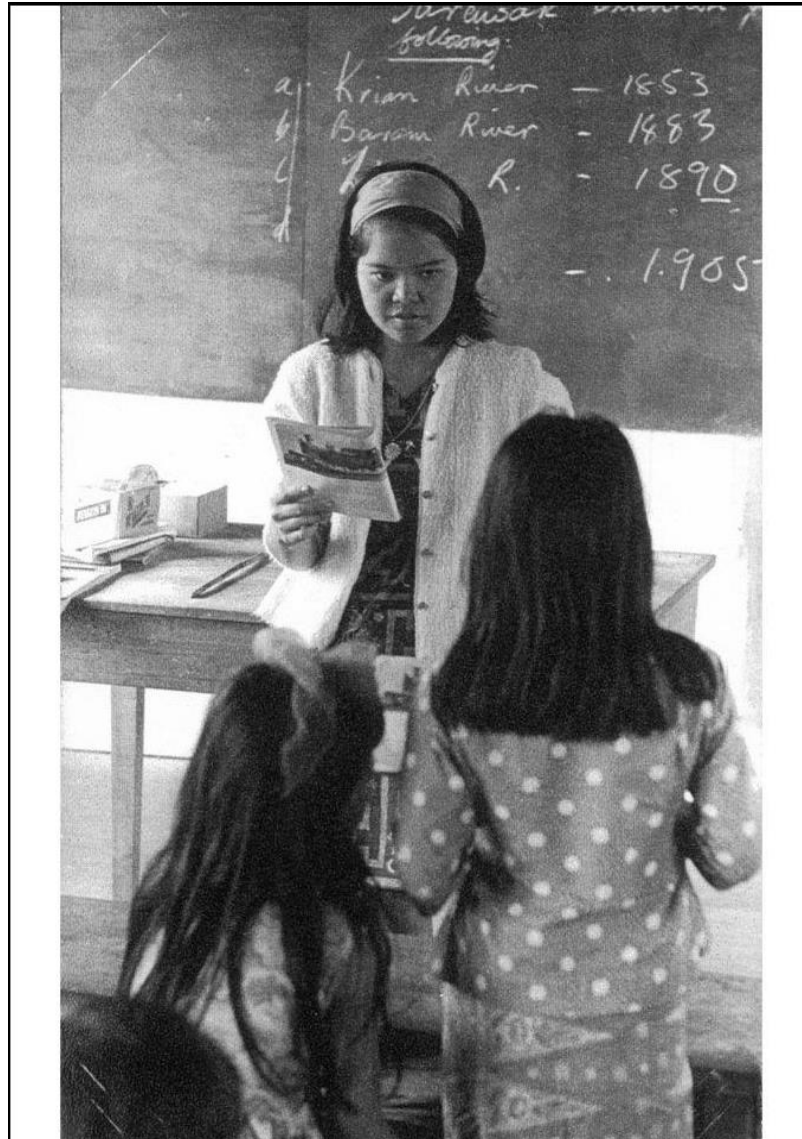


Figure 4.12: A Kelabit teacher teaching geography to her students

In an effort to test the collaborative nature of social media, this methodology proves that it is easy to invite others to find solutions in extracting information from a photograph. Figure 4.12 was posted without any statement on it and was gauged to determine how the Kelabits use social media for their advantage. Most of the participants who interacted with Figure 4.12 were those who were older than 50 years old. They quickly found out the name of the person in the photograph and tagged her husband's Facebook account onto the post.

“Who is this teacher?”

“This was Fxxxx Kxxxxx Sxxxx teaching temporarily in Bario in 1965 and 1966, I guess. Confirm with her”

“Tagged the (subject) facebook account onto the comment”

“Thanks for the pic. That was in 1966 temp teacher. Wah handwriting still same”

“Guru Fxxxx”

“Sina Kxxxxx that must be geography class. Those days we memorised the length of big rivers (laughing emoji)”

“Geography class. Nostalgia!! Some of those young children have gone on to forge successful careers and callings in their life. (biceps emoji)”

Through the interactions from Figure 4.11 and Figure 4.12, it further emphasise the presence of collective memory that relies on the “aggregated individual recollections of group members” (Olick, 1999) that suggest on the premise that only individuals can recall memories that occurs in the brain of unique individuals. The interactions of Figure 4.12 relies on the memories of individual which contributes to the collective as a whole.

4.5.2 Instagram Photo-Elicitation

Instagram photo elicitation is a potent technique for data collection and comprehending the perspectives of other people. It can be used to learn more about a range

of subjects, including social issues and consumer preferences. Researchers can better learn how people think about the topic at hand by asking them to share photographs linked to it.

When interviewed for this study, there were several participants who had a following on their Instagram account of more than 500 followers and their accounts were public. When the discussion regarding the types of photographs that were posted onto their account that was presented, out of the ten (10) participants selected, 7 of them stated that based on the amount of likes and engagements on their photos on their Instagram profile, Portraits of a Kelabit person and Landscape shots of Bario were the most popular ones. One participant claimed that his top three (3) most liked photos on his Instagram account are portraits of Kelabit ladies wearing the full Kelabit attire and also those who have the long earlobes and heavy brass earrings.

“I noticed that more Kelabits and even non-Kelabits really love my portraits that I’ve posted. Especially ones where the ladies wear the Peta headgear, those get a lot of interests. However, I must remember to add the ‘#Kelabit’ or ‘#Bario’ hashtag on it so that it is much easier to be discovered. I met a lot of new Kelabits whom I had never known through my Instagram posts”

-INS_001, 29 years old, Bario

Participants INS_001 stated that posting a lot of Kelabit and Bario related photos on his Instagram profile has helped him to get in touch with other Kelabits as well.

“I found INS_001 through Instagram just as I was also browsing around the app to look at any publicly available photographs of Kelabits or Bario through the hashtags. I found out that he was a Kelabit because of the photo of ladies wearing the Peta and so I followed him, and he followed me back. That was how we got to know each other and also collab together on new projects.”

-INS_002, 31 years old, Kuching

Other participants also mentioned the same thing on how they also found other members of the Kelabit community through Instagram.

“I’ve lived all my life in Kuching and rarely see other Kelabits my age. Through Instagram, I got to know a few others. You look around on Instagram and see someone posting a familiar landscape photos of paddy fields, and immediately you could tell its Bario. One thing led to another and other Kelabits also starts to notice you on the site”

-INS_003, 32 years old, Kuching

According to participants INS_001, he stated that many of his followers, especially younger Kelabits responds really positively to portraits of people that he had captured around Bario especially during the Bario Food Festival celebration where many walks of life he encountered and took portraits of them whether they’d be in traditional attire with full headgear and bead accessories and up to your normal daily attire. Comments and engagement on his portrait slideshow includes:

“ Plaba doo (heart emoji) (Very good) ”

“Well done kanid (cousin) , (heart eye emoji and a thumbs up)

“Missing this place (heart eye emoji) ”

“Bisak leh (So awesome) ”

“Mok balit (Want to go back) ”

When the female participants were asked regarding their choices of photos that were uploaded onto their Instagram walls on whether they curated the types and quality of

photographs that they allow themselves to upload that corresponds to the image portrayed regarding Kelabit, most of the female participants stated that they were picky about the images portrayed as compared to the male participants which covers portraits adorning the traditional attire, daily lives or landscape images of Bario. This echoes what Moewaka-Barnes (2015) found out that women are often “more attentive in ensuring that their online identities were appropriate, underlining values around self-presentation and performance in SNS”.

4.6 Exploring the methodology

Collecting data through photographs may not be a new idea however the idea itself has only been introduced for a couple of decades. Through photographs, it gave birth to visual anthropology and the continuous use of this practice to record observations amongst researchers.

When conducting the photo exhibition during the Bario Food Festival, this research encountered a slight problem during the three (3) days. The first problem was that not many of the locals came over to check the photo exhibition. Generally, I only managed to record an attendance of five(5) to seven(7)visitors per day aside from the special guests that would be scheduled to visit the museum. I initially anticipated that the number of visitors would not be much but I certainly did not expect it to be less than ten(10) per day. I presume the locals and visitors were not aware of the ongoing exhibition that was conducted in the museum. As the museum was assembled and completed much earlier in 2015, I would regard that the locals have had visited and explored the museum and its contents beforehand and

thus they do not feel the need to come over and assume that the photo exhibition were of the same contents as the rest of the museum's exhibition.

During the photo exhibition, I intentionally chose the photos for display according to the criteria that I had set. The criteria were the photo(s) needed to have either one (1) or more subject in a portrait, present in the photo as well as one that was taken that includes a group of people. Besides that, I had chosen to display several photos that depict the process of everyday life in the Kelabit Highlands as well as photos of locations that have significant attachment to the locals such as houses, villages, fields, and local nature. I did not add any additional information regarding the photos that I've placed for display. I observed that by introducing familiar photographs to the respondents, they are more likely to respond openly and casually towards the interview as mentioned by Bay and Lowderbaugh that a successful photo is one that captures part of one's everyday life (Bay and Lowderbaugh, 1979)..

This research recognizes that photo elicitation is a qualitative research method that has certain limitations and challenges, such as the subjectivity of the responses and the potential for bias in the selection and interpretation of the photographs. To mitigate these risks, this research will carefully select and frame the photographs and prompts, and will use multiple data sources and triangulation techniques to enhance the validity and reliability of the study.

Photo elicitation or photo interview is widely praised as it facilitates an interview dialogue to encourage people to talk and also serves as an icebreaker. They often take the pressure off of an interview as a third party that both the interviewer and the interviewee can engage together that lessen the need for the interviewer contact and help some interviewees feel more relaxed during the collaborative viewing of the photos. Photo elicitation interview can encourage rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee as they work together to

figure out what is depicted on the photographs as Lizardi (2016) stated that through these images, one is able to learn from the past through photographs by looking directly at the loss, learning from it, and moving on.

When analysing data from a photo elicitation interview, it involves a combination of visual and textual analysis. Here are steps as guidance when analysing the data: Firstly, by transcribing the conversation of the interviews based on the photos shown during the interview. Secondly, to identify the themes that appears during the interview based on what the participants say and what is seen on the photos. Thirdly, to identify common reoccurring theme(s) for the photos to compare across participants.

4.7 Photographs as Effective Methodological Tool

Photographs can be an effective methodological tool in anthropology, as they can provide valuable insights into the cultural practices, beliefs, and experiences of people in different societies as Schrer (1990) points out that historical photographs can be used as anthropological documents. By examining photographs, researchers can learn how people represent and interpret their social and cultural worlds. They can gain a deeper understanding of the meanings and significance of different cultural phenomena. There are several ways of using photography as an effective methodological tool. Using photos to spark dialogue and elicit reactions from participants, this study technique is known as photo elicitation. Anthropologists can investigate the meanings and interpretations that people assign to the images by posing open-ended questions about them. Another way that photographs can be used as methodological tools is through visual ethnography. Visual ethnography is a study

method in which photographs and other visual media are used to capture and analyse the culture and social practices of a specific group or community. By evaluating the images, researchers can discover how people portray and transmit their culture and identities. Another effective way of incorporating photography as an effective methodology tool is through photojournalism. Photojournalism is a type of journalism in which images are used to capture and report on current events and news. Researchers can learn about how people depict and respond to social and political concerns by evaluating photojournalistic photos.

Through this research, it was determined that photographs are very effective as a visual ethnographic tool to extract information. The data that were collected does support the basis that photo-elicitation does enhance the process during the interviews and provide a more precise set of data. The photo elicitation method is simply a distinctive method where the photos act as both an image and object that provides a visible starting point for a talk and engagement. Based on the methods that we used especially when splitting two different types of interview methods of separating the interviewees into two(2) groups of one with photographs and a traditional interview. When conducting the interview for the group without the photographs, many of the interviews were mostly slow paced and at times were not fruitful. In order to gather more data, this study introduce the photo-elicitation method towards the end of the traditional interview group further cementing the work done by Collier as he was able to prove his initial hypothesis where the materials that were obtained with photographs was precise as compared to his controlled verbal-only interviews with his subjects. Collier (1957; pg 857).

By using the photo elicitation method whether in a one-on-one interview with an informant or conducting a group session, this research was able to observe that a majority of the participants will respond more towards a familiar photograph that contains the subject(s)

that they know. When comparing to unfamiliar photographs, the respondents were not as responsive as compared to much familiar photographs even as Appleton (2011) mentioned how informal occasions such as photo-elicitation would produce new information as well as new leads for further follow ups and above all “they generated conversations and renewed interest among those present – about the past and people of the past”. In certain times during this research, some of the photographs that this study had gathered for the interviews may not invoke strong emotional connection towards the photos, but it had an opposite effect when this research reversed the method by asking the participants regarding their own personal photo collections. This further cements the statement that not only does photo elicitation is increasingly used in a variety of research, it also further the claims that photo elicitation increases the dynamic of photo interviews and can be more productive than traditional interviews as it generates very rich data that stimulates people to talk and as described by Appleton that photographs as “communication bridges between strangers”.

Parker (2009) commented that when conducting interviews using photographs, the interviewees may feel a strong connection to certain photographs and they will be encouraged to articulate how the photographs “fits with and represent their world, its historical chronology, and how they have constructed their identity, relationships and place in that particular world”. Most times during the interviews, the informants will want to share their most valuable and memorable photographs with the researcher. These photographs represent a portion of their prized memories and at most times, they bestow value to the photographs based on their own interpretation regarding the Kelabit’s history, identity and their past. Thus, during this interview stage, the participants will provide their own narrative of the photographs in which not only does this study observe the visual narration of their photographs but also the verbal or written texts that the subjects provide. In a nutshell,

photographs can evoke memories and narratives, where the photographs act as a stimuli for responses (Slim et al., 1998).

In regards to the photographs taken and displayed by the subjects, Banks (2001) asks a few questions regarding this matter, such as ‘a) why does this image exist?, b) who created it?, c) what is its biography? and d) what does it attempt to represent?’. As Rose (2000) commented regarding the meaning behind the “photographs for its original producers, subjects and its users may well be unascertainable” unless accompanied by archived related diaries, letters or notes. This will entirely leave the researcher and the interview subjects to create their own narrative regarding what the photograph intends to represent or reflect. There was an instance where the subject could reveal a portion of his account of his childhood from going through the photos.

Through photo-elicitation methods, it is generally represented under three categories: reflexive photography, auto driving, and photo novella or photo voice. Half of this research method was using the auto driving method whereby the interviews are driven by the interviewees who were discussing the photographs that they are viewing. The other half of this research method is by reflexive photography where it involves the photographs taken by the interviewees where they were subjected to a reflexive interview in which they review and reflect upon the deep meanings of the photographs they created. Through these methods, this study were able to experience and gain new information regarding any unfamiliar photos of the matter being researched. As stated by Klitzing (2004), interviewees may be attracted by the photographs, which they would be interested to participate in a discussion and could exhibit positive willingness to engage in initial and follow-up interviews. During this research, it was observed to be true as there were a few instances that the interviewees were very intrigued by the initial photographs that this research has shown and were actively

asking for more even after the first interview. When the researcher questioned them (participants) about why they were attracted to these photographs, it was because they were amazed at how ‘clear’ and nostalgic those times were.

“Doo terang ibal gaber suk ngalap ideh ngemalem. Naam men kamih inan kamera ngilad”

(The photos that they took back then were so clear. We didn’t own a camera before)

BS, 75 years old, Bario

By conducting photo interviews, this research determined that the interviews were longer and establishes an enjoyable atmosphere for the interview to carry on for the rest of the session just as Collier’s (1967) findings regarding photo-interviews being “longer and more comprehensive interviews but at the same time helped subjects overcome the fatigue and repetition of conventional interviews”. On average, the interviews would last up to 60 minutes during a one-on-one interview and up to 90 minutes during a group interview as compared to the traditional interview which may last up to 30 minutes or less an average per session and appears to be rigid and less engaging. Some of the photos that were used during the photo-interview certainly broke the ice amongst the interviewer and the interviewees as they were more comfortable with sharing their recollection of those photos. The interview sessions went on towards having delightful conversations filled with laughter and some of the interviewees even asked the interviewer to bring more photos for a subsequent session. Through this shared familiarity that was established, the interviewers were able to ask them questions regarding various topics and sensitive issues that would have been difficult to be answered (such as the previous beliefs held by the Kelabit before mass conversion to Christianity). When introducing the photo-interviews towards the end of the traditional

interview's group session, the interviewer managed to stimulate a more engaging and fruitful conversation with the participants which then prolonged the interview session where it is in line to what Collier (1957) had experienced when he conducted his own experiment with photo-interviews versus traditional interviews.

Most of the participants hold dear towards their family relations as this was apparent as most of the interviewees whenever the interviewer go over to their residence to conduct a photo-elicitation session with the photographs that they have shown on the walls or taken from their smartphones, they will show the interviewer a couple photos of their whole family that includes their parents, children and also grandchildren. When inquired about any photographs of their grandparents, some of the interviewees said that they do not have any of their grandparents. This is apparent on interviewees above the age of 40 and above. This may be due to the fact that most Kelabit families do not own any camera(s) after World War 2 ended.

“Ngilad renga kamih lak ame ngalap gaber, mesti teh kamih maya kapal temurun ame laud ngi Miri. Pengeh ineh, ame studio neh kamih ngalap gaber, inan kamih ‘dress up’ ngimat suk doo doo”

(“Back then when we wanted our photos(portrait) taken, we would need to fly out of Bario and into Miri. We would then go to the photo studio and dress up nicely wearing presentable clothes”)

BA, 73 years old, Bario

From this research by using photographs that were supplied by the interviewees, this study was able to determine how the Kelabits perceive their identities in this contemporary world. This is particularly true as when the interviewer reversed the methods during photo-

interview and went to the interviewees house at the same time managed to conduct interviews by using their photos that were on display in their living rooms as Clark-Ibanez (2004) has confirmed that this photo-elicitation technique is helpful for developing rapport with the participants which improves participants recollection during an interview. From conducting the interviews by using the interviewees photographs, this research would determine that family relations and educational achievements plays a major role in the Kelabit household. Images mostly depicting family portraits taken professionally at the studio, the union marriage of a husband and wife, and lastly educational and career achievements were displayed in the common area of the household.

4.8 Photographs As A Link To The Past and Present

A research conducted by Horn(2015) with similar methodology as this research paper, touched on the subject of visual repatriation. Visual repatriation is where copies of photographs and alternative photographic images that are held in museum or institutional collections are returned to the original site or communities of origin. Horn suggests that the term repatriation is entirely not appropriate for this particular research as it implies that the original item or object is being relocated back to its origins. Unlike photographs that were taken with film cameras, the original prints and negatives still remain with the museum or institution. As some writers apply a more inclusive definition on the term by Dobbin (2013) where the focus is less on the process of the return of the material object in which this case is the photograph, but more on reframing the process of returning the photographs in collaboration with the people that makes up the source communities.

Photographs in itself are like a time capsule. Able to capture what has happened in the past and the memories contained in it. It is then undeniable that photographs are able to

bridge the past and the present through the shared memories that are held by those who took the photo and by those who are present in the photo and the stories that were carried forward because of the photographs. In many instances, there were several historical photographs that were taken by Tom Harrison during his stay in the Kelabit Highlands. Most notably were old portraits that were of Kelabit elders with uniforms and medals which signifies that they were once a part of the special operation that played a part in liberating Sarawak from the Japanese occupation during the World War II and the Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation. Till this day, we have noticed that many of the interviewees has spoken about the involvement of their grandfather's or father's involvement:

“Tetameh kudih suk wan pingat sinih, bere ideh askar ngilad ngen neh katu iyeh lawan ideh askar Indonesia katu konfrantasi ngilad. Kadi neh kamih mada pingat nedih”
(*“This medal belonged to my father. They gave him the medal because he helped fend of the invasion of the Indonesian during the Confrontation. So we displayed his medal on his behalf”*)

Respondent MN, 55 years old, Bario

When the interviewer asked about the medals, some of them said that they would wear these medals during special events when there is a memorial service for the war efforts or when there is a special VIP coming down to Bario for a visitation.

“Kadi tetameh kudih suk wan pingat sinih, wih mesti pakai dih lipa senu'eh pemaun sapa kudih kadi wih wakil yeh. Renga wih suk wan pingat sinih, inan wih pakai dih lipa kabing sapa kudih. Nier gaber sinih iko taih, kapah tetameh kudih pakai diyeh lipa kabing”

(*“Since this medal belonged to my late father, I wore it on the right side of my front shirt as I am representing him. So if this medal belongs to me, I will wear it on my left side. You can see from this picture how my late father used to wear it on his left side.”*)

Respondent JN, 62 years old, Bario



Figure 4.13: One of the interviewee showing the keepsake from her late husband

This signifies that the Kelabit are very proud of the achievement of their family members whether it be during the previous war effort, career achievements and especially educational achievements. During a couple photo-interview sessions at multiple subjects' houses, the interviewer noticed there were many framed portraits of medal-giving ceremonies of their family members given out by the head of state, the Governor and also by Sultan(s) from other states in Malaysia. The photos also include award ceremonies given by government officers for their outstanding work performance and excellence, especially to retired government servants, school teachers, police officers and so on. Receiving a medal and passing it down as a cherished family heirloom not only symbolizes personal

achievements but also becomes an integral part of a family's oral history, preserving the stories and values associated with this distinguished honour. Appleton noted that families of her participants would often show the family keepsakes such as medals and old photographs. Besides that, there are also graduation photographs of their children and grandchildren that were framed and hung on the walls in their houses. This is evident that Kelabits valued education highly especially during the early days when the first school was built in the Kelabit Highlands. This would also highlight my research on how Kelabits view these photographs as part of the family keepsakes.

“Ngilad kamih nedcan diwah tama ngen sina ame sekulah ngi asrama. Inan kamih muit ibal nuba lem buan kadi kamih rudap lem pulung teh peruyung ngen kinanak ngen kanid kamih. Lenuan kamih neh mada dalan ngen kamih. Rayeh neh kamih, doo keli neh kamih nalan ame sekulah, doo naam tusah diwa tama sina muit kamih. Ngilad keh, renga kamih ame sekulah, naam neh cukup tenaga kerja diwah tama sina, kadi tetap tideh nuru kamih ame sekulah”

“Amo, tuuh teh belaan temabu. Ngilad, lenuan kamih sanggup nekap usin pakai bayar sekulah kamih, pengeh neh belih sapa uniform kamih. Pelaba miskin kamih ngilad, sampai naam kereb belih berus gigi”

(“Back then we had to leave our parents during the school period and lived in the school dorms. Before leaving home, we would pack food in our bags because we know it would take some of us at least a couple of days to reach the school, so we would go through the jungle with our siblings and cousins and our parents would accompany us. As we get older we could already make the journey by ourselves. Going to school meant that we would not be able to help our parents at the farm but they insist that we go to school and study”

“Yes, he is right. Our parents would try to raise the funds themselves to pay for our school fees and to buy our uniforms. My parents were so poor, we couldn't even afford to buy toothbrush.”)

TBR & TBU, 64 & 65years old, Bario

It is clearly evident that education has been an integral part of the Kelabit community since the establishment of the first school and it is reflected during this research at the interviewees houses where interviewer found not only photographs or portraits of said educational achievements but as well as certificates and school awards being displayed together with these said photographs.

If we want to know what a personal photo means to its owner or if we want to understand the significance of a photo taken by a research participant, then we'll need to engage with what the people think about their pictures. Now although some people can convey this through writing, most people would find it much easier to do this through talking. As participants respond to these photographs, it will be a starting point for both researcher and participants as there are several modes of engagement as photo interviews are complex sensory experiences as it involves sight, hearing and often touch as they generate feelings of physical sensation such as warmth or chills down their spine. Such features of interacting with these photographs involve a representation of "in the moment" of the split second when the moment during the photo was also taken. It involves an account where both researcher and participant viewing the photos that took place in time whether it may be a historical or biographical moment at the temporally specific context that shapes how the viewer of the photographs can relate to them as they engage with the photo from a vantage point of their current present time or the perceivable future. Whenever Appleton struggled to understand an explanation in Melanau, someone would take out her pen and notebook and draw her a diagram to explain where they became her teachers. As Horn (2015) noted that photo-elicitation method helps to create a safe space and comfortable environment for participants to share their stories.

4.9 Exploring the use of Photo-Elicitation in Social Media

During the period of conducting this photo-elicitation via social media, one of the outcomes from this methodology is increased engagement. Researchers can engage people more meaningfully than with typical survey methods by utilising photographs as prompts. Photos can trigger powerful emotions and recollections, leading to more meaningful conversations and deeper insights. In addition, photographs can assist in breaking down barriers between researchers and participants, allowing for more open and candid communication.

Another outcome that has risen from conducting this social media photo-elicitation is increased understanding. Photos can depict a person's experiences, beliefs, and values visually. This can aid researchers in gaining a deeper comprehension of a specific subject or topic. In addition, photographs can be used to examine the intricacies of a given issue, such as how various age groups perceive a particular subject. The social aspect of social media helps other Kelabits to get to know other Kelabits as well.

Besides that, through the use of social media photo-elicitation, this research was able to increase the accuracy of an information gathering. Photos can provide a more accurate depiction of an individual's experiences than conventional survey techniques. A survey may overlook minor nuances and features that can be captured through photographs. In addition, photographs can be used to validate the correctness of survey responses, as respondents can provide visual proof to back their answers. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook provide a rich source of visual data. Millions of users share photos every day, creating an enormous pool of visual content that can be analyzed and interpreted.

Researchers can use these photos to explore various topics and gain insight into the experiences and perspectives of social media users.

Finally, through social media photo-elicitation this study was able to determine that there was an increase in collaboration. Researchers can urge people to share their experiences and views by utilising photographs as a trigger. Participants can learn from one another and build upon one another's ideas, resulting in a more collaborative research process. Consequently, despite the fact that our method of photo elicitation has limits, it can provide a straightforward strategy that reduces the use of private and confidential information from internet sources and the logistical effort required to directly access participants' personal social media networking connections.

4.10 “The Generation of Post-Memory”

Hirsch (2012) wrote that we can remember the memories of others in which she suggested that traumatic events continue to live on and “leave a mark of the lives of those who were not there to experience them”. She states that the relationship that the generation after those who bears the personal, collective and cultural trauma of those group that came before, in which an experience they remember through images, stories and behaviours which were handed down to them as they grew up. Due to the nature of these experiences that the generation before had gone through, it was transmitted to the generation after were effectively and deeply passed on to take upon these memories as their own. Through this paper we try to ascertain whether the Kelabits has experienced these “Post-Memory” symptoms and if so, how does these “Generation of Post-Memory” respond to this in their contemporary world with the introduction of photographs during the interview.

As Hirsch (2012) idea of the “Generation of Post-Memory” started from the traumatic experiences of the Holocaust survivors and the stories that were transmitted to the generation after, however for the Kelabits, there were no extreme experiences as traumatic as the ones depicted by Hirsch. Despite that, the Kelabits experienced hardship before their mass conversion to Christianity where they were fervent animist as they worshipped spirits and observing the sight of certain animals as signs of danger or wrath of the spirits. Certain practices and rituals were considered when commencing any kinds of task which includes an important journey and starting any kinds of agricultural cultivation. As they continued to observe certain rituals and taboos, it has certainly made their lives much harder and were oppressive.

“Ngilad ken lenuan kudih, pelaba mula tusah tauh senaru kepercayaan tauh ngilad. Ngen keduwih, inan pantang ngilad renga iko nenganak ngen anak perapid. Renga decur nenganak perapid, mesti tiko nedcan adceh anak sineh. Am kereb mere ngen lemulun beken. Inan ideh nedtan neh nima anak sineh mate”

“Ngudah iko mala ‘ngen keduwih’ naah?”

“Mo, ngilad tesineh kudih mala ngen kuh, katu yeh nenganak wih ngilad, anak perapid wih ngilad. Inan kinanak perapid wih ngilad. Iko neh kele kapah taru ideh. Doo ayu teh tauh kinih pengeh tauh nedtan adat maun”

(“Based on what my late parents used to say, the old beliefs were quite troublesome for us. For my case, it was a taboo to give birth to twin children. If a woman gave birth to twin children, then one of the children will need to be abandoned. Not to even be given away but to be abandoned, and thus the child will die”

“Why did you say ‘in my case’ back then?”

“Well you see, from what my late mother told me, I used to have a twin sister. The rest is up to your imagination. Things are much better once we’ve abandoned the old ways”)

SBU, 83 years old, Bario

During the interviews, the interviewers have shown the participants photographs of dragon jars, most of them who identified the dragon jars in the photo as “to store items such as rice or *burak* (rice wine)”. When we pressed further about the *burak*, most of them had said the following:

“Sebelum tauh jadi Kristian ngilad, lun tauh percaya ngen ada. Doo pian tauh naru burak pengeh neh inan tauh ripun dih lem belanay arit naga. Wih ninger tetepuh kudih mala leng-leng kail mirup tauh ngilad. Kadi pengeh ideh masuk Kristian, udcu neh ideh mirup”

“Last time, before we all converted to Christianity, we were believers of the spirits. We used to make our own tuak and store them in these dragon jars. I heard that our grandparents and great grandparents were heavy drinkers. Of course, they stopped drinking once they had adopted Christianity.

SMT, 67 years old, Bario

This points out how memories from the previous generation have shaped how the current generation perceived the past as part of their collective memory. According to Halbwachs, this collective awareness has a significant impact on how each individual perceives the past. According to him, people typically pick up memories from society, and they also recollect, identify, and localise those experiences there (Halbwachs & Coser, [1925] 1992).

Another point of interest in respect to the “Generation of Post-Memory” and the similarities that is exhibited by the Kelabits are associated with the 1973 Bario Revival where massive numbers of Kelabits in the Kelabit Highlands experienced a spiritual religious movement that sees many Kelabits repenting for their sins as they describe it as a ‘Movement of God’ which has turn the lives of many even till present day. In an unpublished letter written by the late Dato’ Sri Joseph Balan Seling to his missionary friends, whom at

the time of the Bario Revival in 1973, he was a member of the Sarawak State Legislative Assembly and as a prominent Sidang Injil Borneo (SIB) (now known as Borneo Evangelical Mission, BEM) church leader (Bulan et.al.,2004). In his letter, he wrote:

“We have been preaching the Gospel for years and years and have seen very few people saved. [In fact] so many have gone farther away from the Lord. But in the last three weeks there have been more than one hundred saved in a very dramatic manner during services.”

-Dato’ Sri Joseph Balan Seling, 1973

As written by Bulan (2004), during the inception of the 1973 Bario Revival, he was the ISCF (Inter School Christian Fellowship) teacher for the school and witnessed the drastic change that this ‘Movement of God’ has started from his own students and spread towards the parents of those students which then also spread to other childrens and also to the rest of the villages. Teenagers and children were sharing testimonies throughout chapels across the various villages, and many had repented of their sins and asked forgiveness from God. According to Bulan (2004), lives were changed with the conviction and fear of God came upon the people. Through various testimonies, Bulan wrote that even marriages were saved during that period as well as mass reconciliation occurred amongst the people, especially families.

Penghulu Ngimat Ayu, the Kelabit chieftain at the time also reported that many cases that were brought to his native court were cancelled as the group involved in those cases were convicted by the fear of God and decided to reconcile. In another sense, many disputes were brought before the elders of the church and settled before God. Bulan also wrote that shops that sold alcoholic beverages and cigarettes soon found that they could not move these two items at all, in which Southwell (1999) noted the change in the Kelabits with their obsession with drunkenness and remnants of their old customs because of the influence from

Tom Harrisson when Southwell returned to the Kelabit Highland in 1947 in which he also found their (Kelabit) interest in Christianity were merely superficial.

During the revival period, many villagers would walk on foot for two or three hours just to attend revival meetings that comprised five (5) villages according to Bulan which would sum up to nearly 500 people that had attended.



Figure 4.14: Revival Night Meeting at the Common Gallery (tawa) of Bario Asal Longhouse. People came from the villages to the north and south of Bario, 1974

During one of the interview sessions conducted with the participants, this photo was introduced into the mix. Many of the participants that responded to this photograph were taken down to memory lane. Some of their responses were:

“Wow, keteng teh wih sekenan masa inih. Keteng teh wih sekenan ame maya diwah sina ngan tama nalan kukud maya lem pulung kira tuda jam kineh babah uyut. Inan sina babah teh kinanak kudih maya ame tebupun. Nalan neh kamih medcing ruma kadang Bario Asal, naam teh dalam semin ngilad”

“Wow this photo really brings back old memories. I used to remember following my parents on foot through the jungle for many hours carrying a basket (uyut), while my mother will carry my sister on her back just to attend prayer meetings. We would walk all the way to Bario Asal longhouse. There were no roads back then”

-TBS, 67 years old

“Amo, tuuh tinah, abi-abi kamih ame nange. Naam diwah tama sina lak kamih mudeng ngi ruma. Semuit kamih teh kanid kamih ame sembayang, madi tideh ngilad”

(“Yes, everybody had to go. None of our parents would let us stay at home. Even my younger cousins would go to these meeting”)

- SBS, 64 years old

“That is a lot of people for a night prayer meeting. How would you all go back home in the dark?”

- Interviewer

“Masa kebangkitan rohani ngilad, temiceh naam kamih muli ruma kadi kamih sembayang medcing lekacang. Mirat idang keh dih teh kamih nalan kukud muli ruma”

(“We don’t even go back at night because sometimes these prayer meetings during the revival would go on till the next morning. By the daytime we would start walking back home”)

- SBR, 70 years old

Many of the younger participants knew about the Bario Revival and knew details that happened during the early days that started the movement. In respect to the traumatic and burdensome nature of the previous belief system of the Kelabits before accepting Christianity, through listening and inheriting stories of the past especially the Bario Revival, there is a greater sense of historical awareness among younger generations. Younger

generations can better understand the events that affected the lives of their parents and grandparents by being exposed to the stories of their family's experiences. This may result in a deeper grasp of their environment and a greater appreciation for the struggles and supernatural experiences of the generation before. In fact, all of the participants that were younger than 40 years old has deemed that the 1973 Bario Revival to be a pivotal moment in the Kelabit's history and when probed about it, most of the younger participants said that they grew up hearing stories and testimonies directly from their grandparents or parents whom went through the Bario Revival period. Growing up, these younger Kelabits were taught by their predecessors about Christianity and were brought up as Christians as even some Christianity celebrations were incorporated into their lives such as Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Christmas. This is because unlike the Dayaks and the Gawai celebration, the Kelabits do not have a celebration for their harvesting season.

Even as Hirsch depicts trauma as a trigger towards bringing forth this generation of post-memory, this also allows a stronger sense of empathy to be present as the result of post-memory. Younger generations can better understand other people's pain and develop a deeper appreciation for the challenges of those who came before them by hearing the stories of their family's experiences. As a result, one may feel more sympathy and understanding for people who have gone through comparable hardships. A younger participants stated:

"It must have been very hard for the folks back then before accepting Christianity. The stories I've heard from my grandparents regarding the olden days were not pleasant. I am glad that we as Kelabit have progressed so much compared to back then. Lives are much easier now"

-JB, 35 years old, Bario

From listening to the stories and supernatural stories that had occurred during the Barrio Revival by their parents and grandparents generation, a stronger sense of identity may result from post-memory. Younger generations can better comprehend their own identities and the identities of their families by hearing the stories of their forefathers' experiences. This may result in a deeper awareness of their own history and culture as well as a stronger appreciation for their own heritage and culture. The use of photo elicitation to explore the concept of post-memory highlights the potential of photography as a tool for evoking and exploring memories of traumatic events. It can create a safe and comfortable environment for individuals to share their experiences and emotions, and can provide a tangible reference point for discussion. Photo elicitation can also provide valuable insights for researchers, helping to create a more nuanced understanding of family or collective history.

In conclusion, the concept of "Generation of Post-Memory", as proposed by Hirsch, highlights the ways in which traumatic events experienced by previous generations can affect subsequent generations. Photo elicitation provides a valuable tool for exploring these memories and understanding how individuals relate to their family or collective history. Through the use of photos, individuals can evoke and share their memories and emotions, and researchers can gain valuable insights into the impact of traumatic events on subsequent generations.

4.11 Photographs as Collective Mediated Recollections in Kelabit Contemporary World

Photographs are an effective medium for recording and keeping memories. They are a collectively mediated recollection that enables us to recall and share prior events. Photographs can be used to record significant events, capture memorable moments, and create enduring memories.

Photographs serve as a collectively mediated memory in the first place by offering a visual record of past events. Graduations, weddings, and even historical events are just a few of the significant events that can be captured in photographs. Additionally, they can be used to capture regular experiences, such as family mealtime and vacations. By seeing these images, we are able to recall the event's specifics and the feelings felt at the time.

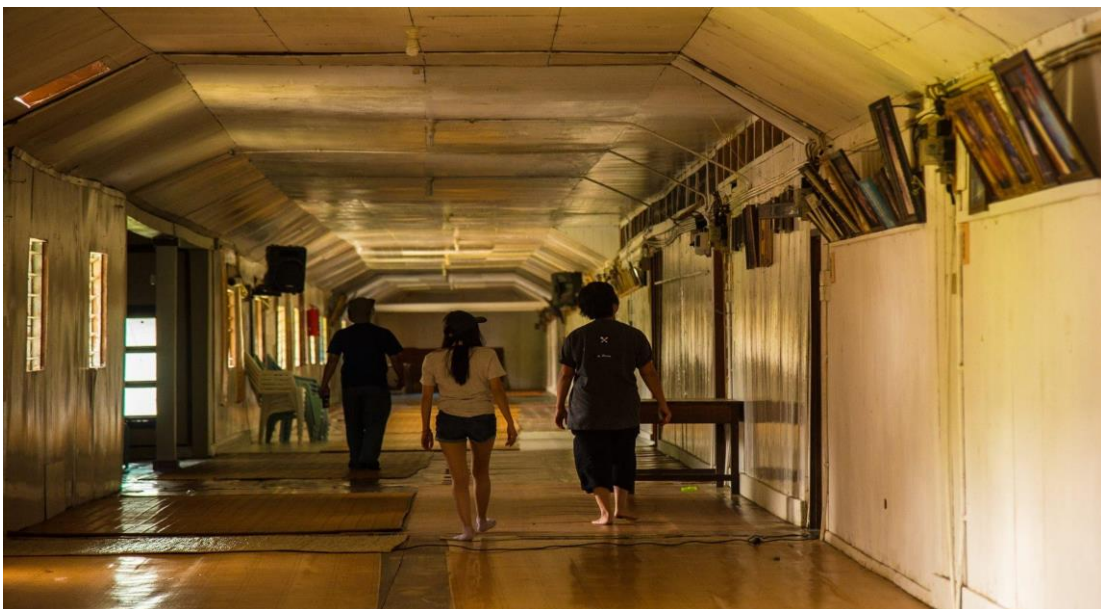


Figure 4.15: The Common Gallery of the Bario Asal Longhouse in the mid 2000. Besides for public meetings and gatherings, the wall are now lined with photographs of portraits and families in the longhouse.

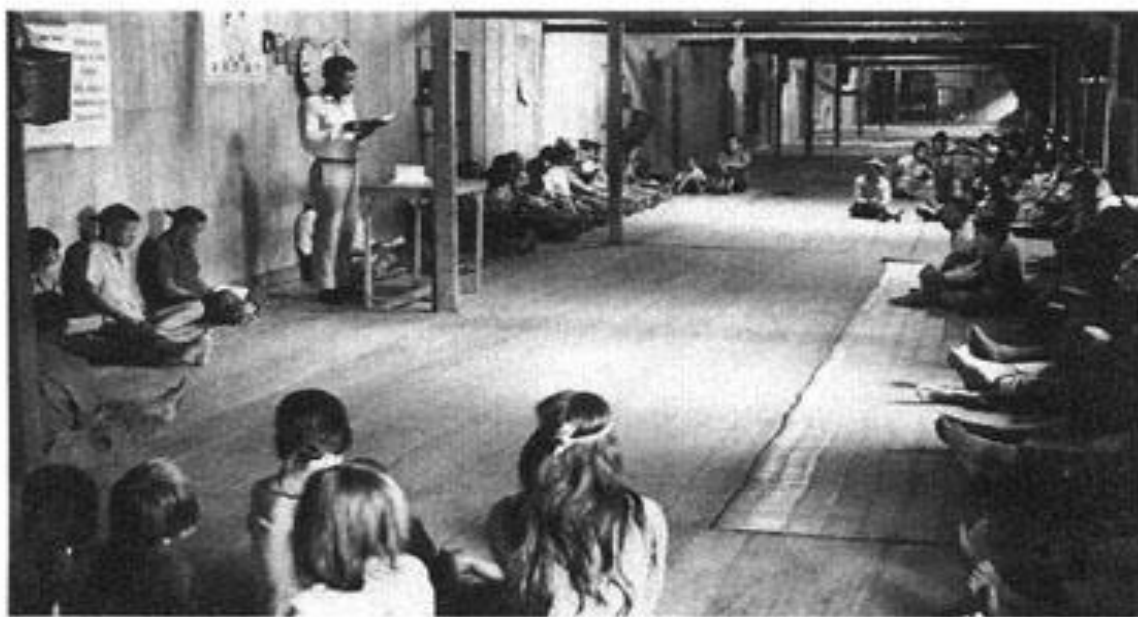


Figure 4.16: Historical Photograph of the Common Gallery (*Tawa'*) of the Bario Asal Longhouse in 1960's. The space is used for public meetings and gatherings. Unlike Figure 5.3: The gallery wall is without photographs

Horn found that photographs play a crucial role in facilitating the transmission of cultural practices and values in the Kelabit community. They serve as a visual record of important events, such as weddings and festivals, and provide a means of documenting the changing social and cultural landscape. Photographs also serve as a means of connecting the past and present, allowing younger generations to gain insight into their family and community history. In this way, photographs serve as collective mediated recollections, providing a tangible reference point for individuals to reflect on their past and present. Over the years as more visitors go to Bario, many of these visitors came with their cameras to capture the moments that they experience. Photos had become a way to relive the moment and to remember the memories that they captured. Bario and its people had become a part of these visitors' memories, especially through photographs. This is the same for the Kelabits who live there. Back then, having their photos taken was considered a rare occasion as not

many could afford to own a camera, let alone on how to operate one. Many would consider having their portrait photos taken to be a luxury and even if they want one, they have to go to a photo studio in the urban towns such as Marudi or Miri to get one which means taking a 45 minute flight out.

In its essence, photography is considered one of the ultimate tools in capturing a moment and its surroundings as evidence with a realistic approach. Just being able to remember things of the past has a significant impact on how we remember them. This is relevant today in the lives of the Kelabits as remnants of the second world war is still visible in the surrounding area, albeit those remnants are being swallowed by the elements, some of the old photographs from the war serves as a reminder of the involvement of the Kelabits in aiding the war efforts where history is being reinforced with visual evidence and goes further as compared to oral tradition.

Some of the older photographs were taken by explorers, researchers, and missionaries. As years goes by, some of the Kelabit will go on to take pictures of their own from their own cameras. Through photographs, one can even experience the feeling of nostalgia whenever we see photographs from the past. Some of these photos include a portrait of themselves or their loved ones whether they are still alive or have long passed away. It portrayed how the people used to dress themselves whether it be for leisure or formally, social and communal activities and the landscape of an area that is familiar to them. Photographs also record significant social and family events. Through these old photographs, many Kelabit today reminisce about the old days as they recall the memories of when they were younger. Robert Bellah has suggested that true communities are communities of memory, and that these communities of memory create constitutional narratives that are recounted and retold in such

a way that the individual and communal identities of group members are inextricably intertwined.

Photos serve as a collectively mediated remembrance by allowing us to share our recollections with others. Photographs can be utilised to communicate stories and experiences with family and friends. They can be used to create shareable photo albums, slideshows, and photo books. This enables us to share our memories with people who were not present at the time, allowing them to indirectly experience the event. This is essentially true when presented with the option to upload those photographs onto social media, which indirectly serve as a photo sharing platform for others to experience.

Clear blue skies, golden fields of paddy, the beautifully abstract colours of the traditional clothing gears, tall strong mountain range as far as the eye can see; this will definitely tickle the curiosity of any traveller looking for a new experience. Vibrant traditional clothing, alluring traditional folk dance, mesmerising smiles and unique culture certainly captures the heart of many photographers. Bario is indeed a picturesque location in the northeast of Sarawak as it is one of the highest settlements in the state, where the skies appear much bluer than the coastal urban cities. Bario was dubbed the ‘Land of a thousand handshakes’ by several adventuring bloggers and is actually being heavily promoted by the state tourism ministry (Sarawak Tourism Board) as part of Sarawak’s ecotourism and cultural tourism destination which has collectively painted the Kelabit in this light. Aldis (2020) points out that we cannot talk of the collective without individual memories, and we cannot speak of individual memory without the vast influences of community and environment, we cannot speak of the collective without individual memories. Since an infinite number of social and neurological networks are continually interacting, it is

impossible to examine memory in its entirety without analysing the person, the context, and the group.

Photographs serve as a collectively mediated recollection by preserving memories for future generations. Photographs can be used to build a visual chronology of our lives, enabling us to recall significant occasions. Additionally, they can be utilised to establish family histories, allowing us to share our tales with future generations. Similarly, another study by Schiffer and Horn (2015) explored the role of photographs in the Kelabit community as a means of preserving cultural heritage and identity. The study found that photographs serve as a medium for transmitting cultural practices, such as traditional dances and rituals, and provide a means of fostering a sense of community and shared identity. Photographs also help to create a sense of continuity between past and present, allowing individuals to maintain a connection to their cultural heritage and identity.

Photographs that are aesthetically pleasing to the eyes will definitely capture the attention of the viewer as even the state's tourism board included beautiful photographs to promote the Kelabit Highlands. As the folks in Bario are moving their economy towards ecotourism, many of the guesthouses and homestay owners use stunning photos as part of their marketing strategy to attract visitors. It is evident that one can see the beauty that the Kelabits experience through photographs, yet at the same time one can also see these images may convey the challenges that the community face.

The use of photographs as collective mediated recollections in the Kelabit community highlights the power of visual media as a means of transmitting cultural practices and values. It also underscores the importance of preserving cultural heritage and identity in the face of changing social and cultural landscapes. Through the use of photographs, the

Kelabit community is able to maintain a connection to its past and present, while also fostering a sense of community and shared identity.

In conclusion, photographs serve as collective mediated recollections in the Kelabit contemporary world, playing a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage and identity, and facilitating the transmission of cultural practices and values. Through photographs, the Kelabit community is able to connect the past and present, providing a tangible reference point for individuals to reflect on their family and community history. The use of photographs in the Kelabit community highlights the power of visual media as a means of transmitting cultural practices and values, and underscores the importance of preserving cultural heritage and identity in the face of changing social and cultural landscapes.

4.12 Weaknesses of Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation is a qualitative research technique that employs photographs to encourage participant discourse and elicit information. It is a valuable instrument for academics who wish to investigate the meanings and interpretations that individuals attach to images. Although praised for its effectiveness in collecting data, photo elicitation also has its flaws.

The primary shortcoming of picture elicitation is that the data can be difficult to comprehend. Photos are susceptible to interpretation, and it can be challenging to draw meaningful insights from participant answers. In addition, the researcher must take care that the photographs utilised are not skewed or deceptive in any manner. When using researcher-produced photographs, it is essential to consider the potential biases or limitations that may be introduced by the researcher's selection and classification of the photographs. For

example, the researcher's perspective and experiences may influence the way the photographs are selected and classified, which could impact the study results. Additionally, participants may interpret the photographs differently than the researcher intended, which could also affect the results.

One disadvantage of picture elicitation is that it can be time-consuming. The researcher must select relevant photographs and then spend time with participants discussing and analysing their responses. In addition, the process of analysing photo elicitation data can be time-consuming, as researchers must carefully review photographs and transcripts to identify patterns and themes where the researcher must be willing to devote time to data analysis and formulating relevant conclusions.

It can be challenging to recruit participants via photo elicitation. Participants may be hesitant to engage in a study including photographs, thus the researcher must devote time and effort in participant recruitment. In addition, the researcher must guarantee that the study participants are representative of the population being studied.

In a photo interview, there is a tendency to assume that photos enhance interviews, however not all photos can get people talking. The photographs that get people talking seems to be the photos that are relevant to the participants or otherwise meaningful which includes personal photos. Researchers can employ a variety of techniques to reduce these possible biases and limitations. To provide a more thorough and nuanced understanding of the studied phenomena, one strategy is to triangulate the data with other sources, such as interviews or surveys. Focus groups and qualitative interviews are just two examples of the various data collection techniques that researchers can use to compile a variety of viewpoints on the images. The method used to choose and categorise the images for the research study must also be disclosed by researchers. This can make the findings easier for others to comprehend

and evaluate, which can assist in establishing the research's credibility. Researchers can increase the acceptance of their results and help to improve the body of knowledge in their field by being open and upfront about the research process.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will conclude the findings from this research and the analysis that has been discussed. It will answer the research questions and determine whether the research objective has been fulfilled. This chapter also will touch upon the limitations and include a recommendation for future photo-elicitation research based on the findings from this research as to determine whether photography can be used as a methodological tool while also serving as a window into the past. Even as this research touch upon the subject of ‘Generation of Post-Memory’, this research will contribute towards the exploration of the concept in Sarawak for the future research of similar nature based on a local setting.

5.2 Summary of Research

Firstly, this research seeks to determine in what ways historical photographs can play significant roles in forming collective mediated recollections in the contemporary world. This is particularly on anthropological knowledge of the past, memory and identity. This raises questions: what ways can photographs link the past and the present? How photographs of the past shape the anthropological understanding about issues such as history, identity and the past in the context of a changing social world. With introduction to past studies and current research related to the subject, this study will introduce the concept of collective past and visual culture as well as to the concept of ‘Generation of Post Memory’.

In photo elicitation research, the researcher is responsible for selecting the photographs that will be used in the study and for developing a system for classifying them in a way that allows for the creation of textual data. This classification system can be based on various factors, including theoretical assumptions, research hypotheses, or even the researcher's own intuitions about the world or the participants' experiences. Through the use of photo-elicitation in this research together as a methodology during the interviews with the participants during a private one-on-one session, a group session, as well as a photo exhibition session and the execution of the photo-elicitation via social media. This study also identified certain restrictions and difficulties related to using images in research. For instance, it was found that subjectivity and personal bias can affect the choice and interpretation of photographs, and that the participants' environment and cultural background might affect the images' relevance and meaning. These problems show the necessity for caution and reflection when using photo elicitation techniques and the value of triangulating data from different sources to reduce the danger of bias.

Several directions for more research on photo elicitation and related subjects are recommended in light of the findings. Future research may, for instance, look at how context and cultural differences affect the meaning and importance of images, or it could look at how photo elicitation is used with various age groups and cultural contexts. Research might also look into how images might help with cross-cultural interaction and understanding, or how they can encourage activism and social change. When gauged towards this research in determining the effectiveness of photography as a methodological tool, it is indeed effective in acquiring information from subjects when paired with familiar images during said interviews. Even when conducting a traditional interview, the use of photography is effective in stimulating the participants to extract more information, especially ethnographic data.

Photography is an effective bridge to link the past with the present by allowing the participants to carry the conversation with the researchers.

Even as Hirsch (2012) initially introduced the concept of ‘The Generation of Post-Memory’ with trauma as the trigger, from this research it was determined that the opposite can also be true for the Kelabits. As the events that happened during the period of the 1973 Barrio Revival occurred for the older generations of Kelabits, the younger ones also took upon that experiences as their own. A significant event by the Kelabits even till today, the positive impact of the phenomena has clearly been the highlight of the whole Kelabit community.

5.3 Contribution of Research

This research determines whether photography can be an effective methodological tool to extract information and through the extensive utilisation of photo-elicitation, this research was able to determine that photography indeed stimulates the extraction of data and information compared to traditional interviews. When linking the past and the present, photography has been used to document and preserve a record of significant historical events and cultural traditions, giving a means of understanding and learning about the past. By analysing images from various historical periods, we can obtain a deeper knowledge of the changes and continuities that have shaped the world in which we live today. By using photographs to stimulate discussion and reflection, the participants were able to explore their personal and collective histories in a way that allowed them to connect with the present. This helped to highlight the ways in which the past continues to shape the present, and to provide insights into the ways in which individuals and communities navigate these connections.

Giving a window into the daily lives and experiences of people in the past: Photography can give a peek into people's daily lives and experiences, giving insight into their memories, histories and identities. We can discover information about how people lived and interacted with their surroundings in the past by looking at images from various eras. Even as the trigger for a 'Generation of Post-Memory' is different compared to what this research has found, it is still evident that memories and experiences from the previous generation can be transmitted to the next generation and thus be open for the next generation for interpretation. This is true that even as trauma, histories and culture of the previous generation can be handed down through oral stories, cultural artefacts and even photographs. This is the first instance of photo-elicitation being employed within the Kelabit community, especially in the context of transmitting history intergenerationally and linking oral history to its contemporary societal significance. This research also determines that even as the Kelabits goes through the passage of time, this concept observes how the past shape their histories, memories and identities onto the next generation. One of the key contributions of this research study was its ability to generate post-memory among the participants. Post-memory refers to the ways in which the memories and experiences of previous generations continue to shape the identities and experiences of subsequent generations. Through the use of photo elicitation, the participants were able to connect with their personal and collective histories in a way that allowed them to develop a deeper understanding of the ways in which these histories continue to shape their identities and experiences.

Overall, this research study provides important insights into the potential of photo elicitation as a tool for bridging the past and present, and for generating post-memory. By using photographs to stimulate discussion and reflection, researchers can obtain rich and nuanced data about the experiences and perspectives of individuals and communities in

relation to their personal and collective histories. This can help to deepen our understanding of how the past shapes the present, and to provide insights into the ways in which individuals and communities make sense of their histories. Moving forward, it is important for researchers to continue to explore the potential of photo elicitation as a tool for understanding the complex interplay between the past, present, and future.

This study encourages researchers to keep finding better ways to use photos in their studies. It suggests that scholars should keep improving and adjusting how they use pictures to gather information in various situations and for different research goals. By doing this, researchers can not only make progress in how they gather data but also gain a better overall understanding of how people create, remember, and pass down memories through generations. This effort to improve research methods doesn't just involve technical changes; it opens the door to discovering more about the complex connections between memory, culture, and the stories that shape our experiences over the years.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the research on this topic, there are some recommendations for any researchers who would like to incorporate the use of photographs into their research. Based on the literature review, sometimes the researcher may have biases in choosing photographs for the interviews. Choosing the right photographs for the interview are very important and thus having a theme for what kind of photographs would help in the initial stage of choosing. Standardize the process of selecting and preparing photographs: Researchers should establish clear and standardized procedures for selecting and preparing photographs to be used in photo elicitation research. This can include guidelines for photograph selection, preparation, and distribution to participants. When the photographs prepared by the

researchers may not seem to be effective, do not be afraid to conduct photo-elicitation on the photographs from the participants and reincorporate back the photograph supplied by the researcher back into the interview.

Next is to develop training for participants and researchers: Researchers should provide training to both participants and researchers on the use of photo elicitation. This can include training on how to take and interpret photographs, as well as guidelines for ethical and respectful use of personal photographs. Consider the context and population: Researchers should carefully consider the context and population when deciding whether to use photo elicitation. This can include factors such as the availability and familiarity of photographs, cultural norms around photography, and the potential for discomfort or trauma related to personal photographs.

It is also important to select a wide range of participants for the interview as the more diverse the subjects are, the more diverse and interesting the set of data. Consider the age, background and gender of said participants when incorporating them into the mix. Be mindful of the participants' privacy and when conducting the photo interviews, be wary of touching sensitive topics as sometimes participants may be unable to move forward from said topic which could slow down the interviewing process.

Finally, document the process and analysis: Researchers should carefully document the process of selecting, preparing, and analysing photographs, as well as the interpretations and themes that emerge from the data. This can help to ensure the rigor and transparency of the research.

5.5 Conclusion

Through this research, the three (3) main objectives has been fulfilled in evaluating the effectiveness of historical photographs as methodological tool to extract data, while determining that photographs does indeed able to bridge the past and the present while at the same time proving that the Kelabits does indeed exhibit symptoms of ‘The Generation of Post-Memory’.

This research explores the methodology of utilising photo-elicitation through various interviews and also through the use of social media elicitation. This research further proves the effectiveness of photo-elicitation through various age groups and through multiple types of interactions. This research studied common themes that appeared through the contemporary life of the Kelabit and their memories and identities.

This research also further solidifies the role photography has in extracting data through multiple channels that are effective in stimulating information from subjects as compared to traditional interviews. Through the use of photo elicitation, this research has provided important insights into the ways in which individuals and communities bridge the past and present in their everyday lives. By exploring personal and historical photographs, the participants were able to connect with their personal and collective histories, and to reflect on the ways in which these histories continue to shape their identities and experiences. While photo elicitation has some limitations and weaknesses, its benefits in terms of participant engagement and data richness make it a valuable tool for bridging the past and present in qualitative research. By combining the use of photographs with other data collection techniques, such as interviews and observation, researchers can obtain a more complete understanding of the complex phenomena under study. Moving forward, it is important for researchers to continue to explore the potential of photo elicitation as a tool

for bridging the past and present. This includes developing standardized procedures for selecting and preparing photographs, providing training to participants and researchers, and carefully documenting the process of data collection and analysis. By doing so, researchers can ensure the rigor and transparency of their research, and maximize the potential benefits of photo elicitation for understanding complex phenomena.

In conclusion, this photo elicitation research has provided valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of the participants. By using photographs as a means of stimulating discussion and reflection, the research was able to capture rich and nuanced data that would not have been possible through other data collection techniques. The use of photo elicitation allowed the participants to express themselves in a more holistic and creative way, which helped to deepen the understanding of the research topic. While the technique has some limitations and weaknesses, its benefits in terms of participant engagement and data richness make it a valuable tool in qualitative research. Overall, this research highlights the importance of considering alternative data collection techniques, such as photo elicitation, in order to capture a more complete understanding of complex phenomena. Photography in an essence is a substantial portion of the shift towards professional fieldwork practices was driven by the intention to record lifestyles that were undergoing swift changes or facing the risk of disappearance (Atkinson, 2001).

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APPENDIX

1.0 Photo Elicitation Interview Guide

	Introduction: Welcome and Introduction: Begin with a warm welcome and a brief introduction to the photo elicitation interview. Explain the purpose of the study and the role of the participant in providing insights through both words and images.
	Informed Consent: Reiterate the voluntary nature of participation and ensure that the participant has given informed consent for the interview and the use of photographs.
	Photo Selection: Ask the participant to choose a set of photographs that represent meaningful aspects of their experiences. Reasons for Photo Selection: Explore the reasons behind the participant's choice of each photograph. Ask them to briefly explain why each image is significant to them
	Photo Description: Ask the participant to provide a detailed description of each photograph. Encourage them to discuss the visual elements, composition, and any specific details that stand out to them.
	Emotional Responses: Inquire about the emotions or feelings evoked by each photograph. Prompt the participant to reflect on their emotional responses and how these relate to their experiences.
	Narrative and Context: Invite the participant to share any stories or narratives associated with the selected photographs. Encourage a narrative exploration of the events, people, or places depicted in the images.

	Seek additional contextual information related to the photographs. Explore the time, place, and circumstances surrounding the captured moments.
	Personal Significance: Ask the participant to discuss the personal significance of the photographs in the broader context of their life or experiences.
	Open-Ended Questions: Conclude the interview with open-ended questions, allowing the participant to share any additional thoughts or reflections.
	Closing: Thank You and Debrief: Express gratitude for the participant's time and contribution. Offer a debriefing session, addressing any emotional reactions that may have arisen during the interview.