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Modernization, Malay Matrimonial Foodways and the Community Social Bonding

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***Abstract*—**Solidarity and kinship has long been an intangible emblem to Malay community especially in the rural area. It is visibly seen through the dependability among each unit of the community either in religious and social events including the matrimonial or wedding. Nevertheless, the inevitable phenomenon, modernization legitimately alters every facets of human life not only the routines, traditions, rituals, norms but also to the daily activities and the specific occasion. Using triangulation approach of interview and self completed questionnaire this study empirically examine the level of alteration of Malays wedding foodways which relate to the preparation and consumption of it and its impact on the community social bonding. Some meaningful insights were obtained whereby modernization through technology (modern equipments) and social factors (education, migration, and high disposal income) significantly contribute to the alteration of wedding foodways from preparation up to consumption stages. The domino effect of this alteration consequently leads to the fragility of social kinship or somehow reduced cohesiveness and interaction among the individual of Malay society in the rural area.

***Keywords*—**Modernization, Malay, Matrimonial, Foodways, Social Bonding

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I. Introduction

NOT too much to say that matrimony or wedding is one of the most important religion and social cultures practices for almost all nations in the world. It is a ceremony in which two individual (male and female) are united through legal action or institution called marriage. It involved processes and bringing a number of meanings that significant to human relationship [50]. Weddings are influences by both culture and religion and vary greatly between ethnic groups, countries and social classes [1, 16] and it is a special occasion in the live of network of people and community which being treated as an important event for those who invested money, time, and energy in it [14]. Kalmijn [22] posited that matrimony is more than just a simplistic expression of happiness that newlyweds and their families feel about the marriage but also serves as to socialize the bride and groom and their new roles as married couples. Not only that matrimony has given significant values and meaning in the life of individual as well as in a social context in any ethnic culture. It is one of the most important social culture practices which incorporate ritual aspect of thanking relatives and friends through the festive [53] therefore plays a vital role in transferring culture and civilization from one generation to another in a society [14]. In short, matrimony is a rite of passage which acts as a role enforcer in a series of events. The series of events include the wedding parties, ceremonies or receptions and the nature of this continuum reflects the degree to which the social circles of brides and groom are involved in the marriage transition [22]. Despite this, traditions, ceremonies and rituals are differed according to religious belief, nations and location [2]. In line with the above notion, Malaysia as a multicultural and multiracial country without doubt has its own way in conducting this special social cultural practice. Ethnic groups like Malays, Indian, Chinese, Kadazan, Iban and others despite sharing fundamental needs (education, economy etc) are free to practice their own religion and matrimonial events. Matrimony in fact is one of the important social events for every ethnic in this country. Malay as major ethnic in Malaysia is considered of having an elaborate customs and traditions of matrimony in every step of the processes from planning stage to the actual wedding day. Quah [40] argue being much imbued with religion, traditions and customs, the Malay matrimony processes in general encompasses four main stages from planning, pre-wedding, to the wedding day and the post wedding. In other words, it involved in elaborated series of events from *merisik* (literally spying the future bride or the representatives of the male family pays a social visit to female house inquiring on the availability of the future bride) comes to *pertunangan* (betrothal or engagement), followed by *kenduri* (wedding day which involved the *akad nikah* (solemnization), *bersanding* (seat on the dais) *makan beradab bersama pengantin* (wedding feast with bride and groom) and *kenduri balas* (wedding feast at groom house) [23]. These seven main stages are important in making sure the marriage and wedding are the successful one. It is important to note that for whatever stages, food is undeniable virtually ever present and Abdullah [1] noted that since the olden days, it cannot be separated and remains as social component that occupy a central position in the Malay wedding. The most prominent Malay practices can be observed through the matrimonial ceremonies which involved the preparations, cooking, serving and the consumption of food or known as foodways and it is considered as a communal affair particularly in the village or *kampong* when individuals of community contributes their time and energy in helping the wedding host [32]. This is involved all sort of activities from cooking to serving food to the guests. The combination this religion and social practices

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have proven to be successfully draw community togetherness and integration. Sani [46] contended wedding foodways has long been recognized as the integrative force that enhances solidarity and alliances between individuals and kin groups. The involvement of neighborhoods regardless age, gender and status for wedding foodways (preparation to consumption) draw the community togetherness and integration among them [41]. It also acts as a bonding mechanism not only for the family as well among the community [1]. The practices of Malay wedding foodways nevertheless are believed to have perpetually altered due to the waves of modernization. From sociological perspective, modernization symbolizes advancement, the evolution of a community and society [6, 24, 34]. Moon [34] argues modernization involve societies which innovate and utilize the present and old knowledge, patterns, techniques and resources in all area of activities. In this sense, the preparation and cooking of Malays wedding food which are normally done in *gotong royong* (togetherness manner) are believed to be gradually altered [1]. Mohd Zahari et. al [33] demonstrated that alterations occur in the Malay wedding foodways practices in the urban area. Modernization through the changes in socio-economics, lifestyle and community culture moderates the alteration not only in the preparation, cooking but also the serving and eating decorum of Malay wedding in the urban area. The local regulation, limited space, the emergence of modern equipments and the urban living also contributes to the alteration. Wedding foods are now being served as a buffet-style by arranging food in the chafing dishes on a long table or sideboard in which guests help themselves. In addition, instead of wedding host house, town community and hotel banquet halls are also becoming options to hold the wedding reception. This scenario raises critical questions whether the same phenomenon occurs in the rural area. With that this study is to uncover the issues by looking at; 1) the perception of the wedding planner on Malay wedding foodways in the rural area; 2) the alteration of Malay matrimonial foodways; 3) the causes of alteration in Malay Matrimonial Foodways and 4). the impact of alteration of wedding foodways on community social bonding (kinship)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Foodways as Social Bonding, Symbolism and Culture Knowledge Transmitter

Principally, foodways is a combination of two words which are 'food' and 'ways' which is refers to the way how food is prepared, served and consumed by human. Vast definitions of foodways have been given by theorists and scholars but the precision of the term is yet not near to consensus**.** Merriam-Webster dictionary defines foodways as eating habits and culinary practices of peoples, regions or historical periods. Many associate it as an act or behaviors which involved the preparation, presentation and consumption of food that are characterized by individuals and society [57, 19, 15, 10, 18, 59]. Counihan and Esterik [8] contended that the central role of foodways in humans' daily life and culture is far beyond an exploration of cooking and consumption. Foodways is one of the "insignificant techniques of the body" and as such have the capacity to mark distinction between peoples and groups. Rearick [42] asserted different peoples from different place with different cultures will perform different food preparation and consumption pattern which reflect the characteristic of their culture. Foodways perform as a point of and for social contact [42]. Counihan and Esterik [8] noted that "food touches everything in life: it…strengthens social bonds" and the preparation, serving, and the eating of foods often times supplies a space for interaction or it opens up lines of communication and this elements of foodways have the ability to create bonds between family members and friends. Lewis [27] for instance asserted that 'rich family' has capacity to spend money in the restaurant while 'poor family' had no choice but to purchase ingredients for a home-cooked meal. As a result, the former will have the meal in silence while the latter cooks and eats together in a jovial family dinner. In this sense, O'Connor [39] expounded the possibility of family structure being developed based on parents shared foods with their offspring. Food and its practices (foodways) bring families and oftentimes not only act as a type of communication mechanism but metaphorically functions as glue that binds individual in family together through sharing of it, enjoying each other's company keeping familial ties strong [12] and even binds people together in many part of the world [13].Lentz [26] in Debevec & Tivadar [12] study added social class and its association such as income and educational level remain important in determining food preferences and practices. They depicted how food associates to social class and how one foreign food is transformed into local food as they explain:

> *"A new food item is first adopted by the highest level of society to set off their wealth and prestige, is then incorporated into highly valued special- occasion meals by the lower classes, and is finally popularized and consumed as part of the daily diet. Once an originally 'foreign' food item has been through this process and become accepted as a 'local' food, the question of its origin is no longer important and its consumption becomes something rather ordinary."(page 12)*

They also posited that food through it preparation and consumption is one of the mechanisms of connection in people's daily life. They state that;

> *"A proper meal is ... prepared and taken according to strict unwritten culinary and behavioral rules, ... put into two groups: a) the structure of the eating event (the items of which it is composed, cooking techniques, the combination of flavors, foodstuffs, the sequence of dishes eaten); and b) its adequate social relationships (with whom food is eaten, who has cooked and prepared it, table manners, etc" (page 6)*

Lewis [27] asserted "food and it practices… *through words 'we are what we eat*' culturally bond the individual to

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individual and individual to society" and a key role in human socialization [25] and the social bond depends on how close the integration among the society. In other word, the more interaction occurs within the social group the bonds will becomes stronger**.** This can especially be seen in grand and special occasions whereby food and it foodaways has more impact to the society. Muhammad et al [35] noted in the olden days food and foodways in a certain festivals creating the opportunities in building the relationship, togetherness and the interaction among individuals within a social group and the bonds was so strong.Conner & Armitage [7] posited food and its preparation and consumption (foodways) not only determine the social differentiation but also portraying the identity. Rearick [42] affirmed that some elements of food preparation and consumption are the visible symbols or badges of identity and further explains the identity expressed through these elements are pushed to the front by peoples who believe their culture need to be preserved. Wallace & Wolf [55] in general defined symbol is more than just a gesture or sign but the act of human being or all individual member of one society or social group. Crotty & Germov [9] demystified food through it preparation and consumption symbolize and mark the class structure of individual or society as different classes of society used food as a symbolic way to differentiate themselves through appreciation of etiquette and aesthetic factors. In this sense, the wealthy group could afford to host feasts and banquets lavishly than the poor. Murphy [36] in the different vein articulated that food and foodways in the feasts or celebrations symbolize values and bring important meaning for specific religions, cultures and ethnicity. Food and dishes served during festivities, weddings and other occasions often reflect the host ethnicity, locality and religion despites the preparation and presentation of meals or cuisines are varied depending on communities/ethnic and occasions [54]. Some ethnics have structured their foodways in handling certain occasions with their religion such as Hindus, Buddhist and Jews [54]. Hindus prepared *Laddu* for their festival of light. The *Laddu* symbolize their gratitude to god for their happiness, knowledge, peace and wealth whereas Buddhist prepared cut vegetables and spices or known as *Pibimbap* for their ritual during Buddha's Birthday. For Hanukah or light festivals, Jewish prepare *latkes* or known as potato pancake [49]. Shing [49] expressed that foodways in any feast also carried social messages. He gave Chinese community as an example; honor and respect are showed by the host using his own chopstick to serve the guests. On the other hand, long noodles which means "May you live long" is served during birthday and sharkfin soup are served in weddings as well as lotus Rhizomes for prosperity. Similar goes to the practice of eating together which means solidarity, sharing and participation not only to the Chinese but also to the other ethnic communities. Food also permits a person to perform a specific identity simply by buying, preparing, cooking, and eating [42]. In this manner, food is seen not only offers a group nutritionally but also symbolically in defining customs, norms, or beliefs of a society [13]. Lewis [27] asserted food is quintessential symbol of identity through words "we are what we eat" culturally as well as individually. Rearick [42] and O'Connor [39] highlighted that food and foodways functions as a transmitter for cultural knowledge. The elements of foodways which refers to preparation and consumption, traditions and histories as explained by Gutierrez [19] are mostly being passed down from generation to generation and informally transmitted through oral and demonstration. Koc & Welsh [25] stated food plays a vital role in human socialization when communication through substances, technique of preparation and consumption. Homemade food is reproduced by combining and transmitting the domestic cultural values, enacting the roles and responsibilities of parental generations toward their descendants [12] and during the food preparation, the knowledge is pass from mother to daughter where communication take place between different generations and ages and the history of foods is passed verbally and practically. Foodways is also act as a social mediator among the generation [19]. New England Clambake is one of the examples. The foodways practices of this food product have long been the tradition of family and community of New England. The practices were passed down from the Natives Americans to the colonist and further to its descendents. As the process of preparing and cooking of this baking product took at least two or three days to complete therefore it gives the opportunity to the community in sharing stories and connect with each other. Neustadt [38] contended social relations are reinforced in this matter as individuals, families and community exchange foods or shared meals to create and strengthen social bonds within the community culture.

B. Foodways and Modernization

Food like living things are sensitive or involves changes or alteration [29] and modernization through industrialization, urbanization is found to have a major impact on it and strongly link to social change [11]. According to Gillette [17] some behavioral shifts are occurring in the preparation and consumption of food or foodways including the traditional food and this largely associated with modernization. Modernization in fact not only affects on daily food practices but also in traditional events, celebration as well as ceremony especially the wedding. Food modification or changes are influenced by the new trends in the consumption which Miele [31] described as the emergence of a post-modern circuit of food and the rise of a new culture of consumption among the consumers. The convenience concept of food which comprises of three components like time, physical energy and mental energy significantly contributes to the alteration or changes [5]. Sheely [48] identified ten lifestyle issues which drive the demand for convenience foods. They are the aging population, the changing of household structures, higher females participation in labor force and longer working hours, consumer prosperity and technology ownership, a move toward healthier eating, a desire for new experiences, individualism, declining cooking skills, breakdown of traditional meal times and value for the money. Warde [56] initially argued that the emergence of convenience food reflects the re-ordering of the time-space in relations to everyday life in contemporary society. Sanzo, del Rio, Iglesias & Vazquez [47] investigated customers' attitude and

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satisfaction toward traditional food product (honey) and identified the relationships between three variables: positive consumer attitude towards generic products; the perceived quality of the specific brand consumed; and the satisfaction with the brand and these relationships would become the factors that influence the changes of customers' attitudes.

Modernization is also a structural change that involves technology development and adoption representing materials [20]. The production, processing, distribution of food were extensively shaped by modernization [51, 52]. Jussaume [21] posited that the modernization of food production, distribution as well as consumption is encouraged by business and policy makers. Consequently, this scenario has influenced the changes and manipulated the development of regional and global food production systems which not only a means for improving nutritional well-being but promoting the economic growth via expanding consumer demand. Rogers [44] investigated the matter within the topic of equipments replacement under continuous technological change and identified two types of technological advancement which are discontinuous and continuous technological change. The discontinuous technological change represented by jumps in improvement with each new vintage arrival and the continuous technological change is represented by incremental improvement with each release of the same vintage. Riley [43] looked the reflection on the changes that have taken place in the area of food and beverage which he claimed as one of the most complex activities within the area of hospitality. Technological advances, particularly in the kitchen and the invasion of modern business techniques such as branding and business process engineering have brought new activities in food and beverage production. According to Li, Yin & Saito [28] few the traditional foods practices are on the verge of being lost but improvements of it through modernization benefit food industries, especially in the poor regions and suggested more of them need some improvements with existence of the modern world. However, they were talking it from healthy eating habits perspectives. Bermudez & Tucker [4] mentioned food-related practices of older peoples of any ethnic groups provide challenges including the increased in requirements for important nutrients. This is because physiological changes associated with aging and pathological effects of some chronic conditions. They pointed out that eating practices are ruled not only by physiological demands, food availability and choices but also by cultural norms, knowledge and information, and access to food, which is often determined by economic conditions. From consumer perspective, Wright, Nancarrow & Kwok [37] classified consumers according to their tastes in food and drinks. They argued that consumers' tastes in food sometimes betraying their social origins as they draw more intention and embraced or preferred taste of other food products and claimed those changes are caused by modernization and globalization. White & Kokotsaki [58] studied on the personal values and the changing patterns of consumption on the Indian food among the English and the Indian descendent in the United Kingdom. There were big influences of culture which establishes how people use food and how does it affects their food intakes. There is a tremendously increment in preferences of English toward Indian food and little modification has been made on the original recipes of Indian foods to suit with European tastes and the foodways that relates to the preparation and consumption as well as the appearance and taste of the food are slightly changing due modernization in term of cooking and serving equipment.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Sampling and Instrument

As this study is looking on how modernization alters the Malay matrimonial foodways and its impact on the rural community social bonding, a triangulation approach using interview (qualitative) and self completion questionnaire (quantitative) were chosen. This approach maximizes theoretical fruitfulness; permit more confident conclusions [45], allowing researchers to gain a broader and secured understanding of the investigated issue [30]. For qualitative information, wedding planners or *ketua kenduri* in the selected rural area were chosen as samples. These peoples are believed to have vast experience in organizing wedding ceremony and would provide relevant and valuable information. Five wedding planners were selected and this decision was based on the argument given by Berg [3] that five to twenty individual for qualitative approach are considered sufficient. For quantitative, a self reported experience through a questionnaire survey was used. To base upon actual experience, guests who attended the five wedding ceremonies were chosen. Based on the initial information, approximately 400 to 700 guests are normally attended the wedding ceremony in the rural area. For the contextual setting for both data collection, Rembau district in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia was chosen as most the wedding planners in this distinct are among one of the researcher's relative thus gave conveniency for the researchers to reach the informants. This district also comprises high saturation of Malay population whereby traditional wedding foodways are believed still be practiced. With regard to qualitative instrument, standardized interviewing method was developed with a pre-determined set of open ended questions (six questions) addressing the objectives of the study with a few were directly adapted from Rahman [41]. In addition, demographic information relating to key informants' age, occupation, experience and level of education were also asked. Funneling technique which emphasize from general question to the specific one was used in the question development. For the quantitative instrument, five sections were created. Section A was designed to access general information (demographic profile) of the respondents. Six items were used in Section B to measure the general perception of the respondents on the alteration of matrimonial foodways. Two of the items were directly adapted from Rahman's [41] study while other four questions were created by researchers. Five questions were used in Section C in examining the extent to which technology alters the Malay matrimonial foodways. In measuring the extent to which social advancement alter the Malay matrimonial foodways in the rural area, section D were created. Seven items were included in this section which

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comprised of life style, economy and education matters. Nine items were used in Section E in assessing the impact on the alteration of Malay matrimonial foodways to the rural community social bonding. All questions used in all sections are based on a 5 point Likert type scale ranging from one (1) with "totally disagree" to five (5) with "totally agree".

B. Data Collection

Prior to the actual survey, all the five wedding planners were directly contacted via telephone or through relatives in obtaining permission and date of each wedding day. Subsequently, times for the interviews and surveys to be conducted were arranged based on each wedding dates. The data collection process was then begun from the end of May 2010 until end of June 2010 whereby this time most of the wedding ceremonies held in conjunction with school and university holiday. Each interview with wedding planners was conducted at the end of wedding ceremonies due to the fact that all of them almost done with their responsibility. Based on the structured questions, all interviews took approximately 45 minutes and were recorded using media player (MP3) recorder. Questionnaires were also distributed on the same day of the events with the help of the relatives. However, before undertaking the survey each relative was asked to brief the respondents on the aims of the study and purpose of the survey to be conducted. In addition, they were asked to inform the respondents that their participation is voluntary and they are free not to complete, or to not answer any questions in the questionnaire and all information provided by them were strictly confidential and that no individual respondents would be identified. Without any obvious problems on both interview and survey (n = 300) the data collection processes were successfully undertaken.

IV. ANALYSES AND RESULTS

A. Qualitative

Informants Profiles

Five wedding planners or key informants were involved in the interview. Two of them were males and the other three were females. All of them have been in the position of community wedding planners for more than 10 years. Two of them were retired soldiers with other three women were the full time housewife. Two of the wedding planner achieved the highest qualification of Malaysia Certificate of Education (SPM). However, two of them refused to reveal their educational background. Their profiles are simplified and presented in Table I.

TABLE I
INFORMANTS' PROFILES

Info.	Sex	Exp.	Age	Occupation	Ed. level
1	Male	23	62	Retired soldier	N. M*
2	Female	17	58	Housewife	N. M
3	Male	21	65	Retired soldier	None
4	Female	11	57	Housewife	SPM
5	Female	12	54	Housewife	SPM

**N. M=not mentioned*

The Perception on Malay Wedding Foodways

The first question asked "*what do you think about the wedding foodways in this present day*?" All five key informants have given almost identical answers whereby the Malay matrimonial foodways in the rural area which relate to preparation and consumption is gradually altered due waves of modernization. Informant 1 for instance said;

> *"Yeah, it is undeniable!! Modernization perpetually altered the way Malay community handling the preparation and consumption of food for wedding ceremony. Everything comes in handy and it is easy of handling wedding now. The bottom line is…money."*

Informant 3 comparing what is happening today and the past;

> *"The past 21 years of handling wedding food, things are getting more advanced now. Everything is speed up. One month of planning for food preparation for wedding in those days…but now thing is shortened for approximately two weeks. The modern style eases a lot preparation of food for Malay wedding"*

In the same vein, informant 2 demystified by expressing;

> *"I have been involved in the preparation of food for wedding ceremonies for quite sometimes. I have noticed a lot of changes in the way Malays handling wedding ceremony not only on the preparation but also on the serving of food. Really different with thirty years ago"*

The Alteration of Malay Matrimonial Foodways

The second question asked '*is there any alteration occur in Malay wedding foodways?* Again, almost identical answers received. Modernization not only influences the socio-demographic, economic, life of the community but gradually alter the wedding foodways. Informant 4 comments:

> *"The way food is being prepared and served and other preparation related to wedding is gradually over taken or being altered to suit the current demands and situation"*

In similar tone, the informant 2 expressed;

> *"Everything comes in handy nowadays. On food, catering is the most significant change. Wedding host only concentrate on other matters. No more preparation of food by the community members. Everything much easier despite those days were more enjoyable"*

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Informant 3 stressed on the current wedding trend which limit the choices of foods with the outsourcing practices or through a catering services. He commented;

> *"Food is now pass to caterers. It eases a lot of work. Back then, it was hard. Women need to cook various dishes. Now, everything is set by caterers and they came out with packages and our choice is based on how much we are willing to spend. I don't really like the dishes but that is what they offer. Whether like it or not, that's the trends."*

Informant 4 on the other hand noted that alteration involved not only in the preparation but also on the serving style. She said:

> *"The preparation of food is slightly overtaken by the caterer and buffet style of serving food is so popular in the present days"*

Informant 5 emphasized the changes on the door gifts as a token of appreciation during the wedding reception. She was comparing what is happening today and the past.

> *"This is also changed. In my time, decorated flowered egg or boiled egg wrapped in a tissue like candy is the popular one. Nowadays, things like oranges, muffins and candies are the token of appreciation"*

The Causes of Alteration in Malay Matrimonial Foodways

The third question asking the informants *"what are the causes of the alteration?"* Results of the interviewed revealed that modernization through technology and social advancement which relates to education, economy and lifestyle moderates the alteration of Malay wedding foodway practices. All informants strongly believed technology through modern equipments speeding up the cooking processes, altering the serving styles and consumption of wedding food. In food preparation specifically referring to cooking process, informant 1 posited;

> *"Modern equipments significantly altered the way Malays community prepares and cook the wedding food. Things like pots, pans, blenders, fryers and many others gadgets really speed up the process and it's a blessing with such technology."*

Informant 3 exemplified based on his experience:

> *"Lot easier now with a gas stove and other cooking appliances. No dishes or rice were burned. Those days' Malay peoples used firewood to cook. It is difficult to control the fire. Pushed and pulled the wood to control"*

Much alteration is also observable in serving the wedding food. Informant 2 noted:

> *"Those days, food was all table served. A lot of manpower needed to set the table, clear and re- set up. Food served in a glass plate, metal pot for washing hand and the tissue holder in triangle shape. Now, those are rarely seen. Buffet style is adopted extensively and food is maintained warm with fire beneath the chafing dishes. Don't have to reheat the food again and again."*

On the social advancement, all informants having same views that education, economy and lifestyle lead to the migration of the young generation to the city. This is in turn inhibiting the old practices of wedding foodways in the rural area. Using the term village, informants 5 verbatimly expressed:

> *"Education, economy and lifestyle slightly altered the wedding foodways practices. The migration of young generation to the city lessening the foodways practices. Most of the children leaving parent either for study or working in the city and settled down there. Only old generations living here, therefore it is kind-off hard to continue the tradition."*

Informant 4 stressed:

> *"…children are no longer here. Most of them prefer staying in the city. To host a wedding ceremony like this, yeah, it's involved a lot of manpower. Furthermore, it is easy to earn money now compared to thirty years ago. So, to avoid troublesome and lack of manpower, catering is one of the best option for wedding food."*

In addition, Informant 1 pondered and noted physiological condition also limits the capacity of practicing the wedding foodways. He asserted:

> *"If you can see in this 'kenduri' or wedding, not many young people's involved. The old ones are getting unfit. Make as well we outsource the food to caterer. Indeed, it is not amaze when the catering service has now penetrated into the rural area. The caterer undeniably renders great assistance owing to the physiological condition of the elderly villager as well as present generation afford to hire the caterer. For me, catering really cause the alteration here."*

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The Impact of Alteration of Wedding Foodways on Community Social Bonding (Kinship)

The last question asking informants *"what are the impacts on the alteration of Malay wedding foodways (preparation, consumption/ serving food) to community social bonding?* From the pattern of answers gathered, all five informants perceived that alteration occurs in the way Malay community in the rural area handling the wedding foodways which relates to preparation and consumption/ serving of food. The influence of caterers and the adaptation buffet style of serving wedding food slightly reduce the spirit, togetherness, cooperation and interaction among the community and neighborhoods despite some of the old tradition are still practice. Informant 1 for instance:

> *"Less gotong royong or working togetherness in preparation of wedding food in particular which is overtaken by caterer although ease some burden to the wedding host but reduced togetherness, spirit and identity among the community"*

Informant 2 articulates:

> *"Young generation missed the fun of having 'gotong- royong' during the wedding. The good of old days. We cooked till drop but come with satisfaction. Just look at the success of our villagers' feasts. Nowadays, foods are all catered. Can't say much as it benefit the wedding host but as a whole reduce the harmony and understanding among the community and community becoming individualistic"*

The declining of old generation and migration of young generation to the cities are also contributing to the attrition of community social bonding through wedding foodways. Informant 4 noted;

> *"Young generations move to the city, leaving the old generation behind. It is hard to practice 'gotong-royong' for wedding if short of manpower. Preparation for wedding including food is an extensive work. So what else!! …catering. This has slightly lessening the community spirit, interaction and socialization but not as worse as city."*

Informant 3 on the hand states:

> *"The alteration of Malay wedding foodways not only occurs in the urban area but spreading to the kampong or rural area. Almost everything is outsourcing. This is good in the sense that it accomplishing the wedding without involving the community but slightly given impact on social interaction. With the outsourcing, the individuals wedding hosts are less dependent on each other"*

B. Quantitative

Respondents' profiles

As previously mentioned, in supporting the qualitative result, a quantitative approach through self reported question was undertaken. Before looking at the mean scores, the profiles of respondents are first highlighted in Table 2. 44.0 percents (n = 132) of respondents were males against 56.0 percents (n = 168) females. The high percentage of female probably due to fact they the most attended the wedding reception. 69.3 percents (n = 208) were in between 20 to 35 years old as opposed to 11.7 percents (n = 35) in between 36 to 45 years old while 9.3 percents (n = 28) between 46 to 55 and 9.7 percents (n = 29) were 55 and above. 55.3 percents of the respondents were married (n = 166) as opposed to 41.0 percents (n = 123) single and 3.7 percents (n = 11) others. With regard peoples who attended wedding ceremonies, 56.7 percents (n = 170) of the respondents were from the local area and 20.3 percents (n = 61) were from suburban area and only 23.0 percents (n = 69) were from urban area.

TABLE II
RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Items	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	132	44.0
	Female	168	56.0
Age	20-35	208	69.3
	36-45	35	11.7
	46-55	28	9.3
	56 and above	29	9.7
Marital status	Married	166	55.3
	Single	123	41.0
	Others	11	3.7
Locality	Rural	170	56.7
	Suburban	61	20.3
	Urban	69	23.0

The General Perception on Matrimonial Foodways

Looking at the descriptive analysis, majority of the respondents agreed that modernization influence the way Malays handling matrimonial foodways (M = 4.11, item 1). They agreed that alteration occurs through usage of modern equipments (M = 4.01, item 2) and the wedding food practices are rendered by the caterer (M = 4.05, item 3). Mean scores also indicate majority of the respondents agreed that education (M= 4.04, item 4), high disposable incomes (M = 4.10, item 5) and busy lifestyles (M = 4.09, item 6) alter the food practices in matrimonial event. Those three factors signaling social advancement gives an impact to the transformation of matrimonial foodways in rural area. These are well corroborated with the notions made by all key informants during interviewed.

Technology and Matrimonial Foodways

The interview findings were further strengthened in this sub-section analysis (Table 4). This is evident when majority of the respondents were agreed that technology altered matrimony event in a good way (M=3.60). More specific, they believed that modern equipments alter the preparation (M=3.71), speed up (M= 3.88), serving style (M=3.71) and eating decorum (M=3.58) of food in Malay matrimonial event.

TABLE III
RESPONDENTS' GENERAL PERCEPTION ON MATRIMONIAL FOODWAYS

No.	Items	*n*	Mean	SD
1.	Modernization influence the way Malays handling matrimonial foodways.	300	4.11	.661
2.	Modern equipments alter the matrimonial foodways in a good way.	300	4.01	.664
3.	Catering trend alters the food practices in matrimonial event.	300	4.05	.763
4.	Education alters the food practices in matrimonial event.	300	4.04	.847
5.	High disposable income alters the food practices in matrimonial event.	300	4.10	.802
6.	Busy lifestyles influence the transformation of food preparation.	300	4.09	.831

Scale: 1= Totally disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Slightly agree, 4= Agree, 5= Totally agree

TABLE IV
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON TECHNOLOGY

No.	Items	*n*	Mean	SD
1.	I think technology alters matrimony event in a good way.	300	3.60	.810
2.	Modern equipment alters the speed preparation of food in matrimonial event.	300	3.88	.751
3.	Modern equipment alters the serving style of food in matrimony event.	300	3.71	.838
4.	Modern equipment alters eating decorum in matrimony event.	300	3.58	.871
5.	Modern equipment alters the preparation of food for the matrimony event.	300	3.71	.809

Scale: 1= Totally disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Slightly agree, 4= Agree, 5= Totally agree

Social Advancement Matrimonial Foodways

Similar to the previous section, the descriptive analysis (Table 5) is used in looking on the extent to which social advancement (lifestyle, economy, and education) alters the Malay matrimonial foodways (preparation and consumption).

TABLE V
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION ON SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT

No.	Items	*n*	Mean	SD
1.	Higher disposal income alters the preparation and consumption of food for matrimonial event.	300	3.95	.755
2.	The emergence of catering trend alters the matrimonial foodways.	300	3.96	.783
3.	Modern lifestyles alter preparation of food in matrimonial event.	300	3.90	.799
4.	Modern lifestyles alter consumption of food in matrimonial event.	300	3.71	.806
5.	Education alters the preparation of food in matrimonial event.	300	3.64	.934
6.	Education alters the food consumption in matrimonial event.	300	3.66	.935

Scale: 1= Totally disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Slightly agree, 4= Agree, 5= Totally agree

From the magnitude of the mean scores, majority of the respondents agreed education through migration of youngster to the city alters the preparation (M = 3.64, item 5) and consumption (M = 3.66, item 6) of food in Malay matrimonial event. The emergence of catering trend contribute to the alteration (M = 3.96, item 2) as respondents agreed that modern lifestyles alter the preparation (M = 3.90, item 3) and consumption (M = 3.71, item 4) in matrimonial event. In addition, respondents agree that high disposable income among the rural community also contribute to the alteration (M = 3.95, item 1). This result is also well corroborated with the qualitative analysis.

The Impact of the Alteration of Wedding Foodways on Community Social Bonding

Analysis looking at the impact of the alteration through modernization on the social perspectives revealed that respondents in the wedding ceremonies believed that alteration in Malay matrimonial foodways reduced the community spirit and identity (M = 4.03, item 1). Based on the notions made by scholars relating to social bonding which relates to modernization, respondents in this study also agreed modern lifestyles loosen the solidarity bond (M = 3.96, item 2) and believe that the service rendered by the caterer reduce the kinship among community (M = 3.90, item 3) and agreed that style of serving in matrimonial event lessen cooperation and interaction within the community (M = 3.79, item 4).

TABLE VI
THE IMPACT ON THE OLD PRACTICES AND THE SOCIAL BOND (KINSHIP)

No.	Items	*n*	Mean	SD
1.	I believe modernization of Malay matrimonial foodways reduces the community spirit and identity.	300	4.03	.813
2.	Modern lifestyle loosens the solidarity bond in Malay matrimony.	300	3.96	.809
3.	Catering trend on matrimonial event reduced the kinship among Malay community.	300	3.90	.817
4.	Style of serving in Malay matrimony reduced the element of cooperation and interaction within the community.	300	3.79	.892
5.	Modernization of foodways vanishes the old wedding food practices of society in matrimonial event.	300	3.75	.818
6.	Modernization makes individual less dependent on community in helping during Malay matrimony.	300	3.94	.834
7.	Through modern matrimony, I can see communities are slightly becoming more individualistic.	300	3.74	.841
8.	Modernization loosens generation ties in the Malay matrimony.	300	3.76	.851
9.	I still believe the old tradition of Malay matrimony foodways boosts unity and harmony within the community.	300	4.33	.786

Scale: 1= Totally disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Slightly agree, 4= Agree, 5= Totally agree

This is strengthened when respondents agreed that modernization of foodways vanishes the old wedding foodways practices among the society (M = 3.75, item 5), makes individual less dependent on community (M = 3.94,

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item 6), believed communities are slightly becoming more individualistic (M = 3.74, item 7) and loose of generation ties (M = 3.76, item 8) therefore still strongly believed that the old tradition of Malay matrimony foodways boosts unity and harmony within the community (M = 4.33, item 9).

V. Discussion

Both qualitative and quantitative results clearly indicate modernization is a global phenomena and closely associates with globalization and industrialization. It has altered every facets of human life including the routines, traditions, rituals, norms and the people's daily activities. Not only that, modernization also influences the socio- demographic, economic, education and life of the community for the betterment. This study has witnessed of how modernization through it elements namely technology and social advancement gradually alter the practices in one of the most popular Malay social events that is matrimony foodways which is refer to the preparation and consumption of food for the event. As modernization gradually touches the periphery of rural area, the axis which discerns between urban and rural is becoming fader. The old matrimonial foodways practice which has long been synonymous with Malay rural community is hardly seen due to the penetration of catering services. Table-served style for the wedding is replaced by buffet style. This catering service in fact starts becoming a very important mechanism for Malay matrimonial events in the present day. In actual fact, this something inevitable and uncontrollable as using catering service is proven to ease the heavy burden not only in the preparation and consumption through the eating decorum but also in other facets. In fact, the adoption some of modern aspects in the Malay wedding foodways have makes activities becoming faster, effective and efficient plus many other benefits. On top of that the migration of young generation to the cities plus the decease of old generation are also contributing to attrition wedding foodways by the rural community**.** No doubt such practices have slightly given advantages to the wedding host as well as the community however without realizing it directly given significant impact to the social perspectives. Findings of this study showed that the communication, cohesiveness or social bonding that inhibited the community interaction among the individual of Malay society in the rural area through the matrimonial foodways is slightly lessening. In other words, the functions of foodways in the matrimonial event in the olden days as a mechanism to knit the bond between people in society is explicitly reduced. If this continuously being ignore without any efforts undertaken to maintain or resurrect by the community as whole, the individuals in the community will become self-centered or individualistic thus sooner or later the next Malay generation in particular will not know their hereditary treasures in turn it will totally disappeared. In this sense, what could be exemplified is that modernization without doubt improves many facets of life however as much as we embrace modernization, the integrative force, solidarity and alliances that long been practiced by the Malays community including certain aspects of wedding events even not in the preparation and consumption or whatever relevant should be preserved.

VI. Conclusion

The practice of matrimonial foodways in the olden days created space for interaction among unit of society which strengthening social bond. However the penetration of modernization regardless urban and rural area, human has harvested benefit from it through technology and social advancement. This phenomenon without doubt changes every facet in life as it provides betterment. From technological aspect, preparation and consumption patterns have changed in matrimonial foodways with the usage of modern cooking equipment and appliances. On the other hand, social advancement alters beyond the preparation and consumption pattern of this food practices which is how society acts during this special event. Off all betterment obtained through modernization, from the lens of matrimonial foodways, some virtues of community in this study focusing on social kinship are attenuated. Ergo, as much as human embrace modernity, certain elements of community need to be preserved before in the future, society in turn becoming individualistic not for ephemeral but eternity. Question need to be asked to oneself, "Do we want the social kinship faded into oblivion?"

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