

# The Education and Sociocultural Ecology of Sabah, Malaysia

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**Abstract**— The researcher studied Sabah, northern part of Borneo because a part of which was once believed to belong to her native land. This research aimed to describe the education, beautiful spots in Sabah and the culture of the people. This study utilized the narrative, qualitative research method. The data were gathered through interview, observation, facebook chats, email and web mining. There were 35 respondents. Results showed that education played a vital role in the promotion of tourism and the preservation of cultural heritage. It empowered many to realize the importance of historic resources, to preserve them and to integrate them in their daily life. Primary and secondary education levels are free while tertiary level is student funded. There are international students and faculty in Borneo. Foreign teachers described the people as good and accommodating. All the respondents mentioned that the Klias Wetland River Cruise is the most attractive place because of the presence of fireflies which connotes that the place is still unpolluted while Atkinson Clock Tower is considered the least. There are various beautiful tourist destinations in Kota Kinabalu, and their environment is filled with wildlife. Proboscis monkeys that are endemic in the place are endangered. There are five ethnic groups. Tourists love their delicacies. Bahasa Malaysia is the main language. Islam for Malay and Buddhism for Chinese are the main religions in the area. The Borneans have close family ties. Education has improved the life of the people. There are similarities of Borneo and Philippines. It is highly recommended that tourists should include Sabah in their bucket list as the place is truly beautiful and a similar study may be conducted due to very limited research publications regarding North Borneo.

**Keywords**—culture, cuisine, ethnic groups, Kota Kinabalu, tourism, wildlife.

## INTRODUCTION

Borneo is an alluring island with numerous mosques, tall trees, mountains, and hills. It is so green and alive that when one is there as if he is very near to the creator. It is considered the most huge island in Asia and the third biggest island globally. It is located at the northern tip of Java, east of the island Sumatra and west of Sulawesi. The island is divided into three countries namely Indonesia, Brunei, and Malaysia. Seventy three percent of the Bornean island is Indonesian territory while 26 percent belong to Sarawak and Sabah, Malaysia including Labuan. Only a percent of the land area belongs to the country Brunei. Sabah is a province in Borneo and its capital is Kota Kinabalu popularly known as KK. It is considered a coastal city, some parts of which are rainforest. It is peaceful and pollution-free, with semi-modernized infrastructure and various attractions. It is near the following countries and is assemble by plane to Sydney, Singapore, Brunei, Cebu, Manila, Hong Kong, Kaoshiung, Seoul, Taipei Kuala Lumpur, and Tokyo Brief (Brief History of Kota Kinabalu, 2007).

Kota Kinabalu is known too for its, new boardwalk, bustling markets, beautiful seas and waterfront City Mosque. It is a gateway to popular Mt. Kinabalu located in KK National Park, which is 4,095-high. It has a super rich culture with notable cultural venues. These are the following: Science and Technology Center, Sabah State Museum, Ethno Botanic Gardens and Sabah Art Gallery along with historical sites like the Atkinson Clock Tower and Padang Merdeka. There are also many cultural villages found in the place which show off the culture and traditions of the people. Mari Mari Cultural Village showcases a glimpse of the genuine culture and tradition of North Borneo. The Sabah Harvest Festival, KK Jazz Festival, Hari Raya Aidil Fitri, Deepawali and more are the best celebrated religious and cultural festivals (Kota Kinabalu Culture, 2018).

The Malaysian Educational System is a collaborative effort of the mentors and administrators in improving and tapping the abilities of pupils and students in an integrated and holistic manner, to produce graduates who are physically, intellectually, emotionally, culturally and spiritually trained anchored on a strong, incredible faith in the Almighty (Sabah Educational System, 2016).

Is Sabah truly a part of the Philippines? Many years ago, the Philippines and Borneo used to have common economic, cultural and historical unit. Scholars from western countries have sketched the roads that linked these two nature rich countries. The ancestors of the two aforementioned countries come from similar origins. Today the Philippines is nearly 18 miles away from Borneo. In 1704, Brunei's Sultan ruled North Borneo, and because the Sulu Philippine sultan helped him in a revolt against their enemies, the Brunei sultan was so thankful and rewarded Sulu Sultan as the ruler of Sabah. This started the desire of the Philippines to claim Sabah. Several years ago, some nations, like Netherlands, Spain, and Britain recognized the leadership of the sultan of Sulu in North Borneo. In



Figure 1. Map showing Kota Kinabalu and nearby places

1878, an adventurer from Austria, Mr. Baron de Overbeck, learned that the Sulu Sultan was weak physically and nearing death, he convinced the Sultan of Sulu to lease him the island in the amount of annual rental of 5,000 Malayan ringgit which is equivalent to 1,600 United State Dollars that time. Unfortunately, the lease contract cannot be argued in Sabah and other foreign lands because it was stated in the British guidelines and agreement. In the end, Baron disposed of his privileges and rights to an English businessman named Alfred Dent, who built the popularly known British North Borneo Company. The latter then had all the obligations, privileges and rights, under the 1878 treaty. In 1881, the aforementioned Company received the Royal Charter award. The Dutch and Spain directorates protested against the charter grant, and in answer, the British Council cleared its reputation and declared that "the Sultan of Sulu is still the ruler" and that the Company was only a managing authority (Inquirer.net, 2013). The Borneo dispute is considered a territorial dispute between the countries Malaysia and Philippines. Nevertheless, Malaysia does not consider this dispute "an issue" as it interprets the 1878 agreement of cession and that it deems the people of Sabah had exercised their right to self-determination when they joined to comprise the Malaysian federation in 1963. In the 1987 Constitution, the Philippine territory comprises the Philippine archipelago. The ceded archipelagic territory did not include North Borneo or Sabah. On July 22, 1878, the Sulu Sultanate became a Spanish protectorate under the Spanish Treaty of Peace between the Sultan and Spanish Crown.

The Philippines and Borneo continued to become tourist spots globally because both were endowed with very rich natural resources. Part of the History of Philippines and Borneo are the ten Datus of Borneo who travelled to the Philippines. "During the primitive times, cruel Sultan Makatunaw ruled Borneo. Because he was very inhuman his ten datu together with their families and maids bringing with them their treasures left the island. They rode in their boats (balangays) and did not know where to go until they reached the Philippines. They were the following datu: Paliburong, Dumangsol, Lubay, Panduhinog, Sumakwel, Balensusa, Bangkaya, Dumlugdog and their leader is Datu Puti. They landed in Panay Island and went to the Negrito village. The latter met King Marikudo, local head and Queen Maniwantiwan, the wife. He further asked them to buy some land parts for them to stay. After consulting his wife and the elderly in the place, he agreed to sell parts. So they bartered, Datu Puti gave a native helmet from Borneo (Gold Salakot) for King Marikudo and a long gold necklace for his wife (sumangyad). They became good friends and had happy feasting. Marikudo and his people left them and went to the mountains. The seven datu remained in Panay Island and lived there happily while the three datu went further and reached Taal, Batangas province and resided there. In the end, Datu Puti went back home to Borneo, and he narrated the wonderful experiences of the ten leaders who were accommodated in the north (The Ten Bornean Datus: History or Legend?, 2011).

It is never a doubt that any government of any country promotes tourism as this contributes a lot to economic growth. The Department of Tourism (DOT) among other agencies is responsible in promoting, encouraging and developing tourism as a primary socio-economic endeavor of the nation to

generate employment and foreign currency, at the same time advertise the benefits of tourism to public and private sectors.

The researcher was interested to conduct a study on Borneo particularly the northern part (Sabah) because she is aware that the island was once believed to be a part of the Philippines which is rich in natural resources. Generally, this research aimed to describe the educational system of Borneo particularly how education has improved tourism in the area. It looked into its Socio Cultural Ecology as perceived by the residents and tourists in the place. Specifically, it tried to identify the beautiful spots of Kota Kinabalu and determined the culture of the people that includes their delicacies and the similarities of the islands Borneo and Philippines. This was limited only to the tourist places visited by the data collectors during their ten-day stay in Kota Kinabalu for the data gathering. This study was conducted in May 2017.

This study will hopefully invite tourists from the world to visit the paradise thus helping the nation towards better economy and providing the people with more job opportunities and employment. Hopefully the Borneans will appreciate more the beauty of their island and that they would protect and preserve their environment and cultural heritage. Borneo and Philippine natives will hopefully strengthen their camaraderie and help each other in the promotion of their similarities and natural resources instead of continuing the territorial dispute/gap. Since this is one of the first studies on Kota Kinabalu's culture and education by a foreigner, hopefully the natives will realize the impact of this research to them and that they will sustain and maintain their cultural heritage and uniqueness.

A study on the culture of Indonesia, concluded that realizing the spiritual culture in institutions, full support and dedication from stakeholders are needed in the management and maintenance of culture. Unity among the institution's community is very significant in coming out with good religious practices and culture (Asmaun, 2014).

In a study of tourism impacts in two cities of two countries; Vigan City, Philippines and Ayutthaya City, Thailand, it was found out that the social impacts of tourism are perceived to be the same by stakeholders in both cities. The reason is that negative and positive social impacts of tourism are almost similar in tourist areas even if they are countries apart (Lamarca, F. and Lamarca, C. 2017).

A research in Indonesia on the impacts of tourism stated that visitor interest and satisfaction in the community is a source of local pride. Witnessing visitors' interest inspires residents to be more appreciative of local resources that are often taken for granted. As tourism develops, residents enjoy more facilities and a greater range of choices. Tourism activities and events tend to make a living in a place very interesting and exciting (Kreag, 2016).

## METHODOLOGY

This study used the narrative descriptive qualitative method of research in the educational system and how education has improved tourism in the Tropical Island of Borneo. It also identified the tourist spots and the culture of the people. The data were gathered through semi-structured interview that lasted from 35 minutes to an hour. Web mining was also a tool

in collecting archived data. Four data collectors had an actual visit in the selected places in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah province for ten days in 2017. The respondents of the study were 15 tourists interviewed on the evaluation of the beautiful spots. Their emails and facebook accounts were taken for further interview on their answers if needed. They came from different countries like New Zealand, Philippines, China, Laos, Belgium, Indonesia, America, Brunei, Thailand and Vietnam. Ten Borneo residents were interviewed on the culture /traditions and five resident teachers for the educational system of Sabah, and five international teachers, a total of 35 respondents. Authority to travel abroad to conduct research in Kota Kinabalu was approved by the University of Northern Philippines and a letter seeking permission to gather data was approved too by the Head of Tourism in Kota Kinabalu City.

The following principles of ethical considerations along social science research were observed by the researcher as a result of analyzing the ethical guidelines. The respondents were not subjected to any harm. Respect for the dignity of research participants was prioritized. The researcher and data collectors asked full consent from the respondents to answer questions before they started the investigation. The protection of the privacy of research participants was ensured. An adequate level of confidentiality of research data was ensured. The anonymity of individuals was maintained, and any type of communication about the research was done with honesty, truthfulness and transparency.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aside from its alluring scenery, Borneo captivates foreign learners in continuing the higher ladder of education in Malaysia. Recently, It has emerged as an educational hotspot, and this was included in their 2020 Strategic Plan of Educational System. They are not behind among other Western countries in the world.

### EDUCATION IN SABAH

Typically formal education just like in other western countries, begins when a child is four years old and this is termed pre-school. The starting year is just a play. The second phase is kindergarten which is not yet compulsory. Primary education begins when the pupil is six years old. The six years of primary education is considered compulsory. There are two semesters in a year, from January to May and from June to November. Most public schools use Malay as their medium of instruction. The Immigrants coming from China and Indian Tamil group have put up institutions in the place and use their vernacular languages as media of instruction. Starting In 2015, high school education in North Borneo was made compulsory. The government of Malaysia provides free education for the primary and secondary levels. After their secondary schooling, they all take the government examination. Tertiary Education is provided through polytechnics, public universities and community colleges. Public colleges and universities offer

bachelor degrees, masterate, and doctorate programs while polytechnics and community colleges offer certificate and diploma programs. Private universities in Sabah include campuses of foreign private colleges and universities too. The Malaysia Qualifications Agency sees to it that the tertiary education has high standards compared to western countries (Kota Kinabalu info, 2018). After secondary education, if a student wants to study in college, he has to pay for it, it is no longer free. Malaysia accepts enrolees from foreign countries in different levels of education. Since the 1990's, many global students have been going to Borneo to pursue their college education. Nowadays, Malaysia is considered ranked 11th well known country for global education. Also, Kinabalu International School has an outstanding track record in retaining its teachers.

International teachers said that the administrators, faculty, staff and people at Kinabalu International School (KIS) are good and accommodating. Upon their arrival at the airport from their countries, generous KIS faculty and studentry were there waiting for them and gave them immediately what they need. They had questions in mind, what are the opportunities of living in exotic Sabah? How better could life be? Will it be a good one or a real disaster? It was unbelievable how they were able to make it excellently during their first week. They said they were paid enough salary for working hard in paradise. They have been working more than five years now successfully. At present the student population has greatly increased and so with the number of teachers and staff too. The subjects offered have increased and KIS is rated at A level. In Kinabalu International School, foreign teachers feel secure, loved, cared for and well respected. This inspired teachers to teach well. To them Teaching at Kota Kinabalu International School is like being part of a happy huge family. They further mentioned that harmonious working relationship of the community was maintained through the years. They are very grateful that their children now are part of this united community. The global teachers all strived hard to give quality education to the pupils. Working and living in KK for years has been truly rewarding to them. They said, it is gratifying to live in a place gifted with natural resources. Their children enjoyed the wildlife and they were taught about the importance of preserving and appreciating their God-given rich natural resources.

### ROLE OF EDUCATION IN BORNEO TOURISM

Tourists and residents mentioned that education helped improve the life of the people. "Education played a major role in preparing students to gain professional and practical skills required by the tourism industry. It empowered many to realize the importance of historic resources, to preserve them and to integrate them into our daily life. Education prepared us to appreciate and preserve our own culture and be proud of it. It provided optimism toward our cultural and historical backgrounds. Practical training was as important as theoretical training. Residents appreciated varied exposures in preserving

our culture and our identity. Through education tourism in our place was promoted to different countries and helped improve our economy. It provided new jobs and opportunities to us, the residents and increased our local economy.”

Worldwide, education plays an essential role of the country's growth and development. It is the catalyst through which society's development is assured. Giving quality education is a primary responsibility of the school of learning whether it is manned by private or government officials. They are contributory to the educational foundation of a country (Banez and Pardo, 2016).

## TOURIST SPOTS IN KOTA KINABALU

The following are sites for tourists to visit:

### 1. Kota Kinabalu City Mosque

This is often called the floating mosque. If one is interested in the art of Islam, this is a good place to see although a little far from the heart of the city. The sunset view of the mosque is the best and at the right angle. It is a combination of a remodelled Muslim architecture and it can accommodate more than 11,500 worshippers at one time. The natives call it City Mosque and at rare times, Blue Mosque. It is captivating outside but is not that beautiful inside. It has a majestic feature. It is the huge mosque in Kota Kinabalu. It is a building of worship for the Islam faith, and according to the natives, no fees are charged to guests who want to pay a visit. One of the interviewees mentioned that there are a lot of maintenance needs for the building so it would be all right if the one in-charge will ask for donations from tourists. The natives also wished that there should be more people to worship in this sacred place.



Figure 2. The KK City Mosque, standing is a data collector

### 2. Sabah Museum

This museum is a complete place to go in KK for an introduction to Sabah's interesting ethnicities and natural environment, with vivid signage and explanations. There are historical and tribal artefacts including ceramics and a centerpiece whale skeleton, and a replica of a limestone cave. The Sabah Museum is located in a vast land of 17 hectares in Lama, KK. The area also contains an ethnobotanical garden where one sees the indigenous plants of the place, a zoo where the rare animals are seen and an old heritage village. The core building includes the Sabah art gallery. This includes Islamic civilization, natural history, archaeology, brassware, and ceramics. It

preserved and conserved, archaeological, documented ethnographic, zoological, botanical, and other mineral materials in the province. Two of the interviewees mentioned that the Sabah State Museum is the surest and fastest place for tourists and residents to experience a fun historical journey about Borneo.



Figure 3. Sabah Museum

### 3. Mari Mari Cultural Village

Mari Mari Cultural Village is located in the countryside far from the center and developing Kota Kinabalu city. The cultural village showcases a museum that preserves Borneo ethnic culture. Its main objective is to share the knowledge, life history, customs and traditions of Borneo with their people and tourists. In this place, a waterfall is seen that refreshes the place and connotes that nature to them is so important. Trees were believed to be sacred. Here, one observes and experiences the life of the natives (ethnic groups) of Borneo who survived in the primitive times when electricity was not yet introduced in their native place. The village shows five ethnic groups in just one village. They are the a) Kadazan-Dusun who are the Rice Farmers. The first traditional house belongs to the Kadazan-Dusun, considered the largest indigenous group in Sabah, b) Rungus who are the Longhouse Resident, c) Lundayeh who are the hunters and fishermen, d) Bajau who are the cow boys and e) Sea Gypsies who are the head hunters. Tourists see their culture and their houses, they taste different kinds of food of the tribes, and the most unforgettable experience is the free henna tattoos. Tattooing rituals are the core of their culture.



Figure 4-7. Mari -Mari Village activities



#### 4. The National Park of Kinabalu

This park is well known as its nation's prime UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is here where one sees the popular Mount Kinabalu, the highest peak in Malaysia. The park covers an estimated more than 5,500 species of plants which are identified as globally important.

Respondents said, "Though it is far from the center, Mt. Kinabalu to us is a huge geologic wonder. A giant mountain in the tropics whose granite origin is manifested in its craggy peaks. We enjoyed climbing because this is our hobby. To us this is the most awesome from the varied mountains we have really climbed. Mt. Kinabalu has varied things to offer, but we certainly did the "light" version, truly unforgettable experience. Was it really beautiful? Honestly yes. Were there nice things to do? Yes. Was it a must-do? No, not the way we did it. If you are going to the mountain, climb then just enjoy every second the scenery and get the full experience."

#### 5. Poring Wonders

The interviewees said, "Hot Spring in Poring is one of the "refreshing-visit" attractions. This mini nature reserve is truly a relaxing area for a more wildlife adventure like the cave, rafflesia flower, waterfalls, rainforest, orangutan, orchid farm, and butterfly garden. Its hot springs, medicinal with natural sulphur are true wonders. We also enjoyed the beautiful trees. Poring's canopy walkway invites you to savor the glory of a 100 million year old rainforest."

The residents believe that the spring with high temperature has medicinal properties because many were cured of several types of integumentary diseases, and the minerals and heat soothed muscles and improved circulation of the blood and the lymph. There is sulphur in it. It improved health body conditions (Poring Hot Springs, 2012).



Figure 8. Hot Spring in Poring

#### 6. Sapi Island

Sapi Island or sometimes named as Pulau Sapi is the most beautiful and relaxing island to the local and foreign visitors. The interviewees said, "As we arrived in the place numerous fishes and splendid view impressed us. Truly an unforgettable and awesome tour. Still, no matter how many times we go back and forth visiting the place, the feeling that it is the most awesome is still the same. Indeed, a gift from heaven above to KK, how many places in the globe have this nice

virgin island which is only seven kilometers away from the heart of the city? Among all the islands nearby Pulau Sapi gets the highest votes as our favorite. It has the longest island to island zipline in KK and even in the world. Pulau Sapi is truly a gem, smallest island among the five islands of Tengku Abdul Rahman Marine Park facing the city of Kota Kinabalu. An ideal place away from the busy city. Its crystal clear water and pure white sandy beaches make this beautiful island a perfect place to snorkel and unwind".



Figure 9. Sapi Island



Figure 10. The data collector in Sapi Island

This tourist destination has the second biggest area among the islands and the state's primer marine habitat. Manukan to a few is a well known island with KK residents. There are beautiful coral reefs found in this beach. A nice place for playing, swimming and diving, relaxing and mostly snorkelling. This island shows the state of the art facilities comprising of the following: swimming pool, sepak and takraw courts, volleyball and football field. Infrastructure facilities include solar public telephone, electricity, support-water, desalination plant and sewerage system. It is also covered with vegetation and has challenging hiking trails. Tourists said, "It is so refreshing and enjoyable to swim because of the clear blue water. You could see the fishes swimming, and there are tourists here from different parts of the globe. We had great fun with many water sports in Manukan Island. We enjoyed snorkelling; this is the most popular and recommended activity in Manukan. You can rent cheap snorkelling gears here. It is just all right if you do not know how to swim, just wear a life jacket. The splendid soft and hard corals in Manukan are so impressive".



Figure 11. The data collectors in Manukan Island

### 8. Klias Wetland River Cruise and Proboscis Monkeys

Klias Wetland is a beautiful mangrove forest. One of the major attractions is the chance to see and observe the rare proboscis monkeys, chirping birds and crocodiles. The proboscis monkeys are endangered species that are peculiar to Borneo. They possess fleshy, pendulous noses that captivate their mates. They also have huge bellies and light golden yellow brown fur coats. They eat insects, leaves, unripe fruits and seeds (Amazing Borneo, 2017).

“We consider it number one among all the beautiful spots in KK because of the presence of fireflies which means that the water is not polluted yet and so with the place. This is the most remarkable to us because we are environmentalists and this is very rare. There are monkeys staying in the islands. The wetland is still a virgin and undisturbed. The place was an exemplar of an environment friendly whose natural resources: wetlands, virgin forests, crystal clear rivers are well taken care of by the people. The swarm of fireflies is an indication that a certain place has a balance, diverse, interconnected ecosystem.”

These statements of the respondents were confirmed in the study on environment, the respondents have “good” level of practice on the environmental theme that the world is very beautiful, it is God’s gift to us (balance of nature). This implies that the respondents habitually keep places clean and beautiful, avoid burning solid wastes and do not support mining explorations (Pardo, 2012).



Figure 12. Klias Wetland River Cruise



Figure 13. The data collectors observing the wildlife in Klias

### 9. Atkinson Old Clock Tower

The Atkinson Clock Tower is the most aged erected structure in KK. This was dedicated to Francis George Atkinson. Respondents said, “It is nice to see the oldest structure in KK

though there is nothing much, but great to know that they are paying respect to their history. Avid fans of culture and history definitely appreciate this. A beautiful clock tower tucked away which is worthy of more tourist promotions. It is only worth staying for about 8-10 minutes. Unanimously, we did not even realize it was worth stopping for a visit. Maybe if you were a history enthusiast, then it would warrant a visit. Nevertheless, if you are a mere tourist then do not bother if you miss it. To us this is the least beautiful/ interesting”.



Figure 14. Atkinson Clock Tower

### 10. The Signal Hill Observatory Platform

It is located on the hills close to Padang Merdeka, the Signal Hill Observatory Platform is the highest point in Kota Kinabalu. An area to view the city and beyond. Signal Hill is widely considered an important activity for all tourists of KK. From this decked observatory platform, one will not only get a panoramic, bird’s eye view of the wonderful city center, but one that also extends to the beaches of Tanjung Aru and Likas Bay, and even to the outlying islands of the Tunku Abdul Rahman Park.



Figure 15. Signal Hill Observatory

The 15 tourists from different countries ranked the tourist spots from the most beautiful to the least, they ranked Klias Wetland River Cruise and Proboscis Monkey as first followed by Sapi Island, Manukan Island, Mari-mari, fifth is Mt Kinabalu, Poring Springs, Sabah Museum, KK Mosque, Signal Hill Observatory and the tenth the Atkinson Clock Tower.

### KK Culture

Bahasa Malaysia is considered as the official language spoken in KK. Other languages spoken include English, Tamil and Chinese (Cantonese, Hokkien, Foochow, Mandarin, Hakka, Hainan). The indigenous tribes in KK speak their native language too. Malaysian Ringgit is the currency. The city nevertheless has a mix of people from all over the globe so one can find that there are a number of different international lan-



guages that are spoken too. The most observed religious and cultural festivals are Sabah Festival, Harvest Festival, the KK Jazz Festival, Deepawali and Hari Raya Aidil Fitri. Borneans are religious. They value their families, as they are the source of strength and inspirations. They help one another and they have close family ties. Listening during conversations is valued by the people in order to come out with harmonious relationships. They try to maintain a good face, to them a good reputation is very important.

Part of the culture and traditions of the people is sharing their delicacies to the tourists. Some of the delicacies are the following:

### Traditional Borneo Delicacies

#### 1. Jaruk



Figure 16. The Bornean lady is showing the data collector on how to cook one of the delicacies.



Figure 17. Jaruk

Jaruk is a soft fleshy river fish or wild boar inserted in a bamboo tube mixed with salt and rice. The natives of the place enjoy this delicacy. The process of creating the dish is a long one. It takes weeks to months of fermentation before one can taste it. Jaruk proves that some delicacies, especially traditional Borneo dishes are worth the wait. This adds to the uniqueness of the delicacy.

#### 2. Hinava



Figure 18. Hinava

With hinava, the Kadazans exhibit their version of local sashimi which is also one of the most known delicacies in KK. They are similar in a way that they use fish which is freshly eaten. Different species of fish can be prepared. Mackerel to them is the best and they mix with seeds of grated bambangan, onion, ginger, red chilies, salt and lime. The fish is treated in a citric acid of the lime to kill all the bacteria. Hinava is served during Tadau Kaamatan, a rice harvest festival, or other special occasions such as christening, wedding and natal day celebrations.

#### 3. Ambuyat



Figure 19. Ambuyat

Ambuyat is differently prepared, it is an appetizing jelly-like old Borneo dish which is cooked from the inner part of a sago palm trunk. It is a bland starchy glob, almost like a tapioca starch with many uses. It shows out the best of another dish, especially one rich in tanginess, spiciness and saltiness. Preparing it is easy, one just needs to mix the sago starch powder into boiling water. Once it starts to thicken, use a wooden stick to mix the starch around it and transfer it to another plate.

#### 4. Tuhau



Figure 20. Tuhau

Many tourists love to eat this Tuhau while others do not. Its undesirable and strong smell plays a big role in the subjective preference. However, one bite may make one disregard its scent. To prepare this delicacy, one needs to make a fine dice of wild ginger, chili, and scallion and mix them together before adding salt and vinegar to make it into a pickle.

#### 5. Midin



Figure 21. Midin

Midin. This delicacy may not be found anywhere in Malaysia. It is likened to a rare diamond. The reason why one cannot get it everywhere is because the vegetables only survive in the Sarawak forest lands.

#### 6. Pinasakan



Figure 22. Pinasakan

Pinasakan or pinasakan sada has a palatable taste. This is a native Borneo delicacy (Kadazandusun, to be exact) the basung fish is braised in takob akob (tangy wild fruit), turmeric, salt, and slices of Bambang (optional) until the broth reduces by half of the first volume. It may appear like a different preserved food, with rice and a dash of sambal. It is truly a perfect delicious meal.

#### 7. Bosou



Figure 23. Bosou

Bosou or sometimes called Tonsom is cooked by mixing raw freshwater fish together with rice. It is then pickled with salt and pangi, a local herb in the place. Then stored the marinated delicacy in a jar glass for about two weeks. Similar to other preserved delicacy, it is tangy and salty in flavour which can be eaten deliciously with rice (Fascinating yet Delicacies, 2018).

#### Observed Similarities of Borneo and the Philippines

The natives of Borneo resemble the physical characteristics of the Filipinos; their features and colors. They have similar cuisines and they use rice as their staple food. Their societies are multi-cultural. They both have extended families and practice close family ties. The Bajaos can be seen in both places. Both have rich natural resources. Tourists love their beaches.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Free education has been provided to the Bornean people by the Malaysian government since 2015, six years at primary level and five years at secondary level. Tertiary education is not yet free. Foreign teachers have positive remarks in teaching at Kota Kinabalu and they mentioned that people are good. Education improved tourism industry and helped peoples' lives. Although, KK may resemble other ordinary cities having shopping malls, Chinese shop houses, traditional night markets, restaurants, it has many tourist spots that captivate the attention of the people coming from different countries. The city capital of Sabah is gifted with various islands with very rich marine life. Kota Kinabalu takes pride in keeping a unique culture, wildlife conservation and mountains of adventures. These include the Signal Hill Observatory Platform, KK City Mosque, Sabah State Museum, and Atkinson Clock Tower. There are a number of cultural villages around the city that show off the songs, dances, customs and traditions of the region like Mari Mari Cultural Village. Klias Wetland River Cruise ranked first among tourists' preference. Tourists enjoyed the wildlife and the unpolluted environment and Atkinson Clock Tower as the least beautiful and interesting. There are similarities of Borneo and Philippine Islands. Both have close family ties.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

More similar studies looking into the deeper customs, traditions and values of Borneo and its educational system should be undertaken because there are rare studies along these areas. They should include the different problems encountered by the people and the tourists. It is highly recommended that tourists from other countries explore the enchanting beauty of the island of Borneo.

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