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# **Research Paper**



# **The Aesthetics of Storybird to Replace the Traditional Pen and Paper for Writing English Essays**

**Arif Bahari Musli<sup>\*</sup> , Mohd Eswandy Asre<sup>\*\*</sup> ,  
Prakash Velloo<sup>\*\*\*</sup> & Fatin Aliyah Hassan<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup>**

**Abstract:** The initiatives of the Malaysian Ministry of Education in elevating the quality of education in Malaysia had been outlined in the National Education Blueprint (2013 – 2025) and the Blueprint for Higher Institution (2015-2025). One of them is to equip students with the 21st century skills to incorporate more of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the teaching and learning process in order to improve the quality of students' learning experience in the classroom which is in line with the millenials' attraction towards visual appeal. This study aims to identify the students' perception on the usage of an ICT tool called Storybird and their thoughts on the visuals and to identify the preference of students between the digital approach and the conventional approach in writing an English essay in the ESL writing classroom. Two essay tests were carried out and a questionnaire was used as the instrument in this study. A total of 18 respondents in a private university college in Malaysia participated in this study.

**Keywords:** Storybird, visuals, ESL writing, conventional

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## INTRODUCTION

Integration of technology in teaching English subjects in Malaysia is nothing new in the education sector. It was implemented in 2003 with the integration of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in all educational fields as outlined by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2003). Although ICT has a positive influence in education, the usage of ICT in teaching writing skills in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom is still not encouraging (Yunus et al., 2013). According to the Ministry of Education's second plan in the integration of ICT, it emphasises the usage of ICT to obtain information and communication by making ICT as an educational tool. Thus, this study attempts to shed some light on the effects of the integration of ICT on writing English essays by students. The launch of the National Education Blueprint (2013-2025) and the Blueprint for Higher Institution (2015-2025) is expected to address the necessary skills needed by students for the 21st Century in line with the government's initiatives incorporate more technology in education. Advancements in technology has led to many innovations in the different ways of teaching students. Students with ICT literacy is also higher than in previous years with them being labelled as "Digital Natives" (Prensky, 2001).

One way to cater to the new generation called millennials is to incorporate digital instructional tools in writing an essay. Zakaria et al. (2016) have stated that the writing component in English can be a daunting task that can lead to boredom when the process of teaching is still using the conventional approach. A previous research titled "Students' Experience of Using Storybird in Writing ESL Narrative Text" by Zakaria et al., (2016) had explored the integration of using Storybird in teaching writing to students. This instructional tool is in sync with our current educational blueprint in incorporating ICT in educating students. One of the tools that is currently being used by writers is Storybird. Storybird is not effective enough to improve the students' essay as it needs to be visually appealing as well, to be able to gain students' interest in writing. Thus, this study aims to take a look beyond the students' experience in using Storybird. It attempts to highlight the aesthetics of the pictures which are used in Storybird and at the same time explore the students' preferred choice between the conventional approach

or the new ICT based approach in writing an essay. Literature pertaining to Storybird is still limited (Herrera, 2013; Menezes, 2012; Wertz, 2014) and there are not many studies being done on the aesthetics as well as the comparison between the digital approach and conventional pen and paper approach.

The research questions that act as the basis of this study are: (i) Are there any significant differences in using the conventional approach and the digital approach in writing an English essay? (ii) What is the perception of the students on the visuals and usage of Storybird in the learning process?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. ESSAY WRITING

Preparing for the 21st Century, students must have the necessary skills to be able to embrace the 21st century. English language teaching (ELT) and learning is still being updated with new tools and pedagogies (Velloo & Shuib, 2019). According to the Ministry of Education (2012), some of the skills needed are the ability to communicate well and having English language proficiency. One of the strategies to enhance the language proficiency in English is through writing. In producing an essay in English, most teachers will revert to the conventional method of writing an essay using pen and paper with students brainstorming for ideas and making mind maps. Writing is a very complex process regardless of whether it is by the conventional or digital approach. According to Biggs et al., (1999), writers need to simultaneously do multiple things when it comes to writing. To add to this complexity is the notion of English as a Second Language (L2). L2 learners go through much more in producing a piece of writing compared to writing in their mother tongue (L1) (Biggs et al., 1999).

### 2. STORYBIRD IN WRITING AN ESSAY

One of the application sites that helps to improve writing is Storybird. It allows users to access a wide arrange of illustrations to help in promoting writing. It is a combination of art and storytelling that can benefit both students and teachers when it comes to producing a better



piece of writing. The most interesting part in using Storybird is the images that can be used for free to aid one's writing. Art is used to create picture books with meaningful art that can be arranged by the writers to suit their story. Pop (2012) and Zakaria et al., (2016) suggested that Art is very simple to use and has very high quality visual arts. Their research aimed to study the perception of the students in producing essays using the Storybird application which can be used in the teaching of writing in the ESL classroom.

### 3. USER INTERFACE DESIGN (UI)

In order to increase the usage of an application or tool, it is very important that the application contains a good interface. According to a famous book written by Shneiderman titled "Designing the User Interface: Strategies for Effective Human-Computer Interaction (2017)", the eight fundamentals for designing a good interface are highlighted as follows:

1. Strive for consistency

Consistent sequences of actions should be maintained in similar situations. Identical terminology should be used in prompts, menus, and help screens, and consistent commands should be employed throughout.

2. Enable frequent users to use shortcuts

As the frequency of use increases, so do the user's desires to reduce the number of interactions and to increase the pace of interaction. Abbreviations, function keys, hidden commands, and macro facilities are very helpful to an expert user.

3. Offer informative feedback

For every operator action, there should be some system feedback. For frequent and minor actions, the response can be modest, while for infrequent and major actions, the response should be more substantial.

4. Design dialog to yield closure

Sequences of actions should be organised into groups with a beginning, middle and end. The informative feedback at the completion of a group of actions gives the operators the satisfaction of accomplishment, a sense of relief, the signal to

drop contingency plans and options from their minds, and an indication that the way is clear to prepare for the next group of actions.

5. Offer simple error handling

As much as possible, the system is designed in such a way that the user cannot make a serious error. If an error is made, the system should be able to detect the error and offer simple, comprehensible mechanisms for handling the error.

6. Permit easy reversal of actions

This feature relieves anxiety, since the user knows that errors can be undone; it thus encourages exploration of unfamiliar options. The units of reversibility may be a single action, a data entry, or a complete group of actions.

7. Support internal locus of control

Experienced operators strongly desire the sense that they are in charge of the system and that the system responds to their actions. The system is designed to make users the initiators of actions rather than the responders.

8. Reduce short-term memory load

The limitation of human information processing in short-term memory requires that displays be kept simple, multiple page displays be consolidated, window-motion frequency be reduced, and sufficient training time be allotted for codes, mnemonics, and sequences of actions.

Storybird is an application that has a good user interface with an artful aesthetic. The graphic layout is arranged neatly and easy for students to use and still keep their attention and focus on the application itself. The location of access is designed in a way that does not burden the users for ease of movement when they need to.

Storybird uses a graphic design that is easy to use and at the same time supported by visual art that is very much appealing to respondents of various ages. This is important as according to the eight fundamentals of UI by Schneiderman et al. (2017), it can cut the time between uploading your own visual art into a platform.

## VISUAL AESTHETICS

### 1. COLOURS

The visuals being used were objects of illustration that use basic colours and contrast. In a study conducted by Boyatzis and Varghese (1994), colour is one of the elements that is very important in affecting the emotions and reactions of an individual. For example, the blue colour tone used in Storybird as the main colour in designing the website can invoke a sense of creativity and an element of calmness for the user. This is very much relevant to the Storybird platform which aims to make respondents become creative in writing and also the art illustrator produce a creative piece. Besides that, illustration in the Storybird platform uses bright colours that trigger positive feedback from users (Boyatzis, 1993), because children are often attracted towards bright colours. This can be seen quite clearly in the creation of popular cartoon characters like Spongebob and Naruto. The use of colours should be emphasised accordingly with the objectives of the application to attract the attention of the targeted end users that was designed for.

### 2. SPACE

In the world of design, space is closely linked with the shape and line that makes up a structure of the design. What is meant by space and the relationship with the graphic design of a website or online application? Space in the world of design can be categorised into white space or negative space. The space mentioned here in the empty spaces is present around a design of an image or website. This can include the spaces between the graphic and the picture, margin and spacing, and spaces between the columns, which can also be considered as spaces.

The proper use of spaces can create a good relationship between the elements of the website with the graphic design of the overall application. Website that is designed using proper spaces will give a better user interface that is comfortable and more user-friendly. This can negate boredom when the teaching process incorporates ICT. Golombisky & Hagen (2013)'s book titled "White Space is Not Your Enemy" explained the importance of using spaces effectively and the direct relationship between the terms "form follows function". Shapes, lines and spaces that

interact with one another and a combination of proper thought-out design are used in designing the graphic user interface. Storybird makes sure it applies these concepts to fulfil the objectives in trying to attract users to use its services. Storybird has managed to manipulate the spaces to attract writers, visual artists and teachers to contribute and use their web services. It is well documented that many articles have stated the effectiveness of promoting digital story telling or essay writing by using Storybird.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study used a mixed-method which seeks the perception of the respondents in comparing writing using the conventional way and the digital approach. A test using the conventional approach in writing and using Storybird was also conducted. The test results were then compared to find if there are any significant results.

### 2. RESPONDENTS

A total of 18 respondents took part in this study. They were of mixed-proficiency levels of English. The proficiency level of the respondents was determined from their English subject 1119/1 Paper 1 and 1119/2 Paper 2 results in the Malaysian Certificate of Education or “Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia” (SPM). The respondents’ proficiency level was mixed to make sure that the findings are representative at other ESL classrooms in Malaysia. All the respondents in this study are currently enrolled in a Communicative English course in a private higher education institution in Malaysia. The number of respondents is small due to the design of the research which aims to look at the results of the test and attempts to gain more details of information by asking the respondents their opinions when comparing both the use of the conventional way of writing an essay and using Storybird.

### 3. PROCEDURES

Purposive sampling was used in this study. The respondents were given one hour to write an essay in class and one week to produce an essay using Storybird. Many of the respondents were not aware of the presence of Storybird. Thus, a simple explanation on how to use Storybird was given. Due to time constraints, the respondents were given notes on how to use Storybird. The respondents were asked to sign up for an account in Storybird and submit in a week's time with no specific theme provided to explore the creativity of the respondents. The respondents were asked to submit their work online and complete a set of questionnaire to share their perception on the use of Storybird.

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

The English essays in the test using the conventional approach of pen and paper were analysed using a rubric that was adopted from Unitar International University.<sup>1</sup> Marks were assigned accordingly based on the rubric and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 24. Questionnaires were also analysed using SPSS. The responses were decoded together with the results from the questionnaires to find any significant outcomes in the respondents' results.

### 5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The respondents managed to submit the Storybird essay within the duration that was set. The respondents essays were marked and then compared between using the conventional approach and Storybird. The data were then analysed using SPSS Version 24. The respondents' SPM English subject results from 1119/1 Paper 1 and 1119/2 Paper 2 were taken into account to ensure that the respondents were of mixed-level proficiency.

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<sup>1</sup>Essay Rubric, Unitar International University, Short Writing Course Assessment, English 3, UGQF0133.

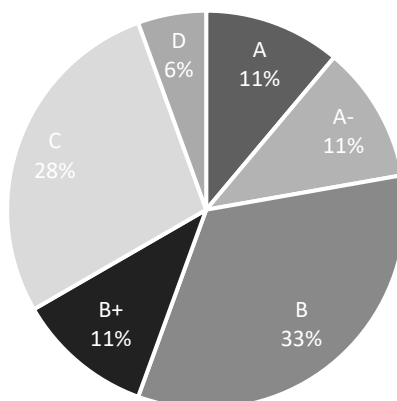


Figure 1: Respondents' overall SPM result for English 1119/1 Papers 1 and 2

Figure 1 clearly shows a mixed-level English proficiency that resembles the common classroom in Malaysia. The percentage of respondents getting grades A, A- and B+ is 11% respectively. Respondents who obtained grades B and C make up 33% and 28% respectively and only 6% of the respondents had obtained grade D.

The test was administered in the classroom. Figure 2 shows the results of the essays after they were marked. Only one respondent managed to score the highest mark that is 16 out of a total of 20 marks. This was followed by four respondents with 14 marks, two respondents scoring 13 marks, and another two respondents scoring 12 marks respectively. Only five respondents obtained the highest score of 11 marks and four respondents obtained the lowest mark of 10.

It was a different scenario with the essay writing task that used Storybird. There was an increase in respondents scoring 16 marks from one to two respondents. Respondents scoring 14 marks remained the same and only one respondent scored 15 marks. There was also an improvement in the number of respondents scoring 12 marks from two respondents to six respondents. Lastly, there was a significant drop in the number of respondents scoring 11 marks and 10 marks to two respondents each.

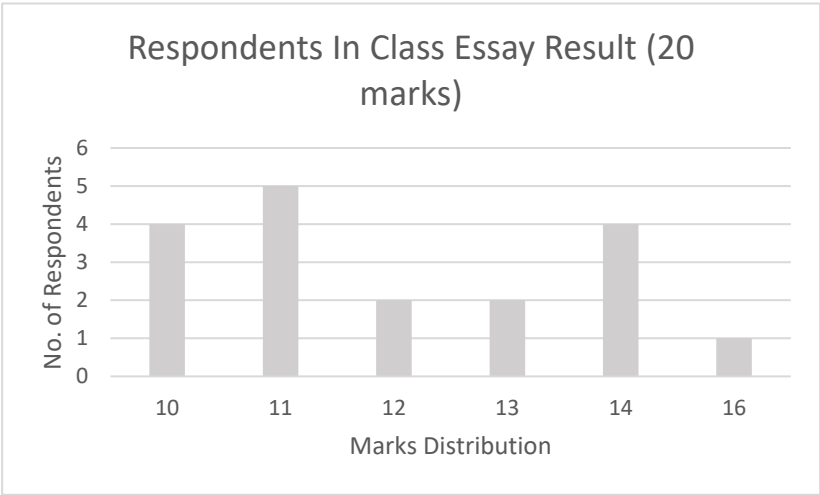


Figure 2: Respondents’ results for the essay writing task in class

Figure 1 and 2 show that the results are different when using the conventional approach in writing compared to using the one aided by a digital visual. However, the increase in marks in the findings between the two is still low compared to the benchmark of the test that is 20 marks. The shift can be clearly observed in the band of the lowest marks available where the total of 10 and 11 marks have shifted to the median point of the overall test scores when Storybird was introduced.

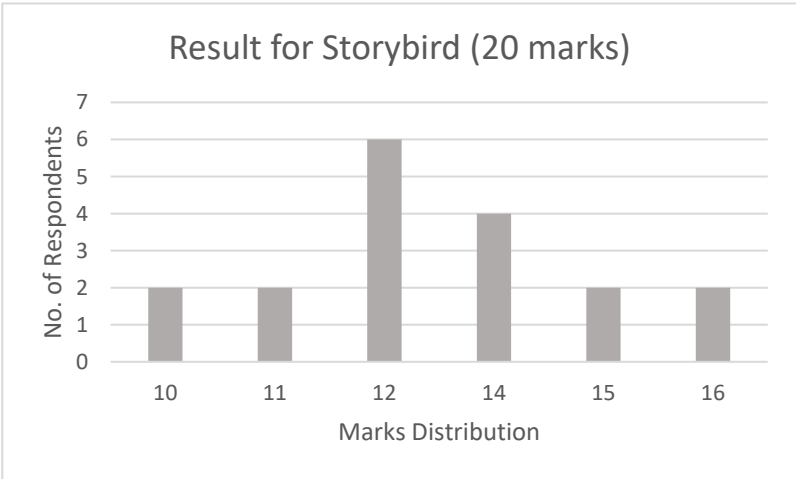


Figure 3: Respondents’ results for the essay writing task using Storybird

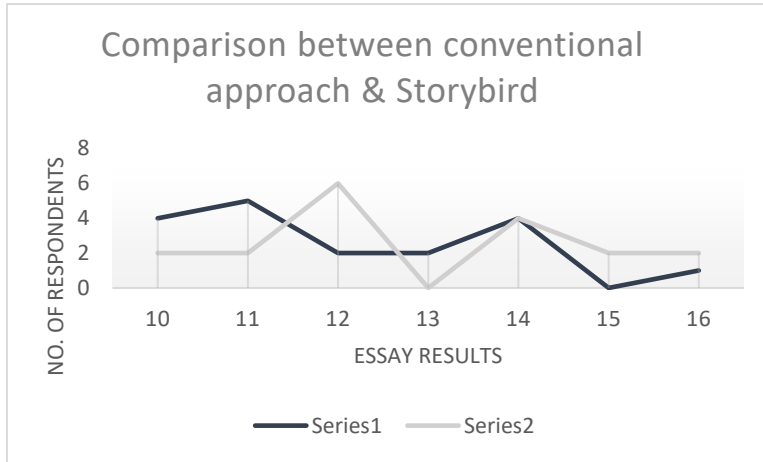


Figure 4: Comparison of results between the essay writing task using the conventional approach & Storybird

Series 1 shows the respondents' results obtained when using the conventional approach in writing the essay and Series 2 shows the respondents' results obtained when using Storybird. In Figure 4, it is apparent that there is an improvement when using the Storybird approach and the number of respondents getting higher marks has also increased.

Table 1: Paired Sample Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	In Class Essay Results (20 marks) & Results for Storybird (20 marks)	18	.637	.004

A paired sample T-test with a p value of  $< 0.05$  shows that there is a significant difference between the results from the conventional method in the class test and that using Storybird. The correlation value  $r = 0.637$  as shown in Table 1 shows that there is a positive correlation between both the tests that were carried out.



Table 2: Paired Sample Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	In Class Essay Results (20 marks) - Results for Storybird (20 marks)	-.833	1.581	.373	-1.620	-.047	-2.236	17	.039

Table 3 shows the results attained for the paired sample T-test was also significant with a p value <0.05. This shows that there are significant differences in the results between both of the tests that were conducted in class.

The perception of the respondents regarding the usage of Storybird was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was labelled according to the questions when entered using SPSS. POS1 to POS6 was used to label the questions<sup>2</sup> except for POS5 as the question was not able to be grouped together to visualize the data on a chart form as shown in Figure 5. Questions POS1 to POS6 except POS5 require a Yes and No answer where respondents are asked to choose based on their experience after using Storybird. Findings for POS1 revealed that many of the respondents were not aware of the tool to help them in writing before participating in this study. POS2 showed 13 respondents thought that it was easy to use Storybird in writing an essay while three respondents answered “No” and another two respondents answered “Others”.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the questionnaire breakdown in the Appendices Section.

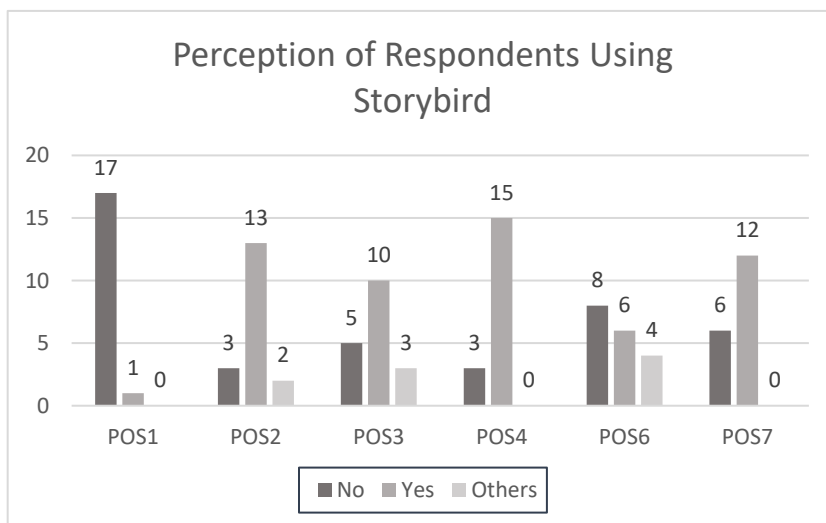


Figure 5: Perception of Respondents Using Storybird

POS3 shows that 10 respondents liked using Storybird when it comes to writing an essay, followed by five respondents opting for “No” and another three for “Others”. In the POS4 question where respondents were asked regarding the artwork that was being used in Storybird, a total of 15 respondents suggested “Yes” with the rest of the respondents opting for “No”. POS5 was assessed in a different visual data. POS6 examined in regard to whether respondents would use Storybird again to write their essay. Mixed-results were attained where only six respondents said they would likely use Storybird while a total of eight respondents said “No” and the rest chose “Others” as their responses. The last question tested whether respondents thought that using Storybird could help them to improve their writing. In POS7, the respondents were asked whether using Storybird had helped them to improve their essay, with 12 respondents replying “Yes” and six respondents ticking “No”.

POS5 examined the time used to complete the essay using Storybird. Although the deadline was set at one week, some respondents took a longer time to complete the essay. To have a better control of the time for respondents to complete the essay for richer information, it would probably be worth to take note that the essay should be written in the classroom setting during class hours.

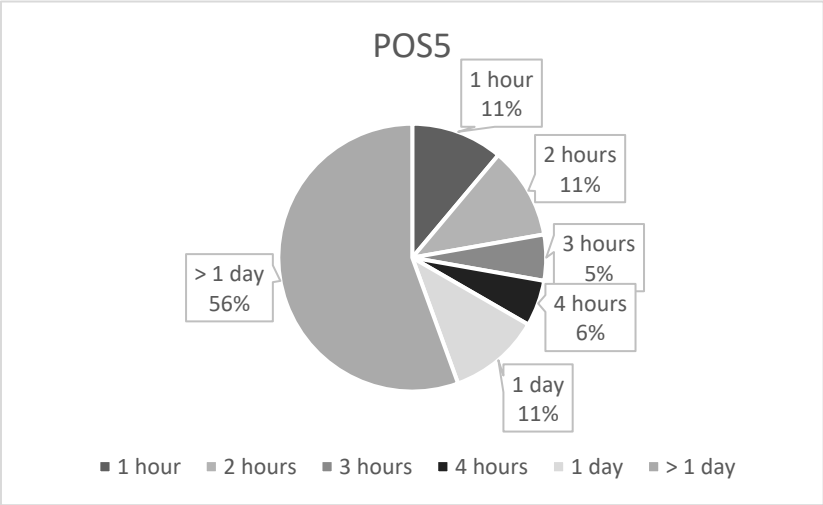


Figure 6: Student time taken to complete the essay using Storybird for PSO5

As stated before, POS5 showed a large disparity with regard to the time taken to complete the essay compared to the timeline given which was one week to be completed at home. 56% of the respondents took more than one day to complete while the rest managed to complete the task in less than a day.

Table 3: POPP1

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	27.8
	Disagree	6	33.3
	Agree	5	27.8
	Strongly Agree	2	11.1
	Total	18	100.0

The respondents were then asked a series of questions regarding the comparison between using the conventional approach that is pen and paper and using Storybird. POPP1 is to compare the ease in is writing an

essay with only 11.1% of the respondents “Strongly Agree”, followed by 27.8% who responded “Agree”. More than half of the respondents or 61.1% replied “Strongly Disagree and “Disagree”. This finding shows a contrast with what was discussed in the introduction part where millennials are more inclined towards technology use.

Table 4: POPP2

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	16.7
	Disagree	3	16.7
	Agree	6	33.3
	Strongly Agree	6	33.3
	Total	18	100.0

Table 4 reveals the finding from the questionnaire which was to assess whether respondents think it is better to use Storybird compared to using the conventional approach. 66.6% of the respondents said “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” which can be implied that the respondents found it much better to incorporate ICT when completing a writing task in English.

Table 5: POPP3

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	5.6
	Disagree	4	22.2
	Agree	6	33.3
	Strongly Agree	7	38.9
	Total	18	100.0

Table 5 shows the assessment of whether the tool is fun to use or not. It indicates that respondents were having fun using Storybird to write

an essay. 72.2% of the respondents replied “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” that it was more fun to use. However, this still does not suggest that Storybird is a better tool to help in improving the respondents’ essay based on the findings that there was not much significant increase from the result in the first essay to the second essay.

Table 6: POPP 4

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	5.6
	Disagree	4	22.2
	Agree	11	61.1
	Strongly Agree	2	11.1
	Total	18	100.0

POPP 4 is a reverse question to ask the respondents whether using the conventional approach was much better compared to using Storybird. 72.2% of the respondents “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” that it was much better. A higher result was obtained compared to using Storybird in POPP2 at 66.6%. This again helps to support the findings that the millennials were not that inclined to use technology in writing English essays.

CONCLUSION

The overall results from the study suggest that there were positive results in the effort to incorporate ICT in teaching English by using Storybird. However, there are still mixed outcomes in terms of using Storybird even though the respondents are from the millennial era. This study suggests that a larger target audience should be investigated for better generalisability. Another area that this study hopes to explore is the teachers’ perspective in trying to incorporate Storybird into the daily ESL classroom teaching.

The opinions of the respondents from PP05 was skewed towards the conventional approach due to the many technical aspects in trying to

complete the essay using Storybird. Preference in using pen and paper was due to the fact that it was deemed easier and faster to complete the task. However, the results of the respondents were different compared to their essays using the conventional approach.

The aesthetics of the Storybird has shown a positive result in which millennials are more inclined towards artistic values when it comes to learning. By incorporating art and writing, respondents' creativity can be cultivated and enhanced further. This study hopes to add to the existing literature in regard to incorporating ICT into the process of teaching and learning to write an English essay.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Survey Questionnaire<sup>3</sup>**

##### **Demographic:**

- Hometown
- High school
- Age
- Gender

##### **Story-bird**

- Have you ever heard of Storybird before this assignment? [POS1]
- Is Storybird easy to use? [POS2]
- Do you like using Storybird? [POS3]
- Do you like the artwork in Storybird? [POS4]
- How long do you take to use Storybird? [POS5]
- Will you use Storybird again in writing your English essay? [POS6]
- Using Storybird improves your essay writing in English. [POS7]

##### **Traditional Pen & Paper vs Storybird**

- Using Pen & Paper to write an essay is easier compared to using Storybird. [POPP1]
- Using Storybird in writing an English essay is better compared to traditional pen & paper. [POPP2]
- Storybird for writing essay is more fun than traditional pen & paper. [POPP3]
- Writing English Essay using traditional pen & paper is better for improvement in writing. [POPP4]
- What is your personal thought on writing using the Traditional Pen & Paper vs Storybird? [POPP5]

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<sup>3</sup>This survey was constructed and distributed through Google Form to the participants once they had completed both essays in class and Storybird.



## Appendix 2

### Essay Rubric for Writing Task

Criteria/Level	1	2	3	4
<b>Main/Topic Idea Sentence</b>	Main/Topic idea sentence is unclear and incorrectly placed, and is not restated in the closing sentence.	Main/Topic idea sentence is unclear and incorrectly placed, and is restated in the closing sentence.	Main/Topic idea sentence is either unclear or incorrectly placed, and is restated in the closing sentence.	Main/Topic idea sentence is clear, correctly placed, and is restated in the closing sentence.
<b>Supporting Detail Sentence(s)</b>	Paragraph(s) have no supporting detail sentences that relate back to the main idea.	Paragraph(s) have one supporting detail sentence that relate back to the main idea.	Paragraph(s) have two supporting detail sentences that relate back to the main idea.	Paragraph(s) have three or more supporting detail sentences that relate back to the main idea.
<b>Elaborating Detail Sentence(s)</b>	Each supporting detail sentence has no elaborating detail sentence.	Each supporting detail sentence has one elaborating detail sentence.	Each supporting detail sentence has at least two elaborating detail sentences.	Each supporting detail sentence has three or more elaborating detail sentences.
<b>Legibility</b>	Writing is not legible.	Writing is not legible in places.	Marginally legible handwriting, typing, or printing.	Legible handwriting, typing, or printing.
<b>Mechanics and Grammar</b>	Paragraph has six or more punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors.	Paragraph has three to five punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors.	Paragraph has one or two punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors.	Paragraph has no errors in punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Rubric is adopted from Unitar International University, Short Writing Course Assessment, English 3, UGQF0133.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>All credits are given to the owner for the rubric.

### Appendix 3

I

NO. [REDACTED] Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Car Accidents

It was my first time face on that situation. At that moment, I was scared and get shock. The accident just came so suddenly. Now I gonna start to talk about the story. That day was a beautiful nice day, we can see the bright sunshine and the wind blow across our face. I was the driver and I fetch four of my friends. We (was) planning going for dinner. When we are heading to the place at a traffic T-junction, we make a right turn and suddenly we (crash) on a go straight line car. Wow, seriously, I was not prepare for that crash, it's just (come) so quickly and out of my mind. My friend was scared but I also must quickly claim down because I was the driver. There are still so many car on the T-junction if I was stuck at there and soon there were be another car came to us, so I must (claim) down and move the car to the road side. After we get out the car, we looked around the car to make sure that was nobody injured and the situation of car. Luckily, there was nobody get hurt in that accident include us and the opponent. All of us discuss and we decided to make report to the (polis) police.

paying

It was my fault, I was not (getting) attention on the road and let my friend get into (dangerous) situation and also the opponent. I learned a lot of lesson in that accident and I will be careful on the next time. Thank God for blessing us without getting any (injure) from the accident.

M - 2  
S - 4  
E - 2  
L - 2  
G - 1

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11

## Appendix 4

No.: [REDACTED] Date: [REDACTED]

FAVORITE SINGER.

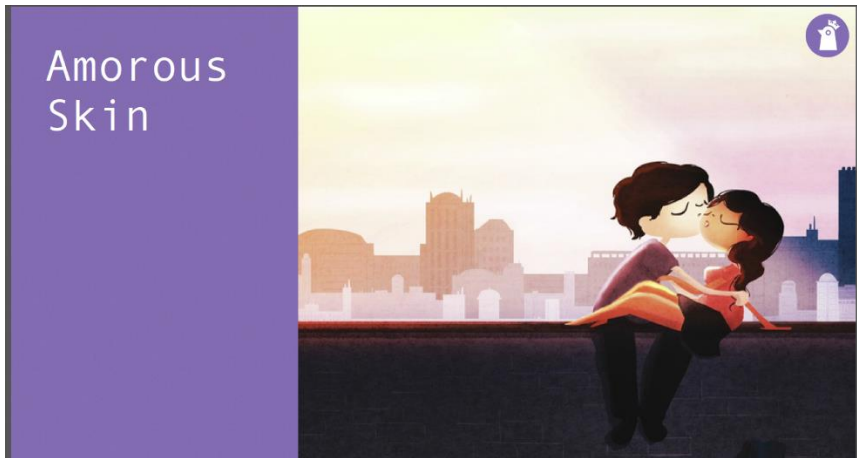
Nowadays, everyone has their own favorite singers. Well, I have too. My favorite singer is 'Joker Xue', a singer who works very hard on his passion for 10 years. He ~~sing~~ writes and sings his songs all alone until now, ~~no one~~ ~~the~~ The first song he wrote was 'Snow in earnest', but sadly, no one knows about him and his songs 10 years ago. ~~After 10 years~~ During that 10 years, he worked so hard to release an album, Xue owned a hotpot shop ~~called~~ and also an online store called 'Dangerous people'. Xue took all his hard earned money to release his first album ~~it~~ <sup>which</sup> is called 'Snow in earnest'.

Joker Xue has <sup>seen</sup> his ~~fair~~ share <sup>of</sup> ups and downs in his life. He was born and grew up in Shanghai, China. His mother passed away since he is at the age ~~of~~ four. Xue grew up with his father and grandmother. ~~His father~~ <sup>his father</sup> always stop him from learning musical instruments. His father ~~things~~ <sup>thinks</sup> that ~~it~~ it is just a waste and music won't help him to have a brighter future. But nothing could stop him from doing and learning what he likes, Xue ~~insists on~~ <sup>insists on</sup> music ~~that~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> His hard work paid off, the album 'Actor' was very well-known and it was a success for him.

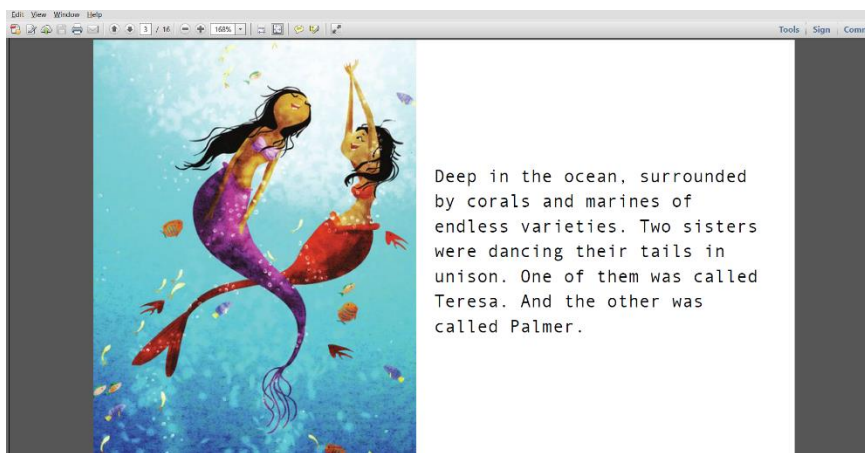
Now, he is the most-streamed mandopop artist on most of the TV shows in China. ~~fastly~~, I admire him ~~it~~ because ~~of~~ <sup>he</sup> he doesn't lose faith on himself and ~~insist~~ ~~insist~~ ~~insist~~ <sup>insists</sup> on his passion.

M - 4  
S - 4  
E - 3  
L - 3  
G - 2  
16

## Appendix 5



Storybird essay that was submitted by a student.



An essay is submitted in PDF format.



**Filial Piety and its Role in Decision-Making:  
A Qualitative Study on Negotiation and Power Relations in  
Choice of University and College Majors  
among Malaysian Youth**

**Elween Loke\***

**Abstract:** The process in deciding college or university majors is complex, especially for youth who have completed their secondary education and have been taking advice from seniors. Such complexity has been caused by the contestation in decision making, whereby applicants have to struggle between obeying their seniors, and taking control of their own lives. This paper discusses the decision-making processes employed by Penang Chinese youths as applicants of college admission or choosers of university majors, and those of their parents, where unequal power relations is built on filial piety, or ‘孝 (xiao)’ in Mandarin. Findings show that Malaysian Chinese youth constantly negotiate the exercise of filial piety under different circumstances. In cases where they disagree with their parents’ decision, they would demonstrate an innate guilt that is often tied to the filial responsibility they expect to fulfil. Nonetheless, their negotiation power would increase when they are clear of their own career path upon graduation, as they strive to convince their parents that the graduates will maintain their family reputation. Such promise is also a demonstration of filial piety, which then gives Malaysian Chinese youth the upper hand in decision-making.

**Keywords:** Filial piety, decision making, family, Malaysian Chinese, education

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. DECIDING A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY MAJOR

Deciding a college or university major is one of the most perplexing choices to make for youth who seek to pursue their tertiary education after completing their secondary education. The decision-making process is perplexing as youth, who are in the midst of entering adulthood, wrestle with the need to abide by parents' instructions and the desire to exercise autonomy in deciding possible career pathways.

Past studies suggest that parental influence plays a role in a child's education (Butler & van Zanten, 2007; Fizer, 2013; Khoo, 2015; Westbrook & Scott, 2012; Cherlin, Scabini & Rossi, 1997, as cited by Colombo, 2011). A quantitative study that involved 380 respondents in Penang by Khoo (2015) reveals that parents top the list of "person of influence" in deciding college and university programmes on behalf of their children. According to Westbrook and Scott (2012), it is common for potential university or college applicants to seek advice from their parents before making a decision, as they perceive parents to be a credible source who are well-equipped with knowledge and information about choices in relation to higher education. This corresponds with the idea of parents being treated as role models by their adolescent children (Cherlin, Scabini & Rossi, 1997, as cited by Colombo, 2011).

In a quantitative study, Liu (2018) examines factors such as reciprocal filial piety, authoritarian filial piety, expectation, student-perceived competitiveness and safety, and student-perceived parental perception in competitiveness, safety, and knowledge in influencing decisions to study abroad, university choice and country of selection. Statistical findings show that such decisions are significantly influenced by students' authoritarian filial piety and student perceived parental perception in safety and knowledge, and no significant correlations were discovered for the other factors.

According to Chen (2016), who also conducted a study on Chinese parental influence on their children's education, two primary forces that shape parental decision-making behaviour are the highly hierarchical Confucian value system, in which filial piety is emphasised. Nevertheless, there are signs whereby children are given the opportunity to voice their opinions during such decision-making processes, even

though parents still play a pivotal role in determining their children's education.

Yet at the same time, youth are more determined in deciding their own fate and challenge the pathways predetermined by the elders in the family. They avoid succumbing to the social norms that the mainstream society imposes on them (Colombo, 2011). At this stage, they experience what is known as the psychosocial moratorium (Erikson, 1968), in revising their commitment and responsibility in the hope of finding a new identity for themselves before marching into adulthood. To a certain extent, this also marks the intention of breaking free from the unequal power relations they have experienced with their parents. According to Cherlin et al., 1997, as cited by Colombo, 2011, adolescents will only acknowledge parents as their role models if the difference between the thoughts and perceptions of adolescents and their parents is minute. In other words, if there is a clash between the youths' personal interest and that of their parents, it is likely that they will stop looking to their parents as role models or for advice to establish autonomy. While youth tend to seek greater autonomy and explore new roles (Turiel, 2002), other studies suggest that they also strive to maintain a good relationship with their parents by exploring conflict resolution and negotiations (Chen-Gaddini, 2012; Lahat et al., 2009).

## 2. RELATIONSHIPS, DECISION-MAKING AND NEGOTIATION

Historically speaking, social relationships have been the subject of study among the scholarship on decision-making and negotiation, in relation to factors including informational exchange, competitive-cooperative tactics and concession making (Walton & McKersie, 1965; Rubin & Brown, 1975; Loewenstein, Thompson & Bazerman, 1989; Druckman & Broome, 1991; Valley et al., 1995; De Dreu et al., 2007).

According to previous studies, negotiators involved in the decision-making process are more willing to compromise to avoid conflict and confrontation with people with whom they have established an intimate relationship (Gelfand et al., 2006; Curhan, Neale, Ross and Rosencranz-Engelmann, 2008). At times, the decision to compromise could result in financial benefits, future negotiation opportunities and the development of one's social capital (Valley et al., 1995; Mannix et al., 1995; Curhan et al., 2010).



### 3. MALAYSIAN CHINESE AND FILIAL PIETY

Two important values embedded in the Confucian culture, as practised by the Chinese community are filial piety, or ‘孝 (xiao)’ in Mandarin, and family harmony. The tenet of filial piety, as reiterated by Bengtson and Putney (2000), focuses on maintaining family order by emphasising the importance of responsibility, interdependence, sacrifice and family harmony. Parents are endowed with the authority and responsibility to educate their children, so that such values will be passed on to the next generation. It is important for their children to exercise filial responsibility because filial piety is the “foundation for them to achieve benevolence towards people in future” (Analects of Confucius, Chapter 15, Legge, 1971). As the future that is promised seems rewarding, children are expected to demonstrate obedience and reverence to their parents and seniors in the family as the expression of filial piety, and bring glory to the family name through success in endeavours of education and occupation (Ho, 1996).

Even when conflict arises during a parent-children interaction, children are supposed to know their limits and not challenge their parents’ opinion (Luo et al., 2013). The importance of filial piety is not merely limited to communities in contemporary China but also Chinese families who live abroad (Chen et al., 2007), as well as in Malaysia (Lee et al., 2001; Cheah et al., 2017). Among the Malaysian Chinese, the need to conform to this particular social rule has caused its youth to remain obedient to their parents, and this obedience is observed as a threat to their autonomy in decision-making (Lee et al., 2001).

The decision-making process is further complicated by the cultural and contextual realities. As a result of the processes of globalisation and Westernisation, Chinese of the younger generation, regardless of whichever country they are in, are exposed to the importance and value of independence and autonomy (Yue & Ng, 1999; Wang et al., 2010). This is also evident among Malaysian Chinese as well (Chua, 2004).

Cheah et al. (2017) argue that despite the Malaysian Chinese respondents expressing their desire to pursue their own interests, they also prescribed the need to uphold the value of being filial to their parents and not brush aside their suggestions. Respondents view such concession as a moral obligation, rather than a demonstration of love and respect they have for the parent-child relationship. Such cultural and contextual

realities experienced by the Malaysian Chinese youth have also affected their choice of a college or university major, and this paper aims to examine the negotiation between Malaysian Chinese youth and their parents in the decision-making process of the subject matter by addressing the following research questions:

1. How does the expression of filial piety towards parents influence the decision of Malaysian Chinese youth in choosing a college or university major?
2. How do Malaysian Chinese youth negotiate the decision in choosing a college or university major with their parents, as far as their personal interest is concerned?

While many of the previous studies reviewed have adopted the quantitative approach in their research, this study adopts a qualitative approach to explore the dynamics and negotiation in the decision-making process. Moreover, the inclusion of filial piety as a focus of study, within the specific context of Malaysian Chinese will provide invaluable insight into the subject matter of filial piety.

## METHODOLOGY

A qualitative study was conducted to collect data in response to the research focus. Semi-structured and in-depth interviews were conducted with 11 respondents, whose ethnicity is Chinese, regardless of the ancestral clans they belong to, and who had grown up in a Mandarin speaking environment, adhering to Chinese norms and values.

The table below documents the demographic details of all the respondents:

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Family social-income status</b>	<b>Programme enrolled</b>
1A	18	Household income unknown; both parents are small traders	Mass Communications (Diploma)

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Family social-income status</b>	<b>Programme enrolled</b>
2B	20	Household income unknown; White-collared professionals	Mass Communications (Degree)
3C	19	Household income of approximately RM8,000 a month, small business owner	Business (Diploma)
4D	19	Parents are economic rice stall owners, household income of approximately RM6,000 a month	Electronic Engineering (Diploma)
5E	19	Household income unknown; White-collared professionals	Electronic Engineering (Diploma)
6F	20	Occupation unknown; Household income of approximately RM8,000 a month	Computer Science (Degree)
7G	19	Father is a an insurance agent, mother is a housewife; household income unknown	Human Resource (Diploma)
8H	19	Both parents are teachers; household income unknown	Quantity Surveying (Diploma)
9I	20	Father is a college lecturer, mother is a piano teacher, household income of approximately RM11,000	Computer Science (Degree)
10J	19	Household income unknown; White-collared professionals	Hotel Management (Diploma)

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Family social-income status</b>	<b>Programme enrolled</b>
11K	18	Father is pest control business owner, mother is an admin clerk, household income unknown	Science (Foundation)

Respondents were newly enrolled in college and university programmes within a period of less than eight weeks in 2019. This is to ensure that their recollection of the decision making process involved in choosing their tertiary educational programmes remains fresh so that they are able to provide a clear picture of the decision-making process. Another criterion in respondent selection is that their parents should have either provided advice, feedback or influenced the respondents in their choice.

Interviews were conducted in the first half of the year, based on January and April student intakes. Peer debriefing and member checks with the respondents were carried out to ensure the data collected is valid and reliable. All interviews were recorded and transcribed to ease the thematic analysis.

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

### 1. THE FINANCIER AS A MEASURE OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

The negotiation often arrives at a dead end when parents emphasise their roles as the financier of tertiary education. This is true among respondents who are dependent on family support, and have no intention to work and finance their own education. Parents might not resort to this tactic during the process of negotiation but when the time to enrol approaches and the decision has yet to be achieved, they would subtly insinuate that they are providing financial backing for the studies of their children, and that youth should trust them.

“We talked about it for quite some time [about university major], and the discussion was okay, but I was a bit lost ... but towards the

end, they made the decision for me and I agreed ...They are ... paying my college fees ... I don't see any problem with that... They will want the best for me ...”

5E, electronic engineering student (diploma)

“They told me to trust them, so I trust them. They are paying the money [tuition fees], so I just follow their decision... If I am paying myself, maybe I will be daring to have more say, but it's okay ...”

9I, computer science (degree)

In cases where parents only provide partial financial support, or students are expected to be financially independent once they are enrolled in university programmes, youth have more negotiation power during the decision-making process, but this does not guarantee the final outcome, as parents will still be able to convince them that they have their best interests in mind.

“My parents agreed to pay for my tuition fees each semester but they expect me to work and earn money to pay for my living expenses ... I'm fine with that. But I kind of wish I could pay the tuition fees myself and they pay for my living expenses, so I will probably have more say in deciding what programme to enrol.”

8H, quantity surveying student (diploma)

## 2.0 MAINTAINING FAMILY REPUTATION BY BEING ‘OBEDIENT’ AND ‘MATURE’

Unlike parents who assert their role as the education financier, respondents tend to perceive obedience as a ‘primitive instinct’ in response to enrolling in the programmes that will bring glory to the family name. To a certain extent, parents emphasise on keeping the family reputation by enrolling in programmes that will ensure promising careers, but they do not directly express to their children that following the parental advice given is a demonstration of obedience.

While such a case gives respondents greater negotiation power as compared to parents who exert direct pressure on the respondents’

choices, the instinctive nature prompts them to make decisions that match their parents' implied expectations.

“They [parents] said whatever I decide to study, I need to think of the future ... good income ... easy to find a job ... this pushes me to opt for programmes that have promising career than something that will fit my interest.”

7G, human resource student (diploma)

“They [parents] trust that I'm mature enough to make my own decision but will give advice here and there. They have high expectations of me, so I want to make them proud.”

2B, mass communications student (degree)

There is also the fear of being labelled as rebellious, especially among respondents who come from a close-knited family.

“Growing up, I have always respected my parents and the decisions they made for the family. And I think they are reasonable people. If they are unreasonable and drive me nuts, I think I would have no issue to go against them. But because they are ‘nice humans’, how can I act ‘gangster’ in front of them?”

5E, electronic engineering student (diploma)

Respondents who claimed to have a rather distant relationship with their parents have also expressed that they had been regarded as the black sheep of the family, and by taking their parents' choice of a diploma or degree major into account this will be a chance for reconciliation.

“Since young, I have always defied my parents ... well not in an aggressive manner but I threw tantrums on and off when things did not go my way. I'm quite a difficult child to deal with, and my parents had a hard time ‘controlling’ me. They eventually gave up and stopped forcing me to study what I'm not capable of, and suggested hotel management. I don't hate this decision ... don't know how to feel about it either, but I think I have learned to give

and take. By taking up hotel management, I hope to fix my relationship with my parents, especially my mum, since I would not be able to spend more time with them after completing my studies.”

10J, Hotel Management (Diploma)

### 3.0 STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN FULFILLING FILIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND PERSONAL AMBITION

Respondents find difficulties in juggling between exercising filial responsibilities towards their parents and maintaining their own ambition. As mentioned earlier, emphasis on the need to exercise filial responsibilities is not a form of direct pressure parents exert onto their children, but it is their inner battle to fight in order to prove they would prioritise parents’ advice.

The negotiation becomes more difficult when the expectations of the respondents and their parents are not aligned, whereby respondents themselves would like to pursue a different career path upon graduation. Though it might not involve open communication, respondents would drop hints in a subtle manner so that their parents understand what they want for their lives.

“I may have agreed to pursue computer science for my degree, but on and off I will remind them, I will decide my career path... it’s not that I already knew what I want to do in life, but I just want them to know I need to take control of my life as an adult.”

9I, computer science (degree)

“The funny thing is ... I like IT stuff, but it’s not computer science. I’m confused too, and I let them (parents) know. If eventually I realise computer science is not where my interest is, I will still complete my degree, because I don’t want to create problems for my parents, but I might pursue other career options. I told them about my thoughts as well, and I think they are fine with it.”

6F, computer science (degree)

In this instance, as far as their personal ambition is concerned, they would have to re-define, or rather, convince themselves that the act of ‘filial piety’ is not limited to being obedient.

“Yes, putting my personal ambition first before my parents’ wish for me is considered as disobedient. But that does not mean I’m no longer filial to my parents, or I neglect my duty as a daughter to take care of them. Obedience should not be equated with filial piety, in my opinion, especially for children who have reached adulthood.”

10J, Hotel Management (Diploma)

As for respondents with no clear ambition but are certain that the direction the parents have determined for them is not what they desire, they also believe that putting their foot down does not mean they are not filial to the parents.

“My family runs a small business, and they hope one day I can take over the business (by pursuing an education in business), since I’m their only child. I think I’ve made it clear that I have no intention of taking over their business. Not sure what I want to do yet, but I’m quite sure I do not want to take over their business... I want to decide what I want for my life, but this doesn’t mean I’m not being filial to them.”

3C, business (diploma)

## DISCUSSION

The cultural and contextual realities among Malaysian Chinese complicate their decisions in reaction to choosing a college or university major. The tension that lies in the cultural realities boils down to the fulfilment of the ethics of filial piety towards the parents, whereas the context realities reflect the desire of Malaysian Chinese youth to be independent and autonomous, as confirmed by Chua (2004).

Based on the current study, in order to be autonomous, one has to be financially independent. Parents being the financier for their children’s studies disrupt the balance in the negotiation, causing a power shift to the former. What continues to cause the power balance to be disrupted is the innate guilt that Malaysian Chinese youth would bear. Such guilt stems from the responsibility to satisfy the financiers, rather than a filial act towards their parents. Moreover, parents being the financier also give them greater negotiation power to create a sense of trustworthiness,



which their children would accept due to innate guilt. Thus, the concept of filial piety may not be accurately examined within the context of this study, as far as financial perspective is concerned, as it is the ultimate game changer.

Another form of innate guilt that Malaysian Chinese have to bear is the need to maintain family reputation by being 'obedient' and 'mature'. In other words, parents do not exert direct pressure on their children by forcing them to obey their decision. While Cheah et al. (2017) argue that the act of following their parents' decision is a moral obligation instead of a demonstration of love and respect, findings in this study suggest that the innate guilt of Malaysian Chinese youth stems from the ethics of filial piety. This innate guilt encompasses every aspect of behaviour that aims at moral obligation, love and respect towards their parents, causing the youth to lose negotiation power.

While the cultural and contextual realities do not seem to be in favour of Malaysian Chinese youth in negotiating the choice of a college or university major, one of the negotiation strategies that allows them to enhance a sense of resilience is their ambition, and the need for the parents to acknowledge the vision their children have as adults. This would not be a problem when the expectations of both parties are aligned, but when they are not, Malaysia Chinese youth have to consider fulfilling their filial responsibilities by heeding their parents' advice. At the same time, the youth spell out conditions for autonomy elusively, hoping their parents would understand and respect their decision.

## CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that Malaysian Chinese youth do not hold much negotiation power in deciding their college or university major, not because of excessive pressure from their parents, but due to the innate guilt that leads the youth to exercise filial piety. Though open communication with their parents takes place during the process of discussion, they resort to a mild approach in voicing their thoughts. As such, they are willing to compromise to avoid conflict and confrontation with their parents in the negotiation process. Putting filial piety aside, Malaysian Chinese youth do not express dismay towards parental

decisions mostly because they themselves do not view the decision made by their parents as negative, and are willing to test the waters.

While this research focuses on filial piety and negotiation power in deciding college and university majors among freshmen, future research areas can target graduating students to identify the negotiation process in the career path. As the qualitative method is employed to discover the processes in this specific study, quantitative methods can be used by examining concepts that revolve around filial piety, ambition, obedience, and their relationships. Future research could explore the role of financial sponsorship in the decision-making process as one that is independent of filial piety. The two factors of financial sponsorship and filial piety are rather exclusive from each other at the point when the study is conducted, and it might be difficult to examine their interrelations.

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# **The Influence of Job Resources and Creative Self-Efficacy on Turnover Intention\*\***

**Gabriel C. W. Gim\***

**Abstract:** Employee turnover is a continuing issue in Malaysia that challenges employers who wish to retain the best talents in their company. High employee turnover is costly to organisations especially when talent is limited. Additionally, echoing the call by our Prime Minister to steer the country from a knowledge-based economy towards an innovation-led economy, the importance of creativity must be reiterated. This study therefore examines the relationships between turnover intention, creative self-efficacy, job autonomy, and supervisor support. The research demonstrated that both job autonomy and supervisor support are positively related to creative self-efficacy. However, the relationship between creative self-efficacy and turnover intention is not significant. As a result, no mediating relationships were found. This study provides not only theoretical but also practical implications which are useful to human resource practitioners.

**Keywords:** Creative self-efficacy, job autonomy, PLS-SEM, supervisor support, turnover intention

## **INTRODUCTION**

Employee turnover is a continuous issue in Malaysia and it is troubling employers who wish to retain the best talents in their company. High employee turnover is costly to organisations especially when talent is limited.

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The shortage of talent in Malaysia might drive companies to shift their operations to neighbouring countries in South East Asia such as Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand instead (Nadaraj, 2016). According to the 2017 Hays Salary Guide, 97% of employers in Malaysia are struggling to source for skilled employees (The Star, 2017), indicating that talent is scarce in Malaysia. Therefore, employers should consider reformulating their retention strategies given the increasing talent shortages and increasing rate of globalisation.

Turnover could be either involuntary or voluntary. The issue being examined in this research is voluntary turnover because it is not within the control of the employer. Employee turnover is costly to employers which includes recruitment costs, onboarding costs, and replacement costs for the new hire (Ang, 2014). Such costs are estimated to be between RM25,000 and RM30,000 (Goh, 2012).

Additionally, echoing the call by our Prime Minister to steer the country from a knowledge-based economy towards an innovation-led economy (Malaymail, 2013), the importance of creativity must be reiterated. Therefore, creative self-efficacy should be brought into the limelight. Other than examining the factors contributing to turnover intention, the factors contributing to creative self-efficacy deserved attention as well. A highly self-efficacious employee is more likely to remain longer in organisations and it is therefore important to find ways to nurture creative self-efficacy among employees.

## 1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Malaysia has the third highest turnover rate at 9.6% in the South East Asian region (Jayaram, 2015). Furthermore, Watson (2015) reported that the intention of employees leaving their employers have increased from 29% in 2012 to 36% in 2015. Additionally, Goh (2012) reported that 75% of executives are switching jobs within a year. The above statistics are compounded by the increasing brain drain of talents seeping away from Malaysia.

A company may lose talent as a result of employee turnover but a country may lose permanent talent when one leaves a country. It is imperative for employers to stem employee turnover as a starting point to halt the brain drain issue. Employee turnover is therefore a continuing issue for employers in Malaysia given the statistics above. The number of

skilled Malaysians leaving Malaysia has risen by 300% in the last two decades (Boo, 2017; The World Bank, 2011).

Job autonomy (Mughal, 2015), supervisor support (Newman et al., 2012), and self-efficacy (Lewin & Sager, 2010) have been empirically examined, demonstrating a relationship with turnover intention. The potential role of creative self-efficacy as a mediator in attenuating turnover intention is worthy of a study. As said earlier, creative self-efficacy is an important variable to be examined to propel Malaysia from a knowledge-based economy towards an innovation-led economy. This study therefore seeks to investigate the mediating role of creative self-efficacy between job autonomy, supervisor support, and turnover intention.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of the literature is focused on turnover intention, creative self efficacy, job autonomy and supervisor support. This is followed by underlying theories and research model and hypotheses development.

### 2.1 TURNOVER INTENTION

According to Takase (2010), turnover intention comprised a multi-stage process which includes psychological, cognitive, and behavioural components in it. Despite the various components embedded in turnover intention, turnover intention basically reflects the willingness of an employee to leave an organisation (Takase, 2010).

In the first stage of turnover intention, it involves a psychological response that triggers the attitudinal withdrawal reactions (Takase, 2010). It is then followed by the cognitive element which represents the intention to withdraw from the employer. The cognitive withdrawal is then followed by withdrawal behaviour. The cognitive withdrawal represents the core of the turnover intention construct.

The antecedents to turnover intention can be categorised along organisational factors (organisational characteristics, organisational climate, and interpersonal relations with organisations), work-related factors (roles, financial rewards, working conditions, and access to power at the workplace), employee factors (demographic factors and attitudinal



factors), and external factors (work/life balance and external job market) (Takase, 2010). Work-related factors shall be examined as the independent variables in this study.

Specifically for this study, job autonomy, and supervisor support are examined as the independent variables. Contemporary researches have shown that both job autonomy (Mughal, 2015) and supervisor support (Newman et al., 2012) are negatively related to turnover intention.

Turnover intention is examined as a proxy of actual turnover because it is more pragmatic to examine the intention of employees rather than to track down employees who have left their employers (Poon, 2012). Furthermore, remedial action can be taken by employers to stem the issues contributing to turnover intention rather than to wait until damages are done.

## 2.2 CREATIVE SELF-EFFICACY

Self-efficacy is developed from an individual's cognitive and social traits that influence the individual to believe that they have the ability and competence to accomplish a task effectively and successfully (Bandura, 1995; Chong & Ma, 2010). An individual with a high self-efficacy easily perseveres in a challenging environment (Bandura, 1995).

Extending the definition of self-efficacy, Tierney and Farmer (2002) coined the term – creative self-efficacy. Creative self-efficacy is defined as one who believes that he or she has the ability to produce creative outcomes (Tierney & Farmer, 2002).

Both creative self-efficacy and its root form, self-efficacy is a motivational force that drives individuals to persevere in their endeavours (Puente-Díaz, 2016). Lewin and Sager (2010) have demonstrated that self-efficacy is negatively related to turnover intention. Furthermore, Tierney and Farmer (2002) showed that creative self-efficacy is positively related to creative performance. It therefore reflects that creative self-efficacy is related to positive job outcomes.

## 2.3 JOB AUTONOMY

A job is autonomous when the incumbent has freedom, independence, and discretion in allocating time and deciding on the procedures involved in carrying out their work (Mathisen, 2011; Oldham

& Hackman, 2010). With the autonomy at the hands of the job incumbent, it is a form of resources that could help alleviate turnover intention. From prior researches, job autonomy has been found to be positively related to self-efficacy (Wang & Netemeyer, 2002), creative self-efficacy (Mathisen, 2011), and organisational citizenship behaviour (Park, 2016). On the other hand, job autonomy has been shown to be negatively related to turnover intention (Mughal, 2015).

## 2.4 SUPERVISOR SUPPORT

Susskind et al. (2003) define supervisor support as the perception of the job incumbent that their supervisor is assisting them to perform their job. A supportive supervisor helps to improve the personal well-being of employees (Babin & Boles, 1996). Prior research have shown that supervisor support is positively related to creative self-efficacy (Chong & Ma, 2010), job satisfaction (Babin & Boles, 1996), and customer orientation (Susskind et al., 2003). On the other hand, supervisor support has been found to be negatively related to role ambiguity, role conflict (Babin & Boles, 1996), and turnover intention (Newman et al., 2012).

## 2.5 UNDERLYING THEORIES

In this study, two theories are used to explain the causal flow of the variables. The theories are the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 2012) and the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Both these two theories are theories which centre around motivation.

The COR theory is a stress model that focuses on the conservation of resources in order to generate motivation (Hobfoll, 2012). Conversely, the depletion of resources produces undesired behaviour. The COR theory helps to explain how job resources at the workplace help to alleviate turnover intention through the nurturing of creative self-efficacy. COR theory is an integration of both stress and motivational theories that can be used to explain people's behaviour (Hobfoll, 2012). In COR theory, self-efficacy is a form of a personal motivational resource (Hobfoll, 2012) which helps explain how it reduces turnover intention. Job autonomy and supervisor support are forms of job resources that help to build the employees' motivational resource, which in turn alleviates any forms of withdrawal intention, which is turnover intention.

Other than COR theory, self-determination theory helps to explain the causal flow examined in this study. Niemiec and Ryan (2009) posited that the cultivation of job autonomy at the workplace assists in building up creative energies.

Self-determination theory looks at both environmental and personal factors that drive self-motivation, social functioning, and personal well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Competence, autonomy, and relatedness are the three important psychological needs that determine how motivated a person is and how mentally healthy a person is (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When those needs are satisfied, an individual gets motivated, engaged, and behaves mentally well. Hence, organisations that wish to motivate their employees, regulate their employees' behaviour and foster mentally healthy employees should satisfy the three important psychological needs among their employees.

Applying the self-determination theory, organisations should design autonomous jobs and provide sufficient supervisor support in order to build up confidence in creativity among employees that could help downplay their intent to withdraw from the workplace.

2.6 RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

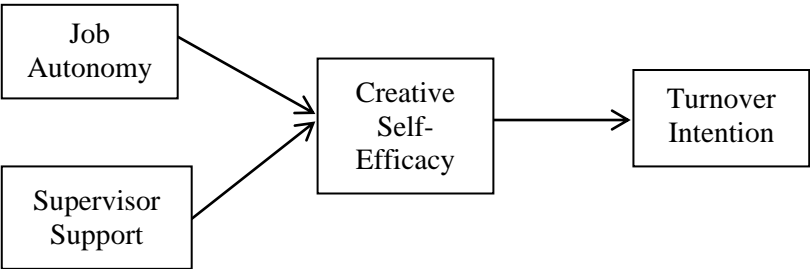


Figure 1: Research Model

Specifically, it is hypothesised that creative self-efficacy serves as a mediator between the independent variables (job autonomy and supervisor support) and turnover intention as the dependent variable. The research model of the study is shown in Figure 1.

Prior researches (Mathisen, 2011; Wang & Netemeyer, 2002) have shown that job autonomy has a positive relationship with both creative self-efficacy and self-efficacy among real estate agents and

manufacturing employees. When job incumbents experience freedom and autonomy in their job, it gives them more leeway in carrying out the work as they wish. The freedom paves the way to the job incumbents to fully utilise their skills, knowledge, and creativity to find the best solution to their work (Wang & Netemeyer, 2002). It also helps to cultivate experimentation, playfulness, and endurance that enable the job incumbent to experience themselves what method works and what does not work, which in turn further increases their efficacy beliefs (Mathisen, 2011). Hence, the following hypothesis is developed.

H1: Job autonomy has a positive relationship with creative self-efficacy.

Chong & Ma (2010) examined employees from financial, business service, telecommunication, and food industries and found that supervisors' supportive and non-controlling management style is a positive predictor of creative self-efficacy. This is because a supportive supervisor who provides useful resources, ideas, and feedback helps improve the ability and confidence of the subordinate in delivering creative work (Chong & Ma, 2010). Hence, the following hypothesis is developed.

H2: Supervisor support has a positive relationship with creative self-efficacy.

In a study among salespeople, Lewin & Sager (2010) found that self-efficacy is a negative predictor of turnover intention. They explained that employees who hold strong efficacious beliefs are better able to stay committed to their work in the face of adversity. Hence, the following hypothesis is developed.

H3: Creative self-efficacy has a negative relationship with turnover intention.

Based on the foregoing justifications hypothesising the relationships between job resources and creative self-efficacy as well as between creative self-efficacy and turnover intention, it is reasonable to state that

creative self-efficacy could play a role as a mediator between job resources and turnover intention. Hence, the following hypotheses are forwarded.

H4: Creative self-efficacy mediates the relationship between job autonomy and turnover intention.

H5: Creative self-efficacy mediates the relationship between supervisor support and turnover intention.

## METHODOLOGY

This study is a positivist research relying on a quantitative research method. Questionnaires were distributed on a convenience sampling basis to Malaysian workforce to obtain their responses to the variables of this study.

The study relied on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to simultaneously analyse the relationships among the variables. The SmartPLS 2.0 software (Ringle et al., 2005) was used to apply PLS-SEM into the data. SPSS version 20 was also used for data entry and for analysing the demographic profile of the respondents.

The creative self-efficacy was adapted based on a scale developed by Tierney and Farmer (2002) containing three items. The Cronbach's alpha reported ranged from 0.83 to 0.87. The scale was measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (7) "strongly agree".

The job autonomy scale was adapted based on a scale developed by Mathisen (2011) containing four items. The Cronbach's alpha reported was 0.81. The scale was measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (7) "strongly agree".

The supervisor support was adapted based on a scale developed by Susskind et al. (2003) containing four items. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.95 reported by Susskind et al. (2007). The scale was measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (7) "strongly agree".

The turnover intention scale was adapted based on a scale developed by Jaros and Culpepper (2014) containing five items. The Cronbach's

alpha reported was 0.88. The scale was measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (7) “strongly agree”.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Upon collection of the data, the data are subjected to statistical analysis in order to test the hypotheses developed for this study.

### 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A total of 86 Malaysian employees responded to the questionnaire. The SPSS 20 software was used to obtain the frequencies of the demographic profile. In summary, the majority of the respondents are below 31 years old (66.3%), are male (58.1%), are Chinese (64%), are not married (61.6%), are equipped with diplomas or advanced diplomas (30.2%), are working 12 months or less in their organisation (60.5%), and holding non-executive positions (51.2%).

### 4.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE MEASUREMENT MODEL

As part of the PLS-SEM analysis, the measurement model is assessed first by assessing the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of the constructs.

Convergent validity is assessed by inspecting the factor loadings and the average variance extracted (AVE). Individual factor loadings should be above 0.70 in order to be deemed significant (Hair et al., 2014). Factor loadings which are below 0.40 should be deleted (Hair et al., 2014). There were no factor loadings which were below 0.40.

After inspecting the factor loadings, the AVEs of each construct were inspected to ensure that it is above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014). Two constructs with AVEs below 0.50 were found. The two constructs were job autonomy and turnover intention. As a result, the lowest factor loadings for each construct were deleted in order to increase the AVEs. JA4 of job autonomy and TI2 of turnover intention were deleted. Upon deletion of the two items, the AVEs for job autonomy and turnover intention increased to above the 0.50 threshold as shown in Table 1 below. As a result, all constructs are convergently valid.

Following the assessment of the convergent validity, the discriminant validity of each construct is inspected. This is done by comparing the square roots of the AVEs with the correlations between the constructs to ensure that the square root of the AVEs is higher than the correlations. As shown in Table 2 below, the square roots of the AVEs, which are bolded, are higher than all of the correlations and thus, supporting that all the constructs are discriminantly valid.

Subsequently, the reliability of the constructs is inspected to ensure that the composite reliability is above 0.60 (Hair et al., 2014). The composite reliability for all constructs is above 0.60. Therefore, the scales used for each construct in this study are considered reliable.

Table 1: Results of Measurement Model

Variable	Item	Loading	Composite Reliability <sup>a</sup>	AVE <sup>b</sup>
Creative Self-Efficacy	CSE1	0.803	0.889	0.727
	CSE2	0.870		
	CSE3	0.883		
Job Autonomy	JA1	0.827	0.767	0.542
	JA2	0.870		
	JA3	0.430		
Supervisor Support	SS1	0.680	0.878	0.645
	SS2	0.750		
	SS3	0.853		
	SS4	0.910		
Turnover Intention	T1	0.990	0.890	0.804
	T3	0.792		

- Note: a. Composite reliability (CR) = (square of the summation of the factor loadings)/{(square of the summation of the factor loadings) + (square of the summation of the error variances)}
- b. Average variance extracted (AVE) = (summation of the square of the factor loadings)/{(summation of the square of the factor loadings) + (summation of the error variances)}

Table 2: Discriminant Validity of Variables

	<b>CSE</b>	<b>JA</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>TI</b>
Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE)	<b>0.853</b>			
Job Autonomy (JA)	0.442	<b>0.736</b>		
Supervisor Support (SS)	0.294	0.313	<b>0.803</b>	
Turnover Intention (TI)	0.077	0.058	-0.227	<b>0.897</b>

Note: The bolded diagonals represent the square root of the AVEs while the other entries represent the correlations.

#### 4.3 ASSESSMENT OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

After assessing the measurement model to ensure that the constructs are reliable and valid, the structural model is assessed. The assessment was made using SPSS version 20 and SmartPLS 2.0. In order to assess the structural model, the following are assessed:

- i. Collinearity
- ii. Path coefficients
- iii. Coefficient of Determination
- iv. Effect Size
- v. Predictive Relevance

##### (1) COLLINEARITY

The first step in assessing the structural model involved assessing the collinearity. The three exogenous variables, which are job autonomy, supervisor support, and creative self-efficacy, are regressed against turnover intention to obtain the variance inflation factor (VIF) values.

The VIF values are 1.28 (job autonomy), 1.118 (supervisor support), and 1.243 (creative self-efficacy). All of the VIF values computed are below 5.0 (Hair et al., 2014) and therefore, there is no condition of collinearity.



(2) PATH COEFFICIENTS AND COEFFICIENT OF DETERMINATION

The second step is computing the path coefficients to test the hypotheses of this study. Bootstrapping was carried out to obtain the path coefficients, standard errors, and the *t* values. Table 3 shows that both job autonomy ( $\beta = 5.046$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and supervisor support ( $\beta = 1.667$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) have significant positive relationships with creative self-efficacy. It therefore shows that H1 and H2 are supported.

However, it was found that creative self-efficacy does not have a significant relationship with turnover intention ( $\beta = 0.506$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The mediating role of creative self-efficacy was also examined. Hence, the mediating relationships are also not significant. It therefore shows that H3, H4, and H5 are not supported as shown in Table 3 below.

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) for creative self-efficacy is 22.2% and for turnover intention is 0.6%. It means that both job autonomy and supervisor support explain 22.2% of variance in creative self-efficacy while creative self-efficacy only explains 0.6% of variance in turnover intention.

Table 3: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Standard Error	<i>t</i> value	Decision
H1	JA $\rightarrow$ CSE	0.388	.077	5.046**	Supported
H2	SS $\rightarrow$ CSE	0.173	0.104	1.667*	Supported
H3	CSE $\rightarrow$ TI	0.077	0.152	0.506	Not supported
H4	JA $\rightarrow$ CSE $\rightarrow$ TI	0.030	0.060	0.493	Not supported
H5	SS $\rightarrow$ CSE $\rightarrow$ TI	0.013	0.037	0.359	Not supported

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$

## (3) EFFECT SIZE

Apart from statistical significance, practical significance is also important. The effect size is a guide to determine whether the particular path is practically significant or not. The  $f^2$  is relied upon in order to assess the effect size. The effect size is computed manually (Hair et al., 2014) and the formula is shown below in Table 4.

Table 4: Effect Size for Direct Effects

Relationship	$f^2$ Effect Size	Magnitude
JA → CSE	0.170	Medium
SS → CSE	0.034	Small

Note:  $f^2 = \frac{R^2 \text{ included} - R^2 \text{ excluded}}{1 - R^2 \text{ included}}$

The rules of thumb for  $f^2$  are 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium), and 0.35 (large) (Cohen, 1988). From Table 4, it therefore shows that job autonomy ( $f^2 = 0.170$ ) has a medium effect on creative self-efficacy ( $f^2 = 0.034$ ) whereas supervisor support has a small effect on creative self-efficacy. It implies that job autonomy has a higher practical significance compared to supervisor support in influencing creative self-efficacy.

## (4) PREDICTIVE CAPABILITY OF THE MODEL

The final step in the assessment of the structural model is assessing the predictive capability of the model. This is done by inspecting the  $Q^2$  (predictive relevance) by using the blindfolding procedure in SmartPLS. The cross-validated redundancy is relied upon to compute the  $Q^2$ . The independent variable is said to have predictive relevance on the dependent variable if the  $Q^2$  is above 0 and vice versa if the  $Q^2$  is below 0.

Two separate blindfolding procedures were calculated for both creative self-efficacy and turnover intention and the  $Q^2$  values are 0.138 for creative self-efficacy and -0.028 for turnover intention respectively. Only the  $Q^2$  value for creative self-efficacy is above

zero and therefore, it indicates that the path has predictive relevance. However, the  $Q^2$  value for turnover intention is below zero and thus, it shows that the path pointing towards turnover intention has no predictive relevance. It is therefore consistent with the non-supported hypothesis on the relationship between creative self-efficacy and turnover intention.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current study has revealed that both job autonomy and supervisor support are positively related to creative self-efficacy. Thus, it corroborates past studies that both these two variables are positively related to creative self-efficacy (Chong & Ma, 2010; Mathisen, 2011; Wang & Netemeyer, 2002). The result signals the need for organisations to provide the freedom to employees to decide on how they carry out their work in order to nurture the development of creative efficacious employees. An autonomous job increases the confidence among employees to be creative in making judgements and decisions. The result also implies that it is important for organisations to have supervisors providing creative ideas, resources, and constructive feedback in order to encourage the development of creative efficacious employees at the workplace.

Additionally, this study showed that there is no significant relationship between creative self-efficacy and turnover intention. As a result of the non-significant relationship, there is no mediating effect in this study. Since Lewin and Sager (2010) had shown that self-efficacy is negatively related to turnover intention, the result of the current study came as a surprise. The most plausible reason for the non-significant relationship between creative self-efficacy and turnover intention is because of the high numbers of non-executive employees responding to this study, which consists of 51.2%. Non-executive respondents perhaps face limited job opportunities and thus, having higher or lower creative self-efficacy does not influence their intention to change jobs. As an example, Trevor (2001) showed that those with lower levels of education have lower turnover intention due to lesser job options. It might explain the reason why creative self-efficacy has no effect on turnover intention for this study.

In regards to effect sizes, comparing between job autonomy and supervisor support, job autonomy has a stronger effect on creative self-efficacy. It is more important to place higher emphasis on designing autonomous jobs if an organisation wishes to elicit higher creative self-efficacy from its employees. Besides job autonomy, having a supportive supervisor is important to increase the level of creative self-efficacy among employees.

There are limitations in this study that readers should pay attention to. The first limitation is that the respondents in this study were chosen based on a convenience sampling. Thus, the findings of this study could not be generalised to all Malaysians. It is suggested that future studies be undertaken to overcome the limitation of this study by using a probabilistic sampling when it is practical to do so.

The second limitation is that the respondents in this study were not restricted to any specific industry or positions which could help to control for a homogenous sample. It is suggested that future studies be undertaken by restricting the respondents to a specific industry or positions to obtain a more homogenous sample.

In conclusion, it has been empirically shown that both job autonomy and supervisor support are important job resources at the workplace because they are positively related to creative self-efficacy. Therefore, human resource practitioners should design autonomous jobs and encourage supervisors to support their subordinates in order to develop higher creative self-efficacy.

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# **Workplace Incivility in the Banking Sector in Malaysia:**

## **A Descriptive Study**

**Lim Hui Ling\***

**Abstract:** Incivility has become an increasingly prevalent problem at the workplace. Unfortunately, there is a scarcity of research about workplace incivility in the Malaysian context. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of workplace incivility in the banking sector in Malaysia. This study contributes significantly by investigating the overall level of workplace incivility from two perspectives, both instigated and experienced uncivil behaviours. The descriptive analysis on 208 participants from ten local and foreign banks in Kuala Lumpur and Penang showed that workplace incivility is a rather common phenomenon. Limitations and direction for future research are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Workplace incivility, instigated and experienced incivility, banking sector, Malaysia

### **INTRODUCTION**

Uncivil behaviour at the workplace is a persistent and prevalent problem in the past two decades amid a more advancing world. According to the Civility in America poll conducted by US News and World Report in 1999, every nine out of ten Americans thought that incivility was a serious problem. As high as 78% of the participants said that the problem had become worse in the past ten years (Zauderer, 2002). The situation has not improved since then. The Civility in America 2011 poll reported that 86% of Americans were mistreated at

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work and 59% admitted to being uncivil to their co-workers (Mattice, 2012). Cortina et al. (2001) found that more than 70% of the participants in public service in the United States experienced workplace incivility in the past five years. Burnes and Pope (2007) also found a very high rate of staff experiencing or witnessing negative behaviours in National Health Services in the United Kingdom. Spence Laschinger et al. (2009) revealed that almost 70% of nurses experienced incivility. Pearson and Porath (2005) showed that almost four out of five participants witnessed incivility at the workplace. Incivility has also been acknowledged as one of the most common types of anti-social behaviour among employees (Cortina, 2008). The civility report published by Porath and Pearson (2013) revealed that about 40% of the participants in America encountered rude behaviours from employees at least once a month (Porath and Pearson, 2013). Undoubtedly, workplace incivility has become one of the growing challenges that needs to be dealt with (Ghosh, 2017).

Asian countries cannot be spared from incivility problems too. The descriptive research by Yeung and Griffin (2008) indicated that workplace incivility is rather common in Asian countries as well. Lim and Lee (2011) found that 91% of participants in Singapore experienced some forms of incivility at the workplace in the past five years. Across the causeway, Malaysians were reported to be rude and inconsiderate. As pointed out in a news report (Lim et al., 2012), Malaysia was ranked as the third rudest country (placed 33rd out of 35 countries surveyed) by Reader's Digest in 2006. In 2012, an evaluation conducted by Reader's Digest showed that Kuala Lumpur was again positioned at the bottom list of the Least Courteous Cities, sitting at number 34 out of 36 major cities (Lim et al., 2012). Such ranking reflects the finding of a descriptive study conducted by Ida and Zeti (2012), who found that workplace incivility was a common issue in the Malaysian workplace. Out of the 691 participants from both public and private sectors in West Malaysia, 41% of them reported that they had been given little attention or shown little interest to their opinions.

The purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of workplace incivility in the banking sector in Malaysia. The research on workplace incivility in Malaysia is still scarce and deserves to be further explored. This study helps to complement the work of Ida and Zeti (2012) which

only focused on experienced incivility. This study, on the other hand, looked at both instigated and experienced incivility. By considering the two dimensions of incivility, this study contributes to further enhancing our theoretical understanding of the prevalence of incivility at work.

## WORKPLACE INCIVILITY AND OTHER MISBEHAVIOURS

Since Andersson and Pearson published their work on workplace incivility in 1999, many scholars have been focusing more on this covert behaviour than other overt forms of misbehaviour like theft, violence, and bullying (Caza & Cortina, 2007; Hornstein, 2003; Pearson et al., 2000; Zauderer, 2002). This is because incivility has been found as one of the most prevalent types of antisocial behaviour in organisation (Cortina, 2008; Pearson et al., 2000) and can have far-reaching and detrimental consequences to both organisation and employees (Cortina & Magley, 2009). Incivility can also become a chronic feature of an organisational climate which creates daily stressor for employees (Marchiondo, 2012). Thus, incivility deserves a serious scrutiny in both research and practice.

Andersson and Pearson (1999) defined workplace incivility as “low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect,” (p.457). Two distinguished criteria or features are intensity and intent (Lim & Lee, 2011; Sakurai & Jex, 2012). Based on the formative definition provided by Andersson and Pearson (1999), uncivil behaviours are mildly intense. They represent the mildest form of workplace deviant behaviours and have a low level of negative charge (Cortina & Magley, 2009). Examples of incivility include speaking to a co-worker condescendingly, supervisor ignoring a worker in a meeting (Miner & Eischeid, 2012), avoiding from returning a phone call or even a smile (Bartlett et al., 2008), making demeaning remarks about co-workers (Cortina et al., 2001) and many more. These uncivil behaviours can be contrasted from serious forms of workplace deviance such as physical aggression or sexual harassment.

The next feature of incivility is its ambiguous intent. Uncivil behaviours normally lack clear intent to harm (Roberts, 2012). Instigators may intentionally or unintentionally engage in uncivil acts to harm their target. On the other hand, the targets or witnesses may perceive these behaviours as intentional or accidental acts from the instigators

(Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Pearson & Porath, 2005). This means that some uncivil behaviours may be due to the instigator's ignorance or a target's misinterpretation. As such, workplace incivility is referred to as a "milder form of psychological mistreatment in which intentionality is less apparent" (Cortina et al., 2001).

Another feature of workplace incivility, according to Lim, Cortina and Magley (2008), is the violation of norms for respect. Workplace incivility involves acting rudely or discourteously with disregard for others in the workplace and in violation of workplace norms for respect (Andersson & Pearson, 1999). Workplace norms are unwritten rules and beliefs about how people should think, behave and interact with each other (Hammer et al., 2004). Shared moral understanding and foundational norms for mutual respect exist among organisational members (Hartman, 1996). Although Andersson and Pearson (1999) recognised that norms vary across organisations, industries, and cultures, they postulated that in every workplace there are norms for respect for co-workers, without which, cooperation among co-workers will be disrupted. The norm deviant nature of incivility has also been recognised by other researchers (Marchiondo, 2012; Roberts et al., 2011).

By looking at the characteristics or elements in the definition of workplace incivility, one can learn that workplace incivility can be distinguished from other more serious forms of deviance, for instance, workplace aggression, workplace bullying, and workplace violence. Workplace aggression is defined as efforts or intended behaviours by individuals to harm others at work or the organisation (Neuman & Baron, 1998). Intentions to harm are present in workplace aggression. Workplace bullying involves repeated behaviour that threatens, intimidates, humiliates, sabotages, or isolates target individuals at work, undermines their reputation or job performance (Daniel, 2009; Oslf, 2010). Workplace violence can be narrowly defined as physical acts of violence such as homicide, robbery, and assault (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002), or psychological violence like verbally abusive actions (Barling, 1996).

To provide a clearer insight of the differences between workplace incivility and other forms of deviant behaviour, Andersson and Pearson (1999) presented a diagram to show how workplace incivility differs from and overlaps with other forms of mistreatment in organisations such as antisocial behaviour, deviant behaviour, workplace violence and

aggression (Everton et al., 2007; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Kennedy et al., 2004; Marcus & Schuler, 2004). This diagram is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

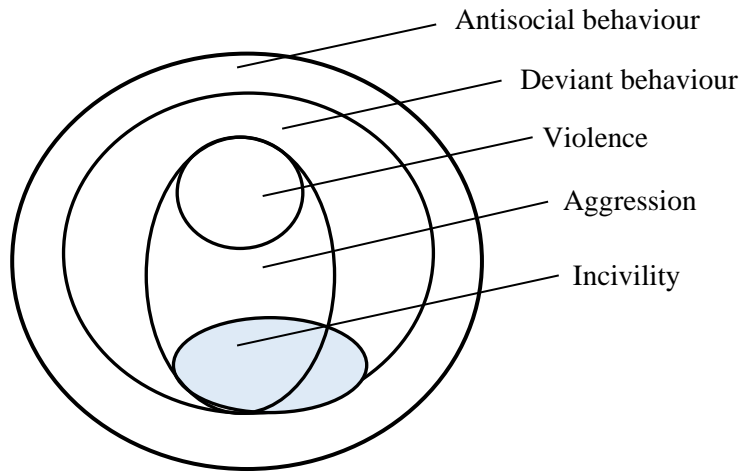


Figure 1  
Incivility and other forms of mistreatments  
Source: Andersson and Pearson (1999)

Figure 1 shows that antisocial employee behaviour encompasses all other conceptualisations of mistreatment in the organisation. Antisocial behaviour includes any behaviour that brings harm to the organisation and/or its members. Deviant behaviour is a form of antisocial behaviour that violates workplace norm, and it includes aggression and incivility. Violence refers to high-intensity, physically aggressive behaviour that falls under aggression. Aggression refers to the behaviours that are intended to harm the organisation and/or people in the organisation. Obviously, considerable overlaps exist among the many different terms of misbehaviour (Greenberg, 2010). As pointed out by Faridahwati (2006), research in organisational misbehaviour suffers from some conceptual difficulties due to the lack of agreement in terms of terminologies and definitions. Table 1 provides the definitions of some frequently used constructs of negative behaviours in organisational research, including insidious workplace behaviour which was recently introduced by Edwards and Greenberg (2010).

Table 1: Definitions and Examples of Negative Behaviours at Work

Concept	Authors	Definition	Examples
Noncompliant behaviours	Puffer (1987)	Non-task behaviours that have negative organisational implications and break rules and norms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being late and take excessive breaks</li> <li>• Taking sales from other workers</li> <li>• Complaining about the organisation or other employees</li> </ul>
Deviant workplace behaviour	Robinson & Bennett (1995)	Voluntary behaviours that break significant organisational norms and threaten the well-being of the organisation or its members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production deviance: damaging quantity and quality of work</li> <li>• Property deviance: abusing or stealing company property</li> <li>• Political deviance: bad-mouthing others, spreading rumours</li> <li>• Personal aggression: being violent towards others</li> </ul>

Concept	Authors	Definition	Examples
Organisational misbehaviour	Vardi & Weitz (2004); Vardi & Wiener (1996)	Acts that violate core organisational or societal norms; intentional workplace acts that violate rules pertaining to such behaviours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intending to benefit the self and the organisation, intending to inflict damage, wasting time, absenteeism, sexual harassment, crime</li> </ul>
Antisocial behaviour	Giacalone & Greenberg (1997)	Actions that bring harm, or are intended to bring harm, to an organisation, employees or stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aggression</li> <li>Theft</li> <li>Discrimination</li> <li>Sabotage</li> <li>Harassment</li> <li>Lying</li> <li>Revenge</li> </ul>
Dysfunctional behaviour	Griffin et al. (1998)	Actions by employees or groups of employees that have negative consequences for an individual, a group, or organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent and deviant: aggression, physical and verbal assault</li> <li>Non-violent and dysfunctional: alcohol and drug abuse, absence, theft</li> </ul>

Concept	Authors	Definition	Examples
Workplace aggression	Neuman & Baron (1998)	Efforts by individuals to harm others with whom they work, or have worked, or the organisations in which they are presently, or were previously employed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homicide and assault</li> <li>• Theft</li> <li>• Intentional work slowdown</li> <li>• Yelling and making racist remarks</li> </ul>
Workplace incivility	Andersson & Pearson (1999)	Low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target and in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making demeaning remarks</li> <li>• Addressing someone in unprofessional terms</li> <li>• Open co-worker's desk drawer without prior permission</li> </ul>
Social undermining	Duffy et al. (2002)	Behaviour intended to hinder, over time, the ability to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work related success, and favourable reputation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making insulting personal comments</li> <li>• Failing to share important information</li> <li>• Deliberately misreporting information</li> </ul>

Concept	Authors	Definition	Examples
Workplace bullying	Einarsen et al. (2003)	A range of negative behaviours including harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rumour spreading and slander</li> <li>• Hurtful teasing and jokes</li> <li>• Blame without factual justification</li> </ul>
Counterproductive work behaviour	Gruys & Sackett (2003); Sackett (2002)	Intentional behaviour of organisation member that is viewed by the organisation as contrary to its legitimate interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft</li> <li>• Destruction of property</li> <li>• Unsafe behaviour</li> <li>• Poor quality of work</li> <li>• Misuse of information</li> </ul>
Counterproductive work behaviour	Spector & Fox (2002, 2005)	Voluntary, volitional acts that hurt or intended to hurt organisations or people in organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing tasks incorrectly</li> <li>• Verbal hostility</li> <li>• Sabotage</li> <li>• Theft</li> </ul>



Concept	Authors	Definition	Examples
Workplace violence	Bulatao & Vandenbos (1996); LeBlanc & Kelloway (2002)	Act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behaviour at the work site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats and verbal abuse</li> <li>• Physical assaults</li> <li>• Homicide</li> <li>• Rape</li> <li>• Robbery</li> </ul>
Insidious workplace behaviour	Edwards & Greenberg (2010)	A form of intentionally harmful workplace behaviour that is legal, subtle, and low level, repeated over time, and directed at individuals or organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Badmouthing the company to others</li> <li>• Repeatedly chastising a co-worker</li> <li>• Repeatedly sabotaging the sales reports submitted by a co-worker</li> </ul>

## METHODOLOGY

### 1. MEASUREMENTS

In this study, workplace incivility was conceptualised based on the definition developed by Andersson and Pearson (1999) in their seminal work. It refers to low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm and in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Operationally, workplace incivility refers to the frequency an employee exhibits incivility (disrespectful, rude, and condescending behaviours) to others and experiences incivility from others at the workplace within a certain period of time (Cortina et al., 2001).

To gauge the overall level of workplace incivility in the Malaysian banking sector, participants, who are the bank employees, were asked to

respond to both types of incivility they experienced and instigated. Experienced workplace incivility was measured using the seven-item Workplace Incivility Scale (WIS) developed by Cortina et al. (2001). The alpha coefficient of WIS in Cortina et al.'s (2001) study was 0.89, demonstrating high reliability and cohesiveness. Many researchers have also used this scale and reported a reliability coefficient greater than 0.80 (e.g., Caza & Cortina, 2007; Cortina & Magley, 2009; Taylor et al., 2012; Taylor & Kluemper, 2012). In fact, WIS is one of the most widely used scales in incivility studies. Participants were asked to indicate how often they experienced a list of behaviours done to them at work in the past one year. Some of the behaviours included "Paid little attention to a statement you made or showed little interest in your opinion" and "Addressed you in unprofessional terms either privately or publicly".

On the other hand, instigated workplace incivility was measured with WIS modified by Blau and Andersson (2005). To measure the incidences of instigated incivility, Blau and Andersson (2005) reversed the perspective and repeated the general content of the seven-item WIS previously mentioned. The lead in phrase now became "How often have you exhibited the following behaviours in the past one year to someone at work?" The items include "Paid little attention to a statement made by someone or showed little interest in their opinion", "Doubted someone's judgment in a matter over which they have responsibility" and "Addressed someone in unprofessional terms either privately or publicly". A reliability coefficient of 0.89 was recorded by Blau and Andersson (2005).

Both experienced WIS and instigated WIS were measured on a seven-point frequency response ranging from '1' "never", '2' "hardly ever/once every few months", '3' "rarely/about once a month", '4' "occasionally/at least several times a month", '5' "sometimes/at least once a week", '6' "frequently/at least once a day", to '7' "very frequently/at least several times a day". The present study employed a seven-point frequency response scoring to capture the multiple incidences of incivility within a day as suggested by Blau and Andersson (2005). Higher scores reflected higher levels of workplace incivility.

## 2. DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Demographic information asked included gender, age, educational level, marital status, position held, supervisor's gender, tenure under current supervisor, and frequency of interaction with supervisor. Participants' gender, supervisor's gender, and marital status were measured by nominal scales. Educational level was measured with five ordinal categories: SPM/STPM, bachelor's degree, master's degree, doctorate, and others. Participants were also required to specify their position held at the current organisation. Age and tenure under current supervisor were measured using ratio scales. Lastly, frequency of interaction with supervisor was measured by a 7-point frequency scale.

## 3. SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Multistage cluster sampling technique (Sekaran, 2000) was used to select the sample. Based on the list of banks obtained from The Association of Banks in Malaysia, 10 sample banks were selected randomly one-by-one. The 10 banks selected at this first stage were AmBank, CIMB Bank, Citibank, Hong Leong Bank, HSBC Bank, Maybank, OCBC Bank, Public Bank, RHB Bank and United Overseas Bank (UOB). At the second stage of sampling, 30 branches of these 10 local and foreign banks in Kuala Lumpur and Penang were selected. These include 26 local bank branches (87%) and 4 foreign bank branches (13%).

## 4. DATA COLLECTION

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 416 employees at 30 sample branches of local and foreign banks. A total of 221 questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 53%. However, 13 sets of responses were dropped from the analysis due to missing data, incomplete scoring, or outlier problems. Therefore, only 208 responses were used in the analysis. All data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 21.

Table 2: Profile of Participants (N=208)

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
<i>Gender:</i>		
Male	67	32.2
Female	141	67.8
<i>Marital Status:</i>		
Single	77	37.0
Married	123	59.1
Divorced	7	3.4
Widowed	1	0.5
<i>Age:</i>		
20-29	56	26.9
30-39	77	37.0
40-49	57	27.4
50-59	18	8.7
<i>Educational Level:</i>		
SPM/STPM	76	36.5
Bachelor	108	51.9
Master	18	8.7
Others	6	2.9
<i>Place of Work:</i>		
Foreign bank	86	41.3
Local bank	122	58.7
<i>Supervisor's Gender:</i>		
Male	89	42.8
Female	118	56.7
<i>Missing Value</i>	1	0.5
<i>Tenure under Supervisor:</i>		
Less than 1 year	24	11.5
1-3 years	103	49.5
4-6 years	54	26.0
7-9 years	17	8.2
10-12 years	5	2.4
13-15 years	0	0
15-20 years	1	0.5
<i>Missing Value</i>	4	1.9

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
<i>Frequency of Interaction with Supervisor:</i>		
Never	0	0
Hardly Ever	1	0.5
Rarely	10	4.8
Occasionally	13	6.3
Sometimes	32	15.4
Frequently	70	33.6
Very Frequently	81	38.9
<i>Missing Value</i>	1	0.5

## RESULTS

To achieve the objective of this research, descriptive analyses were performed to find out the occurrence of experienced and instigated workplace incivility among the employees in the Malaysian banking sector.

The overall mean score for experienced workplace incivility was 2.55. On the other hand, the overall mean score for instigated workplace incivility was relatively lower at 2.33. Mean scores for all items in both experienced and instigated workplace incivility were less than 3. Table 3 below shows the frequencies of responses for each of the seven items of experienced workplace incivility, its respective mean and standard deviation, descending from the highest mean value. The most frequent uncivil act experienced by the employees was being doubted about their judgment over the matter they had responsibility in (Item 6), with more than 85% of the participants reported that they experienced this at least once every few months, and about 11% of them said they encountered it at least once a week. However, the mean score for Item 2 ("Paid little attention to your statement or opinion") was the highest (Mean=2.89, SD=1.23). Item 3 ("Made degrading, rude or unfavourable remarks about you") scored the lowest mean (Mean=2.24, SD=1.24) among all items. Yet, less than 35% of the participants had never experienced rude or unfavourable remarks made against them at their workplace.

Table 3: Frequency of Experienced Workplace Incivility (N=208)

Items		Response Frequency (%)							Mean (SD)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2	Paid little attention to your statement or opinion.	15.9	22.1	29.3	24.5	6.3	1.9	0	2.89 (1.23)
6	Doubted your judgment in a matter that you have responsibility in.	12.5	36.5	17.8	22.1	10.6	0.5	0	2.83 (1.24)
7	Made unwanted attempts to draw you into a discussion of personal matters.	23.1	33.7	15.4	17.8	7.2	2.4	0.5	2.62 (1.37)
5	Ignored or excluded you from professional gathering (e.g. social conversation).	24.0	29.8	22.6	13.9	9.6	0	0	2.55 (1.26)
1	Looked down on you in some way.	25.5	32.7	19.7	12.5	8.7	0.5	0.5	2.50 (1.30)
4	Addressed you in unprofessional terms (either privately or publicly).	36.5	31.3	13.9	10.1	5.8	2.4	0	2.25 (1.33)

Items		Response Frequency (%)							Mean (SD)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3	Made degrading, rude or unfavourable remarks about you.	34.6	30.3	19.7	7.7	7.2	0.5	0	2.24 (1.24)

Note:

1=Never; 2=Hardly ever (about once every few months); 3=Rarely (about once a month); 4=Occasionally (about 2-3 times a month); 5=Sometimes (about once a week); 6=Frequently (about once a day); 7=Very frequently (at least several times a day)

Table 4 presents the frequencies of responses for the seven items of instigated workplace incivility, mean, and standard deviation. Not only the average mean score was lower compared to that of experienced workplace incivility, every item in instigated workplace incivility also reported a lower value. The highest mean of 2.68 (SD=1.25) was recorded by Item 6 (“Doubted someone’s judgment in a matter that they have responsibility in”). This is also the most frequent uncivil act committed by the participants. About 85% of the participants stated that they had done this to others at least once every few months. The least frequent act was addressing someone in unprofessional terms either privately or publicly (Item 4), with more than 40% of the participants said they had never done this to others. Item 1 (“Looked down on others in some way”) scored the lowest mean of 2.08 (SD=1.19). Although the participants gave relatively lower scores to instigated workplace incivility, it is undeniable that workplace incivility is a rather general occurrence at the workplace in the Malaysian banking sector, though it might not occur prevalently.

Table 4: Frequency of Instigated Workplace Incivility (N=208)

Items		Response Frequency (%)							Mean (SD)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6	Doubted someone's judgment in a matter that they have responsibility in.	15.4	38.0	22.6	12.0	11.1	1.0	0	2.68 (1.25)
2	Paid little attention to someone's statement or opinion.	20.2	33.7	20.2	16.8	6.3	2.9	0	2.64 (1.30)
5	Ignored or excluded someone from professional gathering (e.g. social conversation).	25.5	37.0	18.3	10.1	8.7	0.5	0	2.41 (1.24)
7	Made unwanted attempts to draw someone into a discussion of personal matters.	30.8	39.4	10.6	11.5	5.8	1.9	0	2.28 (1.28)
3	Made degrading, rude or unfavorable remarks about someone.	36.1	36.5	13.5	7.7	5.3	1.0	0	2.12 (1.19)



Items		Response Frequency (%)							Mean (SD)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4	Addressed someone in unprofessional terms (either privately or publicly).	41.3	25.0	22.1	5.3	5.8	0.5	0	2.11 (1.20)
1	Looked down on others in some way.	38.9	35.1	11.5	8.7	5.3	0.5	0	2.08 (1.19)

Note:

1=Never; 2=Hardly ever (about once every few months); 3=Rarely (about once a month); 4=Occasionally (about 2-3 times a month); 5=Sometimes (about once a week); 6=Frequently (about once a day); 7=Very frequently (at least several times a day)

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Workplace incivility is a relatively new research interest in Malaysia. To date, not many studies have looked into this issue in the Malaysian context. As pointed out by Ida and Zeti (2012), the research of workplace incivility in the country is still very scarce. Their descriptive study, nonetheless, has provided some good background information whether workplace incivility occurs in Malaysia.

The main objective of the present study was to identify the occurrence of experienced and instigated workplace incivility among employees in the Malaysian banking sector. Indeed, workplace incivility does happen in the country. This finding supports Ida and Zeti's (2012) work. However, this study found some differences in specific uncivil behaviour most experienced by the participants. For example, the current study found that the most frequent uncivil behaviour employees *experienced* was being doubted their judgment over the matter they had responsibility in, whereas Ida and Zeti (2012) found that the most frequent uncivil behaviour experienced by employees was being paid little attention to or shown little interest in their opinion. Besides, in the

current study, the mean scores for all items were also higher (highest=2.89, lowest=2.24) than that reported by Ida & Zeti (2012). The standard deviations were relatively stable too, ranging from 1.23 to 1.37 for all 7 items. With regard to *instigated* incivility, most participants admitted that they had doubted others' judgment before too, at least once every few months. The second most frequent incivility done to others was paying little attention to their statements or opinion. The finding regarding instigated workplace incivility is a significant contribution to the literature in the Malaysian context.

In spite of the significance of the findings and their implications, the current study has limitations and leaves room for future research. The use of self-report questionnaire brings some limitations to the accuracy of data. There is a possibility that social desirability bias might be present and affect the quality of the analysis. Although employees may be more hesitant to admit and report their own rude behaviours at work, self-report questionnaire may still be an appropriate means to gather the information. Incivility involves mild and ambiguous deviance that may be unnoticed and off the company records. Thus, given the private knowledge that employees have of their own behaviours, Fox and Spector (1999) stated that self-report is the best available tool in data gathering. Other studies reported that participants were actually quite honest in telling their uncivil behaviours (de Jonge & Peeters, 2009). It was surprising that most participants in the present study reported their engagement in uncivil behaviours quite honestly with the overall mean for instigated workplace incivility recorded at 2.33 (Minimum=1.00, Maximum=5.14). This relatively low mean score is within expectation due to certain extent of social desirability bias (Spector & Fox, 2005).

To address the limitation mentioned above, future research should not solely rely on single source data but must try to obtain information from multiple sources, for example, from self-report, superior's report, subordinate's report, and peer report. Human beings tend to underreport the improper acts they have done. Researchers should take alternative methods to minimise social desirability bias in future studies.

As the findings suggest, workplace incivility does occur in Malaysia. Since workplace incivility could harm an organisation and its members (Cortina & Magley, 2009; Lim et al., 2008; Sakurai & Jex, 2012), ways to address this issue should be discovered. To do this, the causes of

workplace incivility should be determined and identified. To be successful and sustainable, organisations need to understand that every employee deserves the right to work in a respectful environment and be treated with dignity.

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# **Typhoon Haiyan Coverage on Inquirer and The Wall Street Journal News Sites:**

## **A Framing Analysis\*\*\*\***

**Lim Lai Hoon\* , Ngoi Kok Shen\*\* & Tan Ching Mei\*\*\***

**Abstract:** Natural disasters, which strike without warning and leave limited scope of preparedness, is a potentially traumatic event that is collectively experienced with severe consequences. With its high news values, natural disasters gain attention of the media, and therefore are given foremost and extensive coverage, particularly on news sites which allow readers to access the updates anytime anywhere. Natural disaster coverage is always of great concern to people as it involves massive deaths, human suffering and brings a huge impact to the aftermath life of the victims. Debates were going on that the media depicted natural disasters from different perspectives, especially between the Asian media and the Western media, due to the geographical, cultural, political interest and ideological divergences. Therefore, by taking Typhoon Haiyan news coverage as a case study, this research aims to investigate the differences of news frames featured in the Asian local media, Philippine Inquirer and Western media, The Wall Street Journal news sites. The findings indicated that the news framing of the Typhoon Haiyan disaster showed resemblance in primary news source and theme coded for both the Philippine Inquirer and The Wall Street Journal. Both the local and international news media “mediatised” disaster beyond the national spectrum of interest. The proliferation of new media, irrespective of

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Western or Asian media, has transformed the world of disaster into a global context.

**Keywords:** Natural disaster, news framing, Typhoon *Haiyan*, news coverage, news media

## INTRODUCTION

Natural disaster news coverage is increasingly getting popular concern as it does not only involve enormous deaths and human suffering, but also brings a huge impact to the life aftermath. Natural disaster strikes anytime without warning and leaves limited scope of preparedness (Hanusch, 2012). It may come in series or time-delimited and is a potentially traumatic event that is collectively experienced with an acute onset. The consequences of natural disaster are severe from physical, social, psychosocial, social economic, social demographic and even political perspectives (McFarlane & Norris, 2006; Houston et al., 2012).

In the time of crisis, effective communication is important for response, recovery and next-stage preparedness for the local and international community. At this critical moment, people are relying on the mass media for updated information. People trust the information provided by the media even though there is no further justification for the natural hazards. People are outrageous seeing the calamity of others but yet very interested in knowing more about the mass destruction due to the natural disaster (Zarqa, 2013). Apparently, what average citizens come to know about the disaster are primarily learned from the mass media (Quarantelli, 1991). For the past few decades, natural disaster news has taken up foremost and extensive coverage of the mass media (Houston et al., 2012).

Natural disaster reporting on the media always gains substantial audiences. Thus, when a big natural disaster happens, the media will suspend regular programming and start ‘disaster marathons’ broadcasts by providing updated information and ongoing occurrences (Liebes, 1998). Reporters have to cover disaster news in a hurry and provide developments of the disaster. In an unknown and hazardous situation, they have to immediately reach the scene to get exclusive and first-hand

news in the rush. According to Zarqa (2013), hype is accelerated by journalistic competition with a drive of being the first during disaster. <sup>1</sup>As during Hurricane *Katrina*, media were unable to gather contextually rich information about the causes and consequences of the natural disaster (Miller & Goidel, 2009).

Given the point of people keep turning to mass media for providing descriptions of what has actually occurred, the community recovery progress and the dreadful impact of the disaster, it is important to have constant studies on how media depict natural disaster, especially between the Asian media and the Western media which may report from different perspectives due to the geographical, cultural, political interest and ideological differences (Broinowski, 1999; Leach, 2005; Knight, 2005). As such, by taking Typhoon *Haiyan* disaster as a case study, this research aims to examine the differences of the news frames featured in the Asian media and the Western media, namely, *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites (NPR, 26 Jan 2014).

The emergence of online news has posed a challenge to the traditional mass media particularly in the production routine and presentation format. News websites are great sources of news which involve lesser gatekeepers. The users could have access to the news updates of their interest for 24 hours a day with a wide selection of news content (Mellese & Müller, 2012). *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites were chosen as they carry the highest circulation, both in printed and digital format, in the Philippines and United States respectively (Agility PR Solutions, June 2019; Philippines Daily Inquirer, 7 April 2014).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Framing analysis is used in this study to examine the selection of ‘some aspects of a perceived reality’ that makes those aspects more salient to a media audience. Framing is useful in analysing, interpreting, organising and understanding the information in order to define the

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<sup>1</sup>Typhoon *Haiyan* was reported as the strongest storm recorded at landfall, and unofficially the strongest typhoon ever recorded in terms of wind speed, which happened in the Philippines on 8 November 2013, and killed at least 6,000 people in that country alone (NPR, 26 Jan 2014).

problem, diagnose causes or make judgments (Houston et al., 2012). Alatas (1997) criticised that framing is the journalistic routine of giving a news article a central theme by focusing on certain aspects of a multifaceted event. Different frames define an event or causes of this same event or issue to be understood in different ways (Gandy, 2001). As pointed by Price & Tewksbury (1997), how the news is presented will affect public opinion about the reported stories and actors involved in it. Thus, it is important to understand the framing scheme. The framing scheme of this study is the news theme and news source. The framing scheme examined the themes and primary source emphasised on *Haiyan* disaster news coverage on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites. According to Tankard (2001), several news features such as headlines, subheads, photographs, photo captions and leads commonly convey frames. Thus, the news frames of the *Haiyan* disaster coverage are addressed in the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the themes of Typhoon *Haiyan* news coverage on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites?

RQ2: Who are the news sources in Typhoon *Haiyan* coverage on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites?

Entman (1991) suggested that the possible frames for a particular event can be reliably detected by comparing the journalistic texts of two or more news-media outlets. Based on the Typhoon *Haiyan* disaster, this study aims to compare cross-media framings, between the Philippines and USA. Particularly, this comparative study investigates the themes and the news sources of Typhoon *Haiyan* coverage on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites and highlights whether these themes change over time. The study provides an insight and better understanding on the news coverage of an Asian natural disaster from the perspectives of both the Asian and Western media. It is critically important to understand how the Asian disaster news is presented on Asian media and Western media. News stories often reflect the predominant cultural norms, political power structures, and media systems in which journalists work (Hallin & Manini, 2004). According to Hanitzsch (2007), journalists working in Asian countries are less likely

to openly challenge the powerful. As such, this study compares the two news media from different countries because they have different political power structures and media systems that reflect broader differences in professional norms, cultural values and social ideologies (Frith & Mueller, 2003). Through a comparison of the news frames of Typhoon *Haiyan* coverage on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites, we address the third research question as follows:

RQ3: What are the differences of news frames featured in Typhoon *Haiyan* news stories on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites?

## METHODOLOGY

### 1. APPROACH

This study employs quantitative and qualitative content analysis to examine how two online news sites frame the *Haiyan* disaster news. The study followed Matthes and Kohring's approach (2008) by coding different frame elements of the text.

### 2. SCOPE

The unit analysis is the individual news story. 'Haiyan' stories uploaded on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal* news sites were downloaded. The database search covered a 2-month time frame from 8 November 2013 which is the occurrence day of Typhoon *Haiyan* to 8 January 2014 by using 'Haiyan' keyword search. To qualify as a unit analysis, a news story has to relate to Typhoon *Haiyan*. After the process of screening and filtering, the total data set featuring 509 stories that were related to Typhoon *Haiyan* were found. *Philippines Inquirer* produced 336 stories whereas 173 stories were from *The Wall Street Journal*.

### 3. VARIABLES

Based on past researches (Knight, 2005; Barnhurst & Mutz, 1997; Worawong et al., 2007), the coding scheme was initially constructed. The coding variables included the name of the news site, the dateline of the story, the headline, the first two paragraphs of the news story, the primary source of the news story - local government, foreign government, police, medical authorities, victims' relatives and friends, business organisations, non-government organisations, benefactors, eyewitness/victims, locals, prominent figures, religious groups, media and expert and the news theme – politics of local government, economy, health and environment, human interest, victim count, relief, fund-raising & donation, science & facts, communication, search & rescue, damage, recovery, rehabilitation & aftermath, religious matters, crime, politics of foreign government, aid effort, refuge and historical & tourism.

The categories of news theme used were initially drawn from the study of Knight (2005) which examined media reportage of the 2004 Tsunami. The appropriate news of each story was coded based on the story focus in the headline and lead. If the coder could not identify the theme from the story's headline and lead, then the rest of the story is examined until the theme is identified. Primary source in the study refers to the source the person who was first mentioned or quoted in the article. Source categories were also initially drawn based on two studies that focused on natural disasters (Knight, 2005; Houston et al., 2012).

### 4. PROCEDURE

After defining the coding categories, the coders pre-tested twenty *Haiyan* related news articles posted on *Philippines Inquirer* and *The Wall Street Journal*. After the pre-test, the coders resolved their disagreement through discussions to achieve intercoder agreement. This process was repeated twice. Then, changes were made to the categories of news themes and sources. Three coders then separately coded all the 509 news stories.

After the coding process, through quantitative content analytic technique, the total of each category of source and theme was counted. Then, the result was analysed by using interpretive qualitative approach.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. THE CONCEPT OF 'DISASTER' AND THE ROLE OF MEDIA

Disasters, either natural or manmade, have always been one of the top news stories that best captured the general public's attention (Houston et al., 2012). The term 'disaster' has been defined and described meaningfully by the disaster researchers, as 'an event concentrated in time and space' or 'mass emergencies' that brings observable negative consequences, like 'physical harm and social disruption' (Fritz, 1961; Perry, 2006; Lindell, 2013). The characteristics of disasters, being 'unusual, dramatic, and often have great impact upon people's lives' have made disasters newsworthy, and driven by commercial imperatives that news outlets are 'expected' to report them (Belle, 2000). In short, media are pressured to report accurate information speedily and spread to the largest audience possible (Kodrich & Laituri, 2005).

A disaster's concentration in time can be defined according to temporal periods, e.g. pre-impact, trans-impact, and post-impact (Lindell, 2013). According to the emergency management of National Governors Association (NGA), the time frame can also be understood through the activities in different phases, e.g. hazard mitigation, disaster preparedness, emergency response, and disaster recovery (Lindell, 2013). The 'issue-attention cycle' proposed by Downs (1972) attempted to illustrate the different stages of a disaster: (1) a pre-problem stage, (2) alarmed discovery and euphoric enthusiasm, (3) realising the cost of significant progress, (4) gradual decline of intense public interest, and (5) a post-problem stage (Houston et al., 2012). But what is crucial, is the amount of time since a disaster occurred, that not only affects individuals and community at large in terms of needs, activities and concerns, but also influences the news coverage on the disaster over time (Houston et al., 2012).

Media involvement in disasters has contributed significantly to those who are in areas at risk, victims or those who show concerns. Though not exclusively, but yet recognising the contribution of media, the Disaster Research Center has given the credit to mass media as the primary source of information that fulfills the average citizens' and officials' expectations about disasters, that they know and learn from the disasters that happened (Houston et al., 2012). The roles of mass media, can range

from communicating the risk warning, describing the real event, informing the public about post event, to contributing to individual and community recovery and resilience when reporting a disaster (Norris et al., 2008; Houston et al., 2012).

Being an integral part of the social and political response to disasters, news media helps to foster immediate reaction of the international relief efforts, particularly in forming public opinions and shaping their demands for government policies such as the preparedness and prevention efforts for future disasters, as well as determining their support for relief aids (Belle, 2000). Besides, news media have also been 'shaping citizens' knowledge of natural disasters' (Cowan et al., 2002).

In the 1970s, a survey done in the United States reported that 80 percent of respondents, who have no direct experience with the natural disaster, relied heavily on firstly, the electronic media and secondly, the newspapers for disaster information (Wenger et al., 1975; Belle, 2000). Belle (2000) analysed the United States news coverage of foreign disasters using a set of contextual influences variables on the amount of coverage, indicating 'distance' of the event from the United States demonstrates expected relationship with the amount of coverage when the magnitude of the disaster event is controlled.

Though it might suggest disaster news own great prominence in the media, nevertheless disaster reporting has also been claimed to influence people's judgments about the actual damage and their preparation towards disasters (McClure & Williams, 1996). Studies found that media coverage on disasters are lacking of coverage comprehensiveness, contain inaccuracies, overdramatize social and individual reactions, and interpret statistics without context (Wilkins & Patterson, 1987; Hiroi et al., 1985; Cowan et al., 2002). Assuming representation of the disaster which occurred is accurate, media have nevertheless, presented 'an inaccurate image of mass devastation' to the public (Cowan et al., 2002).

The effects of disaster reporting towards its audiences as well as the normative roles of media have been further discussed and challenged in the recent studies. Cottle (2014) who staged disaster in a global context, has adopted a more critical view. He questioned the way disasters was conceptualized, and argued that 'what's ruled in and what's ruled out' carries political or ideological implications. Echoed by Houston et al. (2012), who questioned the implications of disaster coverage on wider

political conversations about disaster-related issues, also urged an investigation on the normative function of media in relation to disasters.

The contemporary disaster coverage is no longer confined geographically. Cottle (2014) argued using the studies of Hurricane Katrina, what was once 'national' has turned 'global' with the emergence of new media. Examining the roles of new media, specifically news sites, in the formation of a disaster community in Cyberspace after the Gujarat earthquake that happened in India in 2001, Kodrich and Laituri (2005) wrote that the advancement of new technology, which is interactive in nature, has dramatically changed the way media report disaster, forcing the media to take on 'an active humanitarian role' rather than the role traditionally taken.

Furthermore, media's involvement with the disaster has exceeded what was once solely reporting disaster news, but has intervened in disaster management (Kodrich & Laituri, 2005). Murthy (2013) argued that blogs functioned as a democratising agent in Sri Lanka during the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, where the new media has given the 'local' journalists 'global voices' to challenge disaster coverage which they found problematic. Also, drawing the case of Typhoon *Haiyan* which swept across the Philippines in November 2013, Cottle (2014) quoted the efforts of Google, in developing online tools - 'crisis map' and a 'people finder' to assist people in the immediate disaster aftermath. In his conclusion, he claimed that the 'mediated disasters in a global age' today have become increasingly dependent on media and communications, and thus causing disasters to be 'defined, dramatised and publicly constituted' (Cottle, 2014).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1. FRAMING AND FRAMING ANALYSIS

Entman's definition of 'framing' is "possibly the most widely accepted" (David et al., 2011) amongst the scholars. Matthes (2009) in his analysis of media framing studies found that Entman's definition is the most influential definition in the studies of media frames. Framing means 'selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular



problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/ or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman, 1993). He suggested that framing functions to define problem, diagnose causes, make moral judgments and suggest remedies. Recognising the power of news media coverage, text and visual presentation in framing and formulating a picture of an issue in the mind of the public within a political realm, Entman (2004) argued that media frames are able to 'stimulate support or opposition to the sides in a political conflict' through emphasising elements of depicted reality while de-emphasising elements that construct a counter frame.

Framing can occur generally within a culture, or in the minds of professional communicators and members of the lay public, or in specific media texts such as articles and broadcasts (Entman et al., 2009). Frames are 'selective' in nature, and therefore suggesting ideas that construct reality in a certain way (Matthes, 2012). Through selecting and highlighting some information at the expense of others, news frame is capable of shaping the minds of audiences and influencing their interpretations towards issues, candidates and events. In short, framing is considered 'an active process of creating, selecting, and shaping the frames' (Matthes, 2012).

Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) suggested news frames can be analysed at macro and micro levels. Macro level emphasises on the mode of presentation used to disseminate information which communicates an underlying schema among the audiences, while micro describes how the audiences use the information and presentation features to make sense of an issue. Besides, news frame can also be studied from the media and audience perspective (Matthes, 2009). Matthes (2012) commented in his studies on framing politics that although news frames are impactful, however, audience frame towards the political issues is not always consistent with what was suggested by the political elite or the news media. In addition, frames tend to change over time, depending on whether the issues and events are well known (Houston et al., 2012).

Framing analysis today is found commonly used in news framing studies at national level (Houston et al., 2012; Yang & Ishak, 2012; David et al., 2010; Dahmen, 2010) and recently, at cross-national level (Mellese & Muller, 2012; Oh et al., 2012; Kwon & Moon, 2009).

Amongst these studies, traditional news media like newspapers, broadcast and news magazines are commonly studied.

David et al. (2010) analysed news framing on population debate in the Philippines comparing source and news frames in broadsheet newspapers. Even though some started to investigate online news reports, news sites and blogs, comparative research in recent years has indicated a growing interest in exploring framing at a larger context, sampling the new media. Kwon and Moon (2009) took a cross-national approach, and ran a cross-media investigation between newspapers and blogs on collectivism in news framing. They highlighted two important aspects in the development of framing research. Firstly, “framing” carried cultural and national differences with the emergence of globalisation. Secondly, the embedded values, based on current national interests, political ideology and cultural norms and values, that build the common frames bridging journalists’ news and public’s interpretation, need to be studied in the new media environment. Capturing a similar vision, Oh et al. (2012) conducted a cross-national study of US and Korean newspaper coverage, comparing the cross-cultural variations in news frames and sources.

Though studies of how disaster news is framed are not new, yet very few studies can be found on natural disasters. One of them is Li’s (2007) study of news framing on the television coverage of a human-made disaster – the September 11 terrorist attacks. The study suggested a coverage frame scheme based on Entman’s conceptualisation of framing, and it was later adopted by Houston et al. (2012) in their studies of news framing of natural disasters. Considering its applicability in analysing disaster news, six main categories of coverage frames have been used to analyse the leads and headlines in disaster news, namely, (1) political; (2) economic; (3) environment; (4) human interest; (5) criminal; and (6) others. Investigating the newspaper and news broadcasts coverage of natural disasters in the United States over a period of ten years, they also found that, disaster news today tend to emphasise on disaster economics while giving attention to the current impacts of disaster on humans, the built and natural environment, as well as the affected state and region. However, very little convincing evidence has shown that media play a role in contributing to the aspects of disaster preparedness, recovery and resilience (Houston et al., 2012).

2. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To determine the news sources and the news themes that appeared in Typhoon Haiyan news coverage, a total of 509 stories were content analysed within two months (62 days) of The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) and The Philippines Inquirer (PI) reporting. Of this total, 173 items or 33.99 per cent of the stories appeared in WSJ whereas 336 items or 66.01 per cent appeared in PI. The news coverage of Typhoon Haiyan in PI, happened in the country in which the media operates, is double in number of the stories of WSJ. Table 1 shows the total number of news and the percentage of Typhoon Haiyan coverage in WSJ and PI.

Table 1: The total number of news and the percentage of Typhoon *Haiyan* coverage in *WSJ* and *PI*

News sites	Number of News	Percentage of News
<i>The Wall Street Journal (WSJ)</i>	173	33.99
<i>The Philippines Inquirer (PI)</i>	336	66.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The findings indicate that 67.63 per cent and 62.50 per cent of the total news stories were covered, for WSJ and PI respectively, in the first two weeks (8/11/2013 – 22/11/2013) when the typhoon story was first reported. In the following weeks (23/11/2013 – 7/12/2013), the number of stories dropped significantly - 43.35 per cent and 38.69 per cent each for WSJ and PI. Entering the second month, the total number of stories covered by PI was 46 (13.69 per cent) whereas WSJ reported only 14 news (8.09 per cent) out of the total coverage for the entire study period. Table 2 shows the comparison of WSJ and PI news coverage in the various stages.

Table 2: The comparison of *WSJ* and *PI* news coverage from stage to stage

	Stage 1*		Stage 2*		Stage 3*		Stage 4*		Total
News Site	No. of News	%	No. of News	%	No. of News	%	No. of News	%	
<i>WSJ</i>	117	67.63	42	24.28	10	5.78	4	2.31	173
<i>PI</i>	210	62.50	80	23.81	31	9.23	15	4.46	336

\*Stage 1 (8/11/2013 – 22/11/2013); Stage 2 (23/11/2013 – 7/12/2013);  
Stage 3(8/12/2013 – 22/12/2013); Stage 4 (23/12/2013 – 8/1/2014).

News stories were coded for the primary source and the main theme based on the first two paragraphs of the stories. This study found 14 categories of news sources cited by *WSJ* and *PI* in the news coverage of Typhoon Haiyan, which included ‘local government’ (232 items or 45.58 per cent), ‘foreign government’ (22 items or 4.32 per cent), ‘police’ (8 items or 1.57 per cent), ‘medical authorities’ (2 items or 0.39 per cent), ‘victim’s relatives and friends’ (10 items or 1.96 per cent), ‘business organisations’ (28 items or 5.50 per cent), ‘non-government organizations’ (NGO) (49 items or 9.63 per cent), ‘benefactors’ (22 items or 4.32 per cent), ‘eyewitness or victims’ (32 items or 6.29 per cent), ‘locals’ (5 items or 0.98 per cent), ‘prominent figures’ (8 items or 1.57 per cent), ‘religious groups’ (10 items or 1.96 per cent), ‘media’ (65 items or 12.77 per cent), and ‘expert’ (16 items or 3.14 per cent). Table 3 shows the comparison between *WSJ* and *PI* in news sources.

Table 3: The comparison between *WSJ* & *PI* in news sources

Source	WSJ		PI		Total	
	No. of News	%	No. of News	%	No. of News	%
Local government	55	31.79	177	52.68	232	45.58
Foreign government	14	8.09	8	2.38	22	4.32
Police	3	1.73	5	1.49	8	1.57
Medical Authorities	1	0.58	1	0.30	2	0.39
Victim's relatives and friends	2	1.16	8	2.38	10	1.96
Business Organizations	9	5.20	19	5.65	28	5.50
NGO	21	12.14	28	8.33	49	9.63
Benefactors	6	3.47	16	4.76	22	4.32
Eyewitness /victims	12	6.94	20	5.95	32	6.29
Locals	3	1.73	2	0.60	5	0.98
Prominent figures	7	4.05	1	0.30	8	1.57
Religious groups	0	0.00	10	2.98	10	1.96
Media	29	16.76	36	10.71	65	12.77
Expert	11	6.36	5	1.49	16	3.14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>173.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>336.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>509.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The findings indicate that the top three sources cited by both *WSJ* and *PI* were the same, namely, ‘local government’, ‘NGO’ and ‘media’. The total number of cited sources for ‘local government’, ‘NGO’ and ‘media’ of *Haiyan* stories for both news sites separately were 232 items (45.58 per cent), 49 items (9.63 per cent) and 65 items (12.77 per cent). The news sources cited the least in all the stories were ‘medical authorities’ and ‘locals’ in which the percentage for each category is less than one.

Sources of ‘local government’ were widely cited by *PI* (177 items or 52.68 per cent) and *WSJ* (55 items or 31.79 per cent). They were given enormous highlights as the people whose statements were primarily, at the time, extensively emphasised. This was followed by news source from ‘media’ in which the reporting is a compilation of data and facts by the journalists based on the researches done. Those stories with the ‘media’ as the primary source take up 36 items (10.71 per cent) in *PI* and 29 items (16.76 per cent) in *WSJ*. On the other hand, the ‘NGO’ was another preferred source of the journalists. These sources included spokespersons from United Nations, World Bank, The Philippines Red Cross, Global Peace Mission Malaysia, Focus on the Global South, The Rural Poor Institute for Land and Human Rights Services (Rights) Network, Greenpeace, Save the Children and etc.

The remaining 11 categories of sources cited in the news carried almost the same percentage in the coverage of both *WSJ* and *PI*, except for ‘religious groups’, ‘prominent figures’ and ‘foreign government’. *WSJ* did not cite any single source from the religious groups in its reporting of Typhoon *Haiyan*.

As for the main themes of the stories in *WSJ* and *PI*, 19 categories were found in this study. Table 4 shows the comparison between *WSJ* and *PI* in news themes.

Table 4: The comparison between *WSJ* and *PI* in news themes

Theme	WSJ		PI		Total	
	No. of News	%	No. of News	%	No. of News	%
Politics of local government	18	10.40	53	15.77	71.00	13.95
Economic	18	10.40	18	5.36	36.00	7.07
Health & environment	6	3.47	9	2.68	15.00	2.95
Human interest	18	10.40	41	12.20	59.00	11.59
Victim count	13	7.51	34	10.12	47.00	9.23
Relief	16	9.25	32	9.52	48.00	9.43
Fund-raising & donation	4	2.31	16	4.76	20.00	3.93
Science, technology & facts	11	6.36	9	2.68	20.00	3.93
Communication	3	1.73	2	0.60	5.00	0.98
Search & rescue	2	1.16	3	0.89	5.00	0.98
Damage	7	4.05	3	0.89	10.00	1.96
Recovery, rehabilitation & aftermath	26	15.03	42	12.50	68.00	13.36
Religious matters	0	0.00	3	0.89	3.00	0.59
Crime	4	2.31	13	3.87	17.00	3.34
Business	2	1.16	8	2.38	10.00	1.96

Theme	WSJ		PI		Total	
	No. of News	%	No. of News	%	No. of News	%
Politics of foreign government	8	4.62	5	1.49	13.00	2.55
Aid effort	11	6.36	38	11.31	49.00	9.63
Refuge	2	1.16	4	1.19	6.00	1.18
Historical & tourism	4	2.31	3	0.89	7.00	1.38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>509.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

In the combined analysis, the three main themes covered by *WSJ* and *PI* were ‘politics of local government’ (71 items or 13.95 per cent), ‘recovery, rehabilitation and aftermath’ (68 items or 13.36 per cent) and ‘human interest’ (59 items or 11.59 per cent). Among others, the least frequent themes reported included ‘religious matters’, ‘search and rescue’ and ‘communication’ categories which carried less than one per cent of the total news coverage of Typhoon *Haiyan*.

‘Politics of local government’ theme was given great emphasis to show strong leadership and confidence in assuring the people that they were well-prepared for the devastation aftermath. The people were not alone and should have no worry with the aftermath. Local government was portrayed as a backbone for recovery and rehabilitation actions. With that ‘reality’ constructed by the media, the status quo of the Philippines government is secured. Along with calamities were some human interest stories which were poignant and included elements of heroism and etc. The stories of how ordinary people reacted in the calamities were widely covered.



## CONCLUSION

Framing is a social construction of reality. The news media do not operate in a political, economic and ideological vacuum, and the 'nature of news' is not an objective reflection of truth. When journalists seek to actively classify and interpret their life experiences to make sense of what happens, they engage in a cognitive process named 'news framing'. The messages produced by the journalists are interpretations that have been crafted, among selected and highlighted competing facts, to reflect 'reality' that is packaged efficiently for the audiences.

Framing is vital. The way a given piece of information is presented has the potential to influence the public opinion about the reported occurrences. It influences audiences' interest, attention and comprehension of the news that they cannot witness directly. The audiences respond on the occurrences based on their perception and understanding of the 'facts' that journalists choose to play up or down in their reports. The audiences also tend to believe in the reality constructed by the journalists to be the most salient aspects of a natural disaster. In revealing the social world to the audiences, framing analysis debunks the myth of the so-called 'balance and objectivity' of news reporting which is tainted with ideologies and operational constraints.

In this study, the journalistic act of framing the news of natural disaster, Typhoon *Haiyan*, through core themes in *WSJ* and *PI* did not show much difference. That means journalists' choices of highlighting or reducing elements of the perceived reality to make them more or less salient are not obvious in both coverages. *WSJ* and *PI* have emphasised on the similar themes with consistent societal sentiments – humanitarian.

The same trend goes to the news sources in this study. Just as what was argued by Entman (1993) and Fahmy (2005), to a certain extent, the source is the story. It confines the simple nature of the stories, as well as the flow of information in the news media. In *WSJ* and *PI* news reports, local government was heavily cited as the official source which legitimises the state and all its actions and policies. However, the hegemony of the Philippines government is framed as being challenged. The State strives to prove that local strategies are relevant and sustainable, alongside with international aid efforts and fundraising.

The news framing of the Typhoon *Haiyan* disaster shows resemblance in primary source and theme coded for both Western media, *WSJ* (an American English-language international news media) and an Asian media, *PI* (a Philippines-based English-language news media with the mission of ‘We are a multi-media organisation passionately telling the Filipino story’). In line with Simon Cottle’s (2011 & 2014) findings, infused within natural disaster reporting on news sites, media has reached a new global height of extensity and intensity, in terms of speed and scale. With the universalising technologies, media and communication environment changed. Natural disaster that strikes the country no longer remains as ‘a state’s misfortune’. Instead, it is a ‘mediated disaster’ which becomes ‘globalised media event’ that exhibits extensive scale. These communication technologies also provide greater prospects for the audiences from all over the world to “witness” disaster before they hurdle into humanitarian response. In other words, the proliferation of new media, irrespective of Western or Asian media, has transformed the world of disasters into a global context.

In today’s global news ecology, both local and international news media ‘mediatised’ disasters from different views and values which could in pursuing of open to national integration, striving for political change or mobilising sympathy for humanitarian response. Through borderless news reporting, journalistic framing has gone beyond the national spectrum of interests to offer a philanthropic support to the storm victims. By such communication means, Typhoon *Haiyan* reporting on both *WSJ* and *PI* exhibits not only a ‘national event’, but a ‘media event’ that manifests public opinion in the global public sphere.

Notwithstanding the above, this study focuses on “media framing” without empirical data from audience analysis. Therefore it is beyond the scope of this study to draw conclusion about audiences’ cognitive understanding of Typhoon *Haiyan*. A future research could be done on “audience framing” to further comprehend the meaning constructed by audiences on natural disaster reporting. It would be remarkable to juxtapose the findings of this study with the impact of news frames on public’s perception and opinion towards the disaster.

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# **News Framing by Mainstream Media on Political Parties**

**Lim Tse Shaun \***

**Abstract:** The results of GE14 marked an interesting time for Malaysians as to the direction of mainstream media and how they will frame news of the new ruling coalition and the new opposition. This discussion paper examines the context of mainstream media in Malaysia in relation to their ties to selected political parties and presents a case to study the post-GE14 media using framing theory. Several studies on past political news that have used the theory will be cited as supporting evidence.

**Keywords:** Barisan Nasional, framing theory, General Election, ownership of mainstream media, Pakatan Harapan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

After Malaysia's 14<sup>th</sup> General Election (GE14), the result marked a historic moment in Malaysia; Barisan Nasional (BN), the ruling party for more than 61 years, was ousted from power by the opposition coalition of Pakatan Harapan (PH). This was unprecedented as BN lost all federal states in Peninsular Malaysia except for Perlis and Pahang (Azizuddin, 2014). PH consisting of the Democratic Action Party (DAP), People's Justice Party (PKR), National Trust Party (AMANAH), and Malaysian United Indigenous Party (PPBM), had won 121 seats, an increase from 68 back in the 13<sup>th</sup> General Election (GE13), while BN only won 79 seats, a drop from 133 seats in GE13. The other notable party in contention, Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) obtained 18 seats while United Sabah Alliance obtained only one and the remaining three seats were won by independent politicians. Being the majority in the House of

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Representatives, it was the first time PH could form the federal government and also the first time BN would be competing to earn the people's trust as the new opposition coalition.

This swapping of roles marks an interesting phase in Malaysia's mainstream media such as *New Straits Times*, *The Star*, and *Utusan Malaysia*. In Malaysia, the mainstream media has often focused on positive stories for the benefit of the political elite (Anuar, 2000). This is due to the ownership structure of the media that has ties with certain political parties. Long regarded as a state apparatus of the government (BN), it has been used to limit the access to opposition parties (PH) (Azizuddin, 2014), but they are in new grounds. As BN takes on the role of opposition coalition, how will *Utusan Malaysia*, *The Star*, and *New Straits Times* report on them? Furthermore, it will be interesting to note if the mainstream media will be the state apparatus of the Pakatan Harapan (PH), albeit with close ties to BN. This discussion paper is divided into three parts to understand this social phenomenon. Firstly, Malaysia's media ownership will be highlighted. This unique relationship would provide sufficient background to how and why the media operate so in Malaysia. Secondly, an explanation of framing theory will be provided to study how mainstream media portray the nation's political parties. Lastly, past studies that used this theory will be analysed to provide support and stir interest in this discussion.

## OWNERSHIP OF MAINSTREAM MEDIA

Media can never be examined in a vacuum as they are social creations which are heavily influenced by the economic base. Employing a holistic approach to media and communication is crucial as media policies, institutions, and professionals need to be studied within and as part of wider processes within societies, which, in turn, are principally by-products of and driven by capitalism, and are full of contradictions and inequities (Zaharom, 2002). Thus, it is imperative to study the media within their ownership to develop an understanding in the Malaysian context.

In 1961, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), a key party within BN, had already successfully acquired *Utusan Melayu*. This newspaper was an advocate of the Malay rights and had supported

UMNO's efforts in opposing Malayan Union. However, infighting within the organisation happened when an UMNO man, Ibrahim Fikri, was appointed director of operations to influence the medium as a supporter of the ruling coalition. After a strike by the journalists over the appointment, a significant amount of the company's shares were bought over by UMNO, enabling the party to have full allocative control over the newspaper (Mohd Safar, 1996). After Malaya's independence, this was the first time a political party took over a newspaper, but more was to come. Since then, *Utusan Malaysia* (renamed in 1967) has always been affiliated with UMNO.

Another key incident that affected the landscape of media indirectly was the racial riots in 1969. On 13<sup>th</sup> May, there was a racial riot between the Malays and Chinese and a state of emergency was declared throughout the country. All publications were suspended temporarily in an attempt to curb further spread of ethnic violence (Zaharom & Wang, 2004). As a result of the racial riot, the New Economic Policy (NEP) was implemented in 1971. As the main reason for the ethnic enmity in 1969 was believed to have arisen from the socio-economic imbalance between the ethnic groups, the NEP was set up to address the imbalance with a two-pronged strategy as:

‘...to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty; and to restructure society so that the identification of economic functions with ethnicity could be reduced and eliminated...’ (Zaharom & Wang, 2004).

What resulted however, was the start of the ruling coalition's (BN) investment in major newspapers. The Malayan Chinese Association (MCA), through its official holding company Huaren Holdings, ventured into Chinese and English-medium newspapers. According to Azizuddin (2014), MCA bought a 42.4% share in *The Star* in 2010 as a desire to ‘reorganise its investments and allow its investment arm, Huaren Holdings, to seek other assets. The Chinese daily *Nanyang Siang Pau* was also acquired in 2002, thus strengthening the ruling coalition's hold on other newspapers. Another party of the ruling coalition, the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) also dominated a portion of the Tamil press through Maika Holdings Bhd., again another investment arm of the

political party (Zaharom & Wang, 2004). Thus, the NEP began a series of ownership and control structure over various newspapers with different languages. This ownership has changed the mainstream media to evolve to become a state apparatus, which is most evident during an election campaign where the opposition parties with their limited access to the mainstream media would turn to social media – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, news portals and blogs—to communicate their reformist policies and counter the government’s campaign on state-controlled television, radio and newspaper, (Azizuddin, 2014).

## FRAMING THEORY

Framing theory is a suitable theory to tie in the complex relationship between the media and state and how news is written in general. According to Entman (1993), the concept of framing offers a way to describe the power of communicating text because it ‘illuminates the precise way in which influence over human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one location – such as speech, utterance, news report, or novel – to the consciousness.’ The framing theory typically involves selection and salience which is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient (a piece of information becoming more noticeable, meaningful or memorable) in the communicating text. This is done to perform any four of the framing functions - to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies. For example, the ‘cold war’ frame used by the U.S news highlighted civil wars as a problem, identified communist rebels as the cause, offered moral judgements (atheistic aggression), and recommended a solution in the form of support for the other side (Entman, 1993),

‘Frames’ work by highlighting bits of information about an item, which leads to elevating them in salience. This then leads to the increased probability that receivers will ‘perceive the information, discern meaning and thus process it, and store it in memory’ (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). In an experiment conducted by Kahneman and Tversky (1984) to investigate the power of framing and the way it operates, they concluded that framing selects and calls attention to some aspect of reality described while also simultaneously ‘direct attention away from other aspects’. This

highlights the point that framing has a two-fold effect - to focus attention on an issue as it is reported while drawing attention away from another issue as it receives less attention. Thus, framing is commonly applied for political communication as it 'plays a major role in the exertion of political power' (Entman, 1993).

In Malaysia, framing in the mainstream media naturally tended to become tools of Barisan Nasional to convey information regarding their ideologies due to ownership through investment arms (Wong & Lean, 2011). According to Cohen and Young (1973), this form of control has resulted in manipulative news where reality is distorted by journalists and editors to safeguard interests of certain political parties. Therefore, framing theory is a suitable theory to be used in analysing the way the mainstream media frame news to influence the readers' perception of different political parties.

## PAST STUDIES

Many scholars have analysed the mainstream media in Malaysia and their portrayal of the political parties. These analyses centre around political news around the time of General Election to investigate how they were written to gain votes. Typically, these studies have used framing theory as a backdrop to analyse the political news chosen. The selected articles are "*Vote for me!*": *A Content Analysis of News Reports Leading to the 12<sup>th</sup> General Election Political Communication* by Wong and Lean (2011), *Framing Islam-related issues during GE13: An analysis of Malaysian mainstream newspapers* by Aini and Nerawi (2015), and *Political Partisanship in the Mainstream Print Media* by Azizuddin (2014).

### "*VOTE FOR ME!*": A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NEWS REPORTS LEADING TO THE 12<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ELECTION POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Wong and Lean analysed political news reported by *The Star* in the days leading to GE12 in 2008. Firstly, one of the reasons *The Star* was selected was due to its readership among all English dailies in Malaysia. It ranked the highest with approximately 1.08 million readers (Nielsen

Media Research, 2008). All political news were analysed between 13 February and 7 March as it was the allotted campaigning period by the Election Commission. Out of the 192 news articles that were published, 155 articles consisted of issues raised by BN while only 34 articles were raised by Pakatan Rakyat (PR) which consisted of People's Justice Party (PKR), Democratic Action Party (DAP), and Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) and the remaining 3 articles discussed the issues brought up by the independent parties.

What stands out in this study is the wide disparity of coverage given to different political parties which Wong and Lean opined 'might give the impression to the reader that BN is the most influential party of the three parties' (Wong and Lean, 2011). Thus, the readers might perceive that news of the other two parties should not be given more attention compared to news of the BN party. This framing falls in line with McCombs (2002) argument that media consumers learn about the degree of importance to be conferred for an issue based on the emphasis placed on it in the news. Due to their ownership of the daily, it was no surprise as political figures from BN used The Star as a channel to communicate. Furthermore, the one-sided coverage indicates that the newspaper functioned to highlight information about BN, and in doing so, elevated them in salience.

#### FRAMING ISLAM-RELATED ISSUES DURING GE13: AN ANALYSIS OF MALAYSIAN MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS

In a study conducted by Aini & Nerawi (2015), they analysed how the ruling government (BN) in 2013 utilised the mainstream media to gain the support of Malay voters. In this study, they only picked out political news that touched on Islam, a religion practised by the majority in the country. In analysing *New Straits Times*, *The Star*, *Utusan Malaysia*, and *Berita Harian*, they looked at how Islam-related issues were framed. These newspapers were selected because of their large circulation and readership, being considered to be among the most important source of information among many Malaysians. Over a period of 17 days from April 20 to May 6 2013, Islam-related news that appeared in selected printed newspapers were recorded and analysed based on what were thought to influence the voters' decisions. As Malays

constitute the majority of Malaysian voters, the remark given was that ‘for the first time in the Malaysian election history, the battle between the pro-government (BN) and opposition (PR) political parties were dominated by the Malays’.

Out of the 178 news and feature articles gathered, the majority came from the Malay-medium newspapers *Utusan Malaysia* and *Berita Harian*, which correlated to the dominant Malay-Muslim readership. The three most dominant themes found were *hudud* (prescribed punishments which the Qur’an or *Sunnah* have determined for a handful of offences), *Negara Islam* (Islamic State), and *Kalimah Allah* (the word ‘Allah’). As the *hudud* issue was a hotly-debated topic then, it constituted about 46% of the news gathered. Due to the country’s multi-religious background, the way of framing this issue would affect the voters’ decisions. A negatively framed *hudud* could cause the voters to reject an opposition party like PAS and end up choosing BN. In the same vein, a negatively framed *hudud* could also cause discomfort and anger among non-Muslim Malaysians (Aini & Nerawi, 2015). In many occasions, PAS’ *Hudud* was constantly framed as a negative concept that did not fit the country’s societal context. When it came to the topic of Islamic State, PAS’ agenda was criticised as backward and underdeveloped as found in this quotation in *The Star*:

Malaysians accept the twin affirmations that Islam is the country’s official religion and that individuals are free to practise the religion of their choice, said MCA Young Professional Bureau Chief, Datuk Chua Tee Yong. Therefore, hudud law is not suitable for Malaysia because of the country’s multi-racial nature (“Hudud not suitable for Malaysia,” 2013).

In response to the debate between Muslims and Christians on the usage of the word ‘Allah’, Muslim political leaders of BN tried to portray themselves as the real guardians of Islamic teachings in Malaysia as demonstrated in this excerpt:

A professor has questioned the DAP for its real motive in not using its rocket symbol when the Register of Societies and Election Commission did not bar it.... “Are they trying to keep their rocket

symbol out of sight, in order not to remind Muslim voters of the ‘Kalimah Allah’ controversy?” (Tan et al., 2013).

Another aspect that was examined in Islam-related issues was the news slant taken by the mainstream media. News slant refers to whether the article is framed positively, negatively, or neutrally in regard to a political party. This is also crucial as framing ‘provides’ suggestions on passing moral judgments as well as solutions. As such, the results showed that the majority of Islam-related news across all newspapers were framed negatively towards opposition political parties. This was undoubtedly done in a bid to win Malay votes for BN while fostering public hatred of Pakatan Rakyat (PR). Further research showed that the tone used was one that favoured BN as shown in this excerpt in *The Star*:

A video of former political aide, Saiful Bukhari Azlan in Mecca carrying out a sumpah laknat in connection with his sodomy claim was shown for the first time to the media. This followed the retraction on Tuesday by his father ... he had “repented” and “wanted to return to the path of truth”. (Shagar, 2013).

## POLITICAL PARTISANSHIP IN THE MAINSTREAM PRINT MEDIA

Lastly, in a research conducted by Azizuddin (2014), he sought to understand the extent of mainstream media bias towards certain political parties during GE13. Unlike Aini, he looked at news coverage in general to see if the domination of media coverage had translated to positive election results. He also expanded his research scope to 10 newspapers that were published in Malay, English, Mandarin, and Tamil. While Aini only focused on Islam-related issues, Azizuddin was more concerned with whether political parties received a positive coverage, negative coverage, or neutral coverage, which is essentially news slant. Positive coverage as defined by him would be ‘praising, supporting or mere reports on policy and activities’ of a particular party.

The data collected revealed interesting statistics about how mainstream media framed news slant of BN and PH. For example, *Utusan Malaysia* had 329 articles categorised as BN+ while PR had 385 articles that were negatively framed. This huge difference affirms

Azizuddin's (2015) claim that *Utusan Malaysia* has always operated as a mouthpiece of UMNO. Generally, the news slant for English and Malay-medium newspapers were heavily biased in BN's favour. Further analysis showed that issues on race and religion were something exploited by both coalitions during the campaign, thus affirming Aini and Nerawi's research on Islam-related issues.

However, *Sinar Harian* and Chinese newspapers like *China Press* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh* were the only media to provide a balanced coverage on both BN and PR. While PR were in 81 negatively-framed news in *Sinar Harian*, there were also 145 PR+ news, with a small difference the 154 positively-framed news for BN. This difference by *Sinar Harian* can be traced back to an interview with Chief Editor Abdul Jalil Ali who said, 'we believe if the news newspaper is government-friendly, it won't be reader-friendly. Our readers determine our survival.'

## CONCLUSION

The discussion of mainstream media in terms of how they frame political news has contributed to the existing literature as set on the agenda of the media. This also sheds 'a better picture of the relationship between the news media and political figures' while 'increasing awareness over the media's power' (Wong and Lean, 2011). Having a better understanding of the context in Malaysia's media - namely the ownership of media by political parties, this post-GE14 study could provide a new insight as this is the first time BN and PH have switched roles. How would the mainstream media, long heralded as the ruling coalition's spokesperson, report on the new ruling coalition and new opposition? As Malaysia enters an uncharted territory, such a research at this time would provide an interesting insight to Malaysia's mainstream media.

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**Keramat Tahfiz Tragedy:  
A Content Analysis of Media Framing  
in the New Straits Times (NST)**

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Nur Adillah Binti Maaz\*\***

**Abstract:** The study was carried out with the purpose of identifying the types of frames used by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting on the fire tragedy that hit Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah religious school. A total of 23 students and teachers were killed in the disaster which was dubbed as the worst in the country's history in the past 20 years. The study found that the newspaper had used at least six different frames to help readers form their opinion on the issue. Scholars had also found that the use of frames may have influenced the decision-makers. These were proven when the newspaper's recommendation to prevent the incident from re-occurring was taken into consideration and the fact that the school management managed to escape from being punished for operating illegally and without installing fire safety equipment.

**Keywords:** Media frame, framing, types of frame, methods of framing, Keramat Tahfiz tragedy, Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 OVERVIEW

September 14, 2017 would be the day that would be remembered by all Malaysians. This was the day when the nation' mourned the tragedy that saw 23 young souls perished in a fire that burned down the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school in Kampung Datuk Keramat, Kuala Lumpur. The early morning blaze which was said to be the country's worst fire disaster in the past 20 years gained much attention from the government as well as the public.

The fire which started on the second and higher floors of the school, spread quickly thus preventing its occupants from escaping. It was also reported that the religious school was operating illegally. And it was not equipped with any firefighting equipment. The emergency staircase, which was located in the centre of the religious school building was also blocked.

The incident received extensive coverage from not only the local media but the international media as well. Most media organisations appeared to be in a race to produce the most updated, sensational story in their bid to attract the readers' attention. Among the strategies used by the media was to frame their stories according to the news agencies' stand. This, however, would also indirectly affect the mood or the perception towards the issue.

This study was conducted to look into the use of framing in stories related to Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire and how it may have influenced public opinion on the issue and affected decision-making. A research field highly relevant to understanding media effects on information processing is referred to as "news frames". The media play a key role in forming opinions by influencing people's understanding and perception of a topic. News frames explain how the media present information in a way that emphasises certain aspects of a topic, making those informational aspects more salient than others (Otieno et al., 2013).

Framing is a crucial practice in journalism – it gives meaning to events and issues when it is used appropriately, they instigate the readers' attention and interest. By giving emphasis to certain aspects and downplaying others, they can capture and retain readers' attention to the news (Tankard et al., 1991; Zillman et al., 2004).

Tiung & Hasim (2009) in their study noted that the opportunity to frame any political problem emerged from the media's ability to pick and decide which information is to be offered following pressure from certain groups and politicians. They added that the media have the ability to drop all message inputs given by other parties and create a debate fully moulded by them. This shows that the realities that we access through the media might be the realities that were created by the media.

There are quite a number of framings that the media use to influence their readers. The placing of the story and tone including the use of words are some of the example of frames. At the end of the study, the researcher aims to explain how the New Straits Times (NST) frames their stories and how they may have influenced the authorities in making their decision.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted within the context of media framing. The researcher aims to highlight the idea that each media have their own way in framing their stories and the differences in the frames used by a media organisation which will affect views of the public on the issue.

Gamson and Modigliani (1987) defined media frame as a central organising idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events. The frame suggests what the controversy is all about and the essence of the issue. The scholars believed that frames were formulated based on the journalist's norms and practices and the influence of interest groups. Frame is deemed to be important as it helps to turn a meaningless and non-recognisable happening into a discernible event. Tuchman (1978) noted that "The news frame organises everyday reality and it is part and parcel of everyday reality... (it) is an essential feature of news. Gitlin (1980) believed that media frames help the journalist to quickly identify and classify information and package it for efficient relay to the audiences.

Neuman et al. (1992) said they (the media) skimmed over or ignored irrelevant or uninteresting content. This explains the use of framing by the media to either directly or subtly influence their targeted audience. Kehneman and Tversky (1979) believed framing helps to determine how people will evaluate and decide to act on a problem and issue. Media may

omit certain things to cover certain aspects or give emphasis on some other things in order to show their significance.

Entman (1993) claimed that framing was used to shape and alter the audience's interpretations and preferences by introducing or raising the salience or apparent importance of certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel and decide in a particular way.

The researcher has selected a number of past studies to guide this study. These past literatures were selected based on the keywords – Media Frame, framing, types of frames, methods of framing, Keramat Tahfiz tragedy and Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school.

At the end of the study, the researcher attempts to identify the types of framing used by the selected newspaper and how it may have influenced public opinion and the authorities in their decision making. Content analysis was used to analyse news articles gathered from the New Straits Times.

#### (1) OVERVIEW ON DARUL QURAN ITTIFAQIYAH RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

On September 14, 2017 a fire broke out at Pusat Tahfiz Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah religious centre located at Jalan Keramat Ujung, Kampung Datuk Keramat around 5.15am. The blaze was said to have started in one of the dormitory rooms on the second floor of the three-storey building. There were a total of 36 students and six teachers in the building during the incident. The religious school which was built from contributions from the local “surau” had only operated for about a year.

The students were asleep when the blaze broke out. It was reported that the building's windows were fitted with grills which could not be opened from the inside and there was only one door to enter and exit the building. The fire exit was also blocked, thus preventing the victims to escape. Firemen who entered the building found the charred remains heaped on top of one another. They were found at several locations, all near the windows on the third floor. The survivors escaped from the building by breaking open a window on the third floor and jumping on to a first-floor awning.

On the day of the event, the Kuala Lumpur Fire and Rescue Department was alerted by a distress call at about 5.41am. Earlier on

the day, some media reported that the department was only alerted after almost 30 minutes when the blaze started. However, it was later clarified that nine fire engines arrived three minutes upon receiving the distress call and managed to rescue five students using a ladder.

Besides the updates on the search and rescue efforts, the media also played on stories predicting what could be the cause of the fire. Among the possible cases include a short circuit, as well as mosquito coils. Another key element that was highlighted by the media on the day of the incident was the fact that the religious school was operating illegally and its failure to install safety measures. The Fire and Rescue Department said the school had submitted its building plans in 2015. The authorities had briefed the school management on the necessary fire prevention methods. The school, however, did not submit its mechanical and engineering plans for approval before constructing the building. The building was instead built without the mechanical and engineering plan approval and inspection by the Fire and Rescue Department. Interior renovations were also made, with more dividers built. One exit was also closed off. Authorities also believe that the dorm beds were arranged too closely that may have prevented a swift escape of the victims.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Media play an important role to not only disseminate information to the public but also to shape their perception on certain issues. However, each media has its own ways of framing the news. The use of different frames would cause the public to also have various impressions on an issue. According to Auerbach and Bloch-Elkon (2005), lack of awareness, among the public, along with their reliance on media for information and decision making would make them more vulnerable to be influenced by the media. Placing stories in specific frames would project different meaning to the news. This also helps to increase or reduce the salience of the issue and allow the public to remember and make judgements on issues.

Entman (1993) said framing was used to shape and alter the audience's interpretations and preferences on certain ideas which then encourage target audiences to think, feel and decide in a particular way. This raises concern especially since the media have the power to

influence public perception. The way a particular news is portrayed is as though it could determine the reactions of the public.

This study will also look into some of the frames used by the New Straits Times (NST) and how they may have affected the public opinion as well as the authorities' decision-making.

This study is deemed important as neglecting the impacts of news framing may affect the trust of the public on media. The media might also end up losing their readers or viewers if they fail in framing their news interestingly. The government might lose one of the useful means to gain public support. Gross (2008) noted that different journalistic news frames are known to exert different emotional responses, thus when providing many different angles to a story, it might also create dissonance to the public. Anything that challenges already formed frames creates a discomfort among people thus making them resistant to change since they become reluctant in accepting new information (Ooko; 2014).

The researcher attempts to identify the types of framing used by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting on the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah religious school fire and how it may have affected public opinion and the authorities in making their decision.

### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- RQ 1: What are some of the frames used by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire?
- RQ 2: How does the New Straits Times (NST) attract their readers to read news with regard to the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire by using frames?
- RQ 3: What are the effects of the frames used by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire?

### 1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- RO 1: To identify the frames used by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire?
- RO 2: To explore how the New Straits Times (NST) uses frames to attract readers to read news with regard to the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire.

RO 3: To study the effects on the use of frames by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire

### 1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The study uses the qualitative research technique. A content analysis would be conducted on the New Straits Times (NST) reporting on the tragedy. Data gathered would then be analysed for the results.

### 1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF STUDY

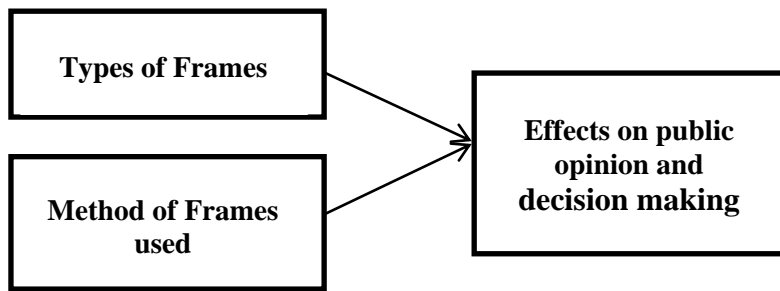


Table 1.1: Conceptual framework

### 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher believes that the study will bring contribution or significance to several parties in several ways which include:

- i) **Government:** Findings of the study would assist the government especially in understanding the power of the media to shape public opinion, it will bring some ideas to the government on how they can utilise the media to disseminate vital information on the government policy and finally gain the support of the public.
- ii) **Media practitioners:** The study will assist media practitioners by sharing some of the useful methods to frame or influence the public. The successful use of framing will also help the media organisation to boost the number of audience.
- iii) **Future researchers:** The study will also help other researchers who are interested in conducting similar studies in this field. Future scholars could also expand this study by rectifying the limitations of this study.



## 1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- i) The study will look into identifying the types of media frames used by the New Straits Times (NST) in their recent coverage on the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah fire tragedy.
- ii) An analysis on the New Straits Times (NST) coverage from September 15 until 18 2017 will be carried out. There were altogether 27 stories that were explored.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 OVERVIEW

This section provides the analysis of the past literatures related to this study. The chosen past literatures provide explanation on the selected keywords which are, Media Frame, framing, types of frames, methods of framing, Keramat Tahfiz tragedy and Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school.

### 2.1 MEDIA FRAMING

Framing theory was initially introduced by a sociologist Goffman (1974) who explained how the mass media were framed by journalists in their efforts to give context on information that they tried to relay and help people to understand, locate, perceive, identify and label (the issue).

Entman (1993), however, came up with an updated definition on framing. He described it as the process where several elements perceived to be accepted, would be chosen and it would be assembled in the form of a narrative piece that would promote a particular idea or interpretation. Entman believed that frames would perform four functions – problem definition, causal analysis, moral judgment and remedy promotion. Framing, he said, was used by the media to shape and alter the audience's interpretations and preferences by introducing or raising the salience or apparent importance of certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel and decide in a particular way.

Wilson and Sinnappan (2014) believed media does not only have the capabilities to tell the public what is important and newsworthy but they also have the capability to shape public opinions, tell them how to interpret and define any controversial issue. Andsagar (2000) said one of

the most important reasons why media use framing is to construct opinion. To frame a story, journalists sometimes omit certain elements which can cause public to receive different perspectives and trigger different sentiments upon receiving the information. Their selection on whom to quote, what to quote and where the quotation will be placed in the story, are among the ways framing was used in a story. Others include the choice of keywords, phrases and images that would reinforce a particular representation of the reality and a specific emotion toward the particular issue (Ngwainmbi, 2017). Framing was done based on a journalist's belief, working conditions, editorial stand, journalistic practices in his organisation, economic environment, political climate, broader ideologies and cultural conditions prevalent in the society.

Public are restricted to only the information made available to them on the mass media and other sources. Ngozi & Kennedth (2012) noted that the public lack awareness in addition to their reliance to the media for information and decision-making that had caused them to be more likely to be influenced by the media frame.

Scholars also suggested that the media have the ability to persuade and influence audiences (Price & Feldman; 2009) and this was made possible due to the fact that audience are passive and they themselves allow the media to influence their views. Chi & McCombs (2004) said every media often reframe the story by emphasising different attributes of the event, consciously or unconsciously in order to keep the story alive and fresh. It is often the case that various media outlets have differing viewpoints on high-profile news stories.

Framing works through priming – which was conducted by introducing or raising the salience or what seems to be important in certain ideas, activating schemas that encourage target audiences to think, feel, and decide in a particular way (Gross & D'Ambrosio, 2004; Iyengar & Simon, 1993; Kim et al., 2002; Price et al., 1997).

Nagel (1975) said the elites want the people to behave in certain ways, supporting and tolerating their activities. They opt to give limitations in time, attention and rationality, getting the people to think and behave in a certain way by selecting some things to tell them about and efficiently cueing them on how these elements should mesh with their own schema systems.

Edelman (1993) in highlighting the impacts of media frames on the public perceptions and responses to policy issues stated that the character, causes and consequences of any phenomenon become radically different as changes were made on what is prominent and what is repressed. Giving only the fact of the event alone would not give any meaning, instead it is only through the placement of the fact into some context by giving emphasis or focus on certain part that, the fact would take on relevance (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Responsibility frames emphasise the responsibility of an individual or a group for a certain event or outcome

## 2.2 TYPES OF FRAMING

Wilson & Sinnappan (2014) highlighted the use of several types of framing used by the local media which include the information and affirmation frames. An information frame refers to the explanation of the process of something or how something works and a focus on exploring policy and its impact. Local media play their role in being purveyors of information and have been used as a tool for the dissemination of public policy. Affirmation frame refers to the need to re-affirm and assure the audience on the information which was first introduced. The frame was used to reinforce the existing attitudes. The scholars also introduced successful and conflicting frames. A success frame was used to indicate the success of a policy which was introduced by the government. A conflicting frame however helps the media to report on distinguishable odds or disagreement in any event.

Okoro & Odoemelam (2013) listed several different types of frames used by the media to report on the Boko Haram insurgency. There are response frame, political frame, economic frame and ethnic frame. Response frame helps the media to focus on the approach adopted by the government in a crisis or security threat situation like the Boko Haram activities. It emphasis as the government response on the situation. Political frame emphasised the escalation of political tension by focusing the conflict of interest for power and scarce among geo-political regions, parties and groups. Ethnic framing was used to portray the crisis and targeting a particular tribe on the news reports, while, economic frame relates to the economic consequences of events on an individual, group, institution, region, or country (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Iyengar (1991) proposed two types of framing, -the episodic framing and thematic framing. The episodic framing was commonly used to give stories from the perspective of an individual or event, while the thematic framing was used when the stories were written based on a broader, societal perspective.

Another type of frame that is commonly used by the media is the human-interest frame. This frame is used by the writer to emotionalise and dramatise information and accentuate individual affectedness. It uses specific features to catch audience's attention by using dramatising or emotionalising vocabulary or lend the story of an individual, personalised touch. There is also the Responsibility frame which was used to emphasise on the responsibility of an individual or a group for a certain event or outcome (Otieno et al., 2013).

### 2.3 THE METHODS USED TO FRAME STORIES

Wilson et al. (2014) noted the uses of sources to help give negative or positive comments in explaining an issue. Citing the Government Transformational Programme (GTP) as an example, the scholar said the media interviewed several sources that gave comments and highlights on the effectiveness of the policy. The use of words such as "bearing fruit", "on the right path" and "driving the nation forward" give readers the impression that the programme has positive effects and is making a headway.

Dunan and Adnan (2014) in their study "Is Malaysia Little Brother of Indonesia? A Framing Analysis of Ambalat Conflict" explained how the Indonesian media use framing to paint a negative perception against Malaysia. Their media used non-verbal framing with the help of graphics, sound bites, intonation and atmosphere to influence their audience. Malaysia was quoted as bad though graphics, super imposed title "Malaysia claims" from the beginning to the end of the news reporting.

Cissel (2012) explained the use of "Tone of Downplay or Dismissal" – where a dismissive tone of the article was highlighted from the journalist's point of view. The use of terms such as "festival of frustrations", "a leaderless resistance movement" gave negative tones to report on the Occupy Wall Street.

Freyenberger (2013) said the tone, story placement, and page placement and the tone of the stories was categorised as negative, neutral,

or positive while story placement will be measured as a body, paired with a graphic or photo, lead, or headline. Giving prominence through the story placement on a page can help to influence media consumers on the level of significance that the story holds. Page placement will be recognised as insides, section front, front page, or not applicable.

Gitlin (1980) said frames provided repetition and reinforced words in the news and images that support certain ideas and not others. This emphasis on or exclusion of information may be either intentional or unintentional. The information which are de-emphasised or omitted can be just as important as the information presented in an article.

Andsagar (2000) stated that among the tactics of framing that journalists could use include developing rhetoric with a strong appeal or effectively manipulating symbols, such as catchphrases or ideograph-special words or phrases that express public values. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) said incorporating and condensing a set of metaphors, visual images, moral appeals, and other symbolic devices could be used to draw on a popular culture that they share with their audience which were also some of the means to frame stories.

## 2.4 THE EFFECTS OF MEDIA FRAMING

Bradley (2010) said framing effect is the idea of manipulating the way information is presented through the use of images, words or presenting the general context around the information, to influence and alter decision making and judgement on an issue. Framing is common in politics. The context in which information is delivered helps the media to shape public assumptions and perceptions about that information.

People reach conclusions based on the framework within which a situation is presented. Positive frames would help to evoke positive feelings, which resulted in risk taking and proactive behaviour while the use of negative frames would evoke negative feelings and risk aversion and reactive behaviour. Being exposed to multiple and conflicting frames would cause cognitive dissonance, and in some cases the framing effects would be reduced causing the people to rely more on their own internal frames that have been created over time (Bradley, 2010).

Journalistic news frames would not only influence people's emotions and perceived risk over a situation, it would also affect what and how much people learn from the information presented (Otieno et al.,

2013). Scholars who studied the effect of using human-interest frame noted that though it helps readers to learn more, the frame would also emphasise the negative aspects of the information and lead to the (mal-) prioritisation of these aspects. Such prioritization would be detrimental when learning about topics that contain conflicting evidence because learners would fail to develop a balance view. This would then lead to the formation of radical positions (Otieno et al., 2013).

Entman and Rojecki (n.d) in their study on the U.S anti-nuclear movement suggested that the frame used by journalists who filtered news on the event have affected the movement ability to build consensus and mobilise participation. Their choices on frames were believed to be heavily influenced by elite sources and they appear with by an underlying professional ideology ambivalent toward public participation.

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 OVERVIEW

In this chapter, the researcher illustrates the research methodology that is proposed for the study. In this chapter the researcher chooses to use a qualitative research design and content analysis on the New Straits Times (NST).

### 3.2 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

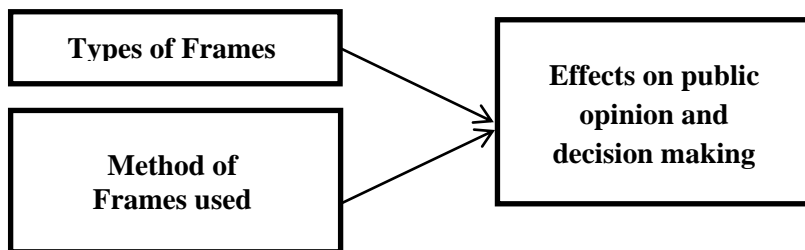


Figure 3.1: Research Framework

The study aims to understand how people's perception can be affected through the use of various frames. There are a few types of framing which the researcher had identified from the past studies. These

frames would be adopted in this study and would be used as a guideline for a researcher to analyse New Straits Times (NST) way or technique of framing stories on the religious school fire incident. The study would also look at how the use of framing by media may have influenced decision-making.

The researcher has decided to use qualitative research design which is deemed to be more suitable for this study. Qualitative research involves finding out what people think and how they feel or at any rate, what they say they think and how they say they feel. This kind of information is subjective and it involves feelings and impressions rather than numbers (Rambocas & Gama, 2013).

In this study, the researcher believed that the writers’ attitude and belief in addition to the media organisation’s stand will influence their way of writing and framing which is deemed to be subjective and cannot be identified by the quantitative research design.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the main outline of a research which guides the researchers on how to conduct the research according to the research procedure (Burns & Grove, 2003). For the purpose of this study, the researcher decided to use the qualitative research design. A content analysis would be conducted on 27 articles taken from the New Straits Times (NST) from Sept 15 until 18, 2017. Data gathered would then be analysed.

Data gathered from the past literatures especially on the types of frames by the media to frame their stories would be used as a guideline for the researcher in conducting this study. The types of frames used to frame stories related to the religious school fire tragedy are as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Types of framing according to previous literatures

Types of Frames	Description
Responsibility frame	Responsibility frames emphasise the responsibility of an individual or a group for a certain event or outcome.

<b>Types of Frames</b>	<b>Description</b>
Response frame	Puts government's response in the spotlight.
Political frame	Emphasises the escalation of political tension and points at conflict of interest for power and scarce means among geo-political regions, party and groups.
Economic frame	Relates to the economic consequences of events on an individual, group, institution, region, or country
Ethnic frame	Crisis situation is portrayed as being targeted at a particular tribe.
Episodic framing	Provides stories from the perspective of an individual person or event
Thematic framing	Story is written based on broader, societal perspective.
Information frame	The frame is used to explain the process of something or how something works and focuses on exploring the government policy and its impact.
Affirmation frame	Affirmation frame refers to the need to re-affirm and assures the audience of the information which is first introduced. This is a reinforcement of existing attitudes.
Success frame	Indicates the success of the policy and takes readers on a closer look into the veracity of a statement made or information given.



<b>Types of Frames</b>	<b>Description</b>
Conflict frame	Discusses the issues or uncovers distinguishable odds or disagreement in relation to the project at hand.
Human-Interest frame	Uses specific features to catch the audience's attention by using dramatic or emotional vocabulary, or lends the story an individualised, personal touch.

### 3.4 RESEARCH METHOD

#### (1) METHOD

The researcher uses content analysis as a research method. Based on the findings of previous literature, the researcher has identified some of the frames used by the media when reporting the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school fire. Employing research methods qualitative provide more comprehensive data compared to quantitative research design. Adopting qualitative research design would be more suitable for the study, since the researcher is identifying the types of frames used and how they may have affected the decision making of which frames to use. This design seems to be the most suitable method of data collection and analysis since the study is looking at gathering non-numerical data.

#### (2) UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Burns & Grove (2003) explained that a unit of analysis is the matter that a researcher aims to study. It can be an individual, a group of people, artefacts, or printed media and literature. The unit of analysis for this study would be the selected mainstream and alternative media of focus. In this study, the researcher has conducted content analysis on stories featured in the New Straits Times, which relate to the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school fire.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the previous section, 3.4.2 method, the researcher used content analysis to gather as much information on the types of framing used by the New Straits Times (NST) when reporting on the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school fire. The study focuses on 27 news articles dated from Sept 15 until Sept 18 2017. The reason why the researcher has chosen to study news articles published within the range of this time period is the incident happened. On September 15, 2017 a press conference was held by the police to explain the relevant details surrounding the event. Seven youngsters were arrested for their involvement in causing the fire.

### 4.1 NEW STRAITS TIMES - SEPTEMBER 15

#### (1) FRONT PAGE

Responsibility frame: The newspaper includes three bullet points, highlighting the failure of school authorities to ensure safety of its occupants and the fact that the institution was operating illegally as the building plan was not approved by the relevant authorities of the Fire and Rescue Department.

Human-interest frame: the picture of a woman crying, pointing at the religious school helped to attract the readers' attention to read the newspaper.

#### (2) PAGE TWO

##### *First story: "23 Die in Tahfiz School Fire"*

Information frame: The story explained the details of the event, such as the location of the fire, the number of casualties, the situation on the ground when it broke out and also information on the possible cause of the fire.

Human-interest frame: The content of the article was based on one of the survivors' testimonies. Muhd Izzarudin Roslan, 15, narrated the events that took place situation from the moment that he woke up. The writers of the article also include perspectives of the eyewitness.

Responsibility frame: The writer narrated the story in a persuasive way to influence the reader who could proceed to question the credibility management of the religious schools. The writers described "the other burning question that has since been raised which was why the religious school was allowed to operate when the premises had yet to be given the approval from the authorities"

*Second story: "PM: Ensure students study in safe environment"*

Response frame: The story highlighted the government's response to the incident, where Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak called on the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government and the Fire department to ensure the safe and conducive environment of students.

(3) PAGE FOUR

*Leader: "Enough is Enough"*

Information frame: This article was published in the opinion section. It not only that it provides information about the incident, but also brings to mind a similar fire incident which took place in 2015. The article also highlights some of the measures that the writer believes should be looked into to prevent the incident from re-occurring.

*"Preventive measures will be put in place"*

Response frame: This article explained the government's plan to streamline safety requirements at all religious schools. This plan was part of the government's response to prevent such incident from re-occurring.

(4) PAGE FIVE

Information and human-interest frames: The writer wrote a story based on interviews with the survivors as well as some of the victims' parents. The story highlights the fact that these survivors

were forced to jump out of the building, leaving behind their trapped friends. There were also strong quotes from the parents of the victims such as "I've lost a son, but Allah has saved another". This inclusion of such questions create an emotional response in the reader.

(5) PAGE SIX

*"Ustaz grieves for children"*

Human-interest frame: The article started with the writer's description of a "one" figure who was waiting at the Hospital Kuala Lumpur mortuary. The man described as victims waiting for the bodies of the victims. The writer described how he was sobbing as he stood over the bodies while praying for them, with and swollen eyed.

*"Mufti: Vital to monitor private religious schools"*

Responsibility and episodic framing: The article focused on the importance of monitoring the number of private Islamic religious schools that has mushroomed. It uses episodic framing because the article was written based on the perspective of the Perlis Mufti Dr Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin.

*"Will I go to heaven if I die?"*

Human-interest frame: The beginning of the news feature focuses on the question posed by Muhammad Hafiz Iskandar one of the fire victims who died. The title is catchy as it certainly dramatises the incident attracting the attention of readers.

(6) PAGE SEVEN

Information and human-interest frame: The title, "Victims found huddled together" would certainly attract readers and evoke sadness. The story also provides information on how the victims were found in their dormitory and they tried to escape but failed due to the permanent grill's that were fitted at all windows.

Affirmation frame: This page comes with a graphic, representation of the locations within the school where the charred remains were found and the escape route the survivors used.

(7) PAGE EIGHT

*“KL fire is Deja Vu for Kedah school”*

Information frame: The article featured an interview with a religious school principal Azizah Yahaya who lost 21 students also due to a school fire in 1989.

Affirmation frame: a graphic representation of fore cases involving religious schools is featured to prove that this incident is nothing new. It has happened so many times before. This relates to the Leader’s section, which called on the government to take action and stop similar incidence from happening again.

*“Mum says unconscious son being treated in ER”*

Information frame: The story basically explained the physical injuries of one of the victims, who suffered a broken leg, broken ribs and burns to his face, following the fire incident.

#### 4.2 NEW STRAITS TIMES - SEPTEMBER 16

(1) FRONT PAGE

Human-interest frame: The headline "Was it Arson" would help to attract readers so that they can look for more information and make their own judgement on the possible causes of the incident.

(2) PAGE TWO

Information frame: The writer provided information about the burial process in this news story. Other than that, the writer also focused on the investigation carried out by several enforcement agencies which have led them into believing that foul play may have been at work. This included the fact that the investigators found a few gas cylinders outside the door to the dormitory on the second floor of the building. It was reported that CCTV recordings from a

nearby building showed that there was an "intrusion" into the school compound several hours before the fire started.

(3) PAGE FOUR

Information frame: The article explained the funeral rites of the burials, which took place in several states.

(4) PAGE SIX

*"New lead may point to arson"*

Affirmation frame: This article explained the theory that the fire incident was not an ordinary event. The article explained the significance of CCTV recordings of a man entering the premises hours before the fire started and the fact that they found traces of petrol in front of the door to the dormitory, where the victims had been trapped. Quoting sources, the writer also explained the possible motive behind the event.

*"Victims died of smoke inhalation"*

Information frame: The article explained in detail the cause of death for all 23 victims and how the process of identification was carried out.

*Identify high-risk schools*

Response frame: The article emphasised the efforts that would be taken by several states to ensure all tahfiz schools met the safety requirements and were registered with the Ministry of Education.

(5) PAGE 10

*"New task force to meet soon"*

Response frame: A task force was set up to investigate the fire at Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah tahfiz school. It would revisit suggestions and recommendations by the Royal Commission of Inquiry which was set up in 1989, to investigate the fire that killed 27 students of Sekolah Agama Rakyat Taufikiah Khairiah Al-Halimiah.

*“Ministry registering religious schools, tahfiz”*

Response frame: The Education Ministry was registering tahfiz and religious schools in the country to make sure they followed the safety and security inspections conducted by government agencies under the ministry. The move came in light of the fire that hit the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah tahfiz school.

#### 4.3 NEW STRAITS TIMES – SEPTEMBER 17

(1) FRONT PAGE

Information frame: The front page provided information on the number of suspects arrested in regard to the fire incident. It also provided information on the motive behind the incident, which was said to be an act of revenge.

(2) PAGE 10

*School Fire suspects arrested*

Information frame: The article provided detailed information on the reason of seven teenagers aged between 11 and 18 year-olds, who decided to burn down the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah religious school. The writer also provided information on how the culprits started the fire.

*“14 Fire survivors in secret shelter”*

Information and response frames: The article described how the survivors had to be placed at a temporary shelter, where the location is unknown. It also reported that the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry would provide counselling to the survivors of the fire tragedy.

#### 4.4 NEW STRAITS TIMES – SEPTEMBER 18

(1) FRONT PAGE

Human-interest frame: The title, “I won’t forgive. Give them the death penalty”, together with a picture of a women in tears, were

among the ways the newspaper framed the story. The title and the image of the lady were used to grab the attention of the readers.

(2) “SORRY WON’T BRING MY SON BACK”

Human-interest frame: Again, the title “Sorry won’t bring my son back” is a very strong quote that explained the anger and pain that the victim’s mother was suffering after losing her son.

(3) NAJIB, AND WIFE VISIT SCHOOL BLAZE SURVIVORS

Information frame: The article gave information about Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak’s visit to the hospital. It also provided details on the conditions of the four survivors who were undergoing treatments.

(4) “SLAP OTHER CHARGES ON THEM, TOO”

Responsibility frame: The article focused on Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi’s call for the perpetrators to be slapped with other charges to reflect the severity of their crime as a deterrent to others. He was actually commenting on calls by many quarters for the minors to be charged and tried as adults based on their actions and the tragic outcome of the incident.

(5) SUSPECTS SHOW NO REMORSE

Information frame: The article described how the suspects who allegedly set fire to the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah religious school had not showed any sign of remorse, even after being picked up by the police.

(6) TEACHER: “STUDENTS QUARRELLED WITH TEENS OVER FUTSAL COURT”

Information frame: The story explained the possible motives that could have led the teenagers to burn down the religious school.

(7) 7 TEEN SUSPECTS SIGN OF DEFECT IN SOCIETY

Response and responsibility frames: The actions of the seven teenagers showed that there is a serious defect in the Malaysian society. Malaysian Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF) chairman,



Tan Sri Lee Lam Thy said Malaysians should step out of their “bubble” and discard the “denial syndrome” as violence among teenagers was alarming. He added that action should be taken against parents who allow their children to be out late at night, causing them to be involved in crimes.

4.5 DISCUSSION

Table 4.1: Types of frames used by the New Straits Times (NST)

Types of Frames	Frequency
Information frame	15
Human-interest frame	9
Response frame	7
Responsibility frame	5
Affirmation frame	3
Episodic framing	1

The New Straits Times (NST) was found to have been using the information frame in most of their reporting on the fire tragedy. The newspaper used this frame 15 times. However, scholars believe that the most important use of this frame can be seen when the journalist wrote a commentary on the issue.

The Leader column which was published on Sept 15 2017 on page 4, had a compelling title "Enough is enough", which basically explained the frustration of the citizens for having to see this tragedy happen again. The writer noted that 211 tragedy fires involving tahfiz schools have been reported since 2015 yet no action has been taken to safeguard the lives of the students. The writer also provided a brief history of a similar incident which took the lives of 27 students in 1989. Most importantly, the writer also highlighted the need for the government to take two specific measures in order to prevent such incidents from happening again. First is to have the Fire and Rescue Department to conduct checks on all tahfiz

schools in the country, adding that a coordinating body comprising representatives of the Fire and Rescue Department, the religious department and Ministry of Education should be able to help in the process. Secondly, the Ministry of Education should ensure that tahfiz schools nationwide are registered under them, or at the very least, allow the ministry to be given a role to oversee the safety of the schools.

The writer's recommendation may have been taken into consideration as the Ministry of Education announced on Sept 16 2017 that they were looking into making registration compulsory for tahfiz schools.

The second most commonly used frame was the human-interest one. The human-interest frame was widely used on September 15 2017, the day after the incident took place. The newspaper made use of information gathered from the survivors and victims' parents, in addition to pictures to better illustrate the sadness felt by relevant parties. Another prominent frame that the newspaper used in the first day of reporting the fire incident was the responsibility frame. The newspaper posed several "burning questions" which included, the issue of the credibility of the religious school, and how the religious school was allowed to operate when the building plans had yet to be given an approval stamp. The New Straits Times (NST) also highlighted the fact that the students failed to escape from the building, which had its fire exit blocked and windows, fitted with permanent grilles. There were also news that focused on the government's response toward the issue. The response frame was used since day one.

From focusing on the school management's "faults" for their failure to ensure a safe and conducive environment for the students, the newspaper started to shift its focus on September 16 2017 when new leads showed that the incident may have happened due to arson. While other media played on stories quoting non-governmental agencies or highlighted sources who demanded the school management to be punished, the New Straits Times (NST) focused on the fact that there could be foul play.

On September 17 2017, the newspaper provided detailed information on the incident, the motive as well as brief information about the seven suspects who were arrested for causing the fire. Meanwhile, on September 18 2017, the media played on human-interest to push for

heavy deterrence against all perpetrators. Stories with headlines such as "Sorry won't bring my son back", "Slap other charges on them, too" and "Suspects show no remorse", are evidence that the media shifted the blame to the suspects instead of focusing on the weaknesses of the school management who also failed to ensure safety of the students.

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study was conducted to look at how the media could influence readers' perception as well as decision-making. In the case of the Darul Quran Ittifaqiyah school fire incident, scholars found that the newspaper used at least six different frames to report the issue. The newspaper uses information frame the most for 15 times, human-interest frame (9) and response frame (7). The New Straits Times (NST) front paged the story for three consecutive days –September 15 until September 18 2017. This shows the emphasis given by the newspaper on the issue and it gave the readers the impression of how important the story was.

As discussed earlier in this study, the media plays an important role to not only disseminate information to the public but also share their perception on the issue. Entman (1993) said framing was used to shape and alter audience's interpretations and preferences on certain ideas which then encouraged target audiences to think, feel and decide in a particular way.

This study showed how the New Straits Times (NST) had subtly attempted to influence readers to have a negative impression of the school management, when it highlighted the failure of the school to ensure safety requirements were met. On September 15 2017, a day after the incident took place, the New Straits Times (NST) not only provided extensive information on the incident but also posed several "burning questions" which among others included. The issue of "how the school was allowed to operate when it had not been given the approval by the local authorities to use the building". It also focused on the fact that the students were trapped inside the building, and could not access the fire exits which were later being reported to have been blocked. The news also failed to escape from the windows as they were fitted with permanent grilles.

However, on the second day of the news report, research found that the newspaper had started to shift the blame to other parties. The title "Was it arson" shows that the New Straits Times (NST) was focusing on looking for a scapegoat that should be blamed instead of highlighting tragedy. The newspaper had no longer highlighted the school management's failure.

Gross (2008) noted that different journalistic news frames were known to exert differential emotional responses, thus when providing many different angles to a story might also create dissonance to the public. While other media focused on putting the blame on both sides, the school management as well as the perpetrators, the New Straits Times (NST), however, opted to influence its readers to focus more on the fact that the incident was a foul play.

Not only that the New Straits Times (NST) was no longer focusing on the school management's failure to ensure safety requirements were met, stories with headlines such as "Sorry won't bring my son back", "Slap other charges on them, too" and "Suspects show no remorse" are evidence that the media were not shifting the blame to the suspects.

## 5.1 THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF MEDIA FRAMING

The Leader column which was published on Sept 15 2017 highlighted on page 4 the need for the government to consider taking two measures in order to prevent such incidents from re-occurring. First, to have the Fire and Rescue Department to conduct checks on all tahfiz schools in the country and second, to have the Ministry of Education ensure tahfiz schools nationwide are registered under them or at the very least for the ministry to be given a role to oversee the safety of the schools. Though scholars could not possibly say that it was the writer who successfully influenced the policy-maker, the recommendations were later being put to thought. The Ministry of Education on September 16 2017 announced that they were considering making it compulsory for all tahfiz schools for be registered under the ministry. The government later had also given the instruction for the Fire Department to conduct checks at all tahfiz school in the country. The Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia found that in the past month, as many as 50% of 956 tahfiz centres throughout the country were found to be unsafe.

Since the media were more focused on the fact that the incident was caused by arsons, the school management had somehow managed to escape being held culpable for their negligence. The school had been operating for the past one year without getting any approval and it was also reported that the building was not equipped with firefighting equipment. The negligence of school management also possibly due to the fact that the newspaper is more focused on portraying the fire was not an accident. However, it is almost impossible to prove that this was solely due to the choice of frames used by the New Straits Times (NST).

## 5.2 FUTURE RESEARCH

In order to better prove the effectiveness of media frames, future research could consider expanding the unit of analysis and examine several newspaper reports on similar issues. Future research may also opt to study issues championed by one newspaper only. This would make it easier to study the effectiveness of the frames.

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# **A Primer on Social Engineering Threats**

**Paul Chin\* & Lim Thong Soon\*\***

**Abstract:** Social Engineering Attacks are a form of deception using communication or media network whereby the victim is tricked into revealing usernames, passwords or other sensitive information to a hacker, parting with a sum of money, or performing some insecure acts. It is not limited to computer systems and can also be done through normal telephone calls or face-to-face communication. World renowned computer hacker Kevin Mitnick who evaded the authorities in the 1990's was the world's first hacker known to widely employ social engineering attacks above all else as the main medium of attack. Such attacks became more prevalent as people began to rely more and more on social media and social networking services. Among all the hacking incidents, the basic principles employed in social engineering attacks have not changed much over the years, as in this attack the hacker targets vulnerable users by psychological manipulation. It has been said that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. More so when it comes to security. A security system is only as strong as its weakest link - which is the human user. Social engineering attacks lead to loss of finances, intellectual property, private data and consumer credibility. This paper examines the anatomy and execution of the attack and also presents a survey of the various notable frameworks to study such attacks and concludes with some mitigation countermeasures to deal with the threat.

**Keywords:** Social engineering, social media, social network, phishing, security awareness

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## INTRODUCTION

Social Engineering Attacks are a form of deception using communication or media network whereby the victim is tricked into revealing usernames, passwords or other sensitive information to a hacker, or, to perform some insecure acts (Kumar et al., 2015). It is not limited to computer systems and can also be done through normal telephone calls or face-to-face communication. World renowned computer hacker Kevin Mitnick who evaded the authorities in the 1990's highly advocates social engineering attacks above all else as a medium of attack (Zheng et al., 2019).

## MEDIUM OF ATTACK

Among all the medium of attacks, social engineering is the least technical of all as it can take the form of a simple phone call at the very least. Other forms of attack include sending fake emails, SMS, fake websites, fake login pages and fake software downloads also known as trojans. An organisation may install the best firewalls, antivirus and intrusion detection systems. These may be the cutting-edge technology, but, one thing that organisations usually overlook is the human factor. It has been said that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. More so when it comes to security. A security system is only as strong as its weakest link - which is the human user (Mitnick & Simon, 2002).

## A TYPICAL ATTACK SCENARIO

Selamat Sdn Bhd (Selamat) is a high-tech company boasting of its latest cutting-edge firewall and intrusion prevention systems. Its staff consist of highly skilled workers knowledgeable in IT and security and also some administrative staff. One of the administrative staff, Miss Harimau is a social media freak and frequently hangs out on Facebook. One fine day, she receives a friend request from a handsome gentleman, Mr Skywalker. Delighted and taken in by his good looks and trusted profile, she immediately accepts the friend's invitation. Over the next few weeks, the online chats became more and more intimate. Then, one fine

day, Mr Skywalker emailed her an intimate picture of himself as an attachment. Unknown to Miss Harimau, the picture file not only contains a picture but also a hidden program. She threw caution to the winds and immediately opened the picture file on her office PC. While she was looking at the photos, the hidden program evades all antivirus and installs itself as a hidden backdoor which allows Mr Skywalker to take control of not only Miss Harimau's PC but also as a launchpad to escalate attacks against the internal network of Selamat Sdn Bhd.

## ANALYSIS OF THE ATTACK

Mr Skywalker bypassed the perimeter defence firewall and intrusion prevention systems and managed to get into the organisation by deceiving a human user. He did not attack the high-tech equipment, he attacked the human users - the weakest link in the security (Mitnick & Simon, 2002). Prior to the attack, he had managed to find out the staff names from the company profiles on the Internet. A deep search using data mining tools like Maltego (Al-khateeb & Agarwal, 2019) revealed some facebook accounts. After filtering some names, he chose the most gullible one - Ms Harimau. Putting out some fake photos of himself and creating fake profiles and posts, he managed to befriend Ms Harimau. He then proceeded to gain the trust and friendship patiently over the course of the next few weeks. Then, he crafted a new backdoor program from scratch and also used encryption so as to avoid all antivirus detection (Tasiopoulos & Katsikas, 2014). The program was written to show a revealing picture of himself when clicked. This fake file is also known as a Trojan. He altered the extension of the picture file to masquerade as a jpg photo using the RTLO exploit (Tasiopoulos & Katsikas, 2014). He then emailed it to Ms Harimau's corporate email to ensure it bypassed the firewalls and intrusion prevention systems. When Miss Harimau opened the attachment, her Antivirus did not detect it as a malware because it was a (sic) picture file and also because it was a newly created program - also known as zero-day malware (Tasiopoulos & Katsikas, 2014).

In this scenario, the social engineering took place:

1. When she accepted Skywalker's friend request on Facebook.

2. When she continued to develop the friendship and the trust over the ensuing weeks.
3. Having trusted Skywalker and also unable to contain her inquisitiveness, she opened the email attachment that Skywalker sent her.

## ANATOMY OF A SOCIAL ENGINEERING ATTACK

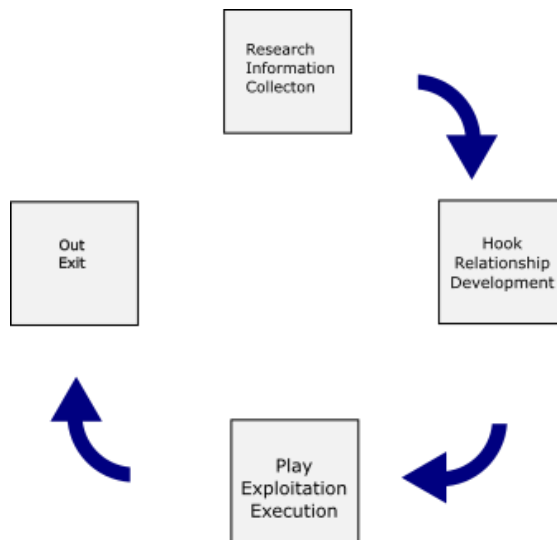


Figure 1: Anatomy of a social engineering attack (Salahdine & Kaabouch, 2019)

### 1. STAGE ONE: INFORMATION GATHERING

It starts off with information gathering where the hacker finds out as much information about the target as possible. He would use automated social engineering attack tools like Maltego to map out hidden paths and relationships between the organisation and its employees, friends, mentors, affiliations, schools, relatives and everything related to all the people connected to the target. This wealth of information can be used to lend credence to the attack, eg if the hacker knows that Miss Harimau likes certain food or engages in certain hobbies, he could send her things related to what she likes. Furthermore, the hacker could also spoof the email sender's name and email to masquerade as one of her friends. This is typically done in phishing attacks where a hacker pretends to be from a

Bank and sends an email pretending to be from the said bank complete with fake bank email sender's address and a letter head with convincing logos and a design which looks identical to that coming from the bank. This attack is also known as Spear Phishing (Gupta et al., 2017). In the body of the letter, the hacker would give fake warning messages saying that the account needs to be re-validated for security reasons and it provides a fake link to the (sic) bank's website where the user can re-enter her credentials to re-validate her account (Lohani, 2018). In such a scenario, the gullible victim would trust the email because she would indeed have an account with such a bank. The hacker knows this from the information gathering which was done at the outset (Al-khateeb & Agarwal, 2019).

## 2. STAGE TWO: HOOK RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In stage two, the hacker builds up the relationship with the objective of gaining the trust of the target. In the case of Harimau, the facebook relationship deepens over the days with Mr Skywalker gradually building up the trust (Zheng et al., 2019) .

## 3. STAGE THREE: PLAY EXPLOITATION AND EXECUTION

In this stage, the hacker, would attack the user by using deception in order to cause the victim to perform a security-flawed action, eg, open an email attachment containing a trojan, or click on a link in an email message to go to a fake website to key in her password, or to make some money payment or transfer. This attack works because of the trust which was built from Stage Two of the attack.

## 4. STAGE FOUR: EXIT

In this final stage, the hacker, having obtained the fruits of his labour would either silently leave the scene, or, keep a low profile whilst maintaining a backdoor access to the system, depending on the initial objective of the attack. If the initial objective was to bypass the perimeter defence and enter an organisation's network, then he would continue to maintain a low-profile whilst wiping out all traces of the attack. On the other hand, if the initial objective was to cause a sum of money to be transferred, then he would silently leave the scene without a trace. If a

facebook account was used as the medium of attack, the owner would be untraceable as he would have used VPN and Tor networks to hide his location and IP address when creating a fake facebook or email account and posting or emailing his victims (Sardá et al., 2019).

SOCIAL ENGINEERING FRAMEWORK MODELS

Two types of social engineering framework models exist in the literature. The first is a conceptual model and the second is phase-based model. The former involves what is called key-entities in a social engineering attack, whilst the latter employs the actual attack process (Zheng et al., 2019). A large number of the phase-based models involve a life-cycle type of attack, also known as the Kevin-Mitnick social-engineering cycle of attack (Mitnick & Simon, 2002).

KEVIN MITNICK SOCIAL ENGINEERING CYCLE

This is the most common of all the Social Engineering Attack Cycles and is depicted in Figure 2, which bears some similarities to the anatomy of an attack as referred to in Figure 1.

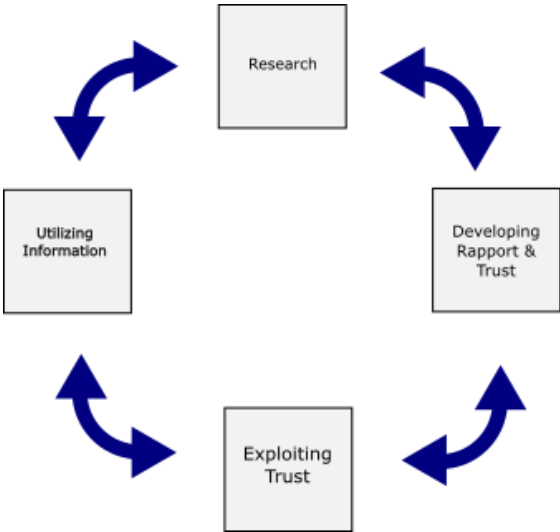


Figure 2: Kevin Mitnick’s Social Engineering Cycle

The difference is that in Kevin Mitnick's cycle, the phases repeats itself like a clock-face going clockwise from Research to Developing Trust to Exploiting to Utilising Information and then back to Research. Not only that, the cycles can go backwards, i.e anti-clockwise. For example, if during the Exploiting Trust phase, if the objectives are not met, then the hacker can go back to the previous phase, viz. Developing Rapport and Trust. Then, once, more trust has been established, he can proceed to Exploiting Trust again. Similarly, in the Utilising Information phase, new data may emerge. This can then lead to the next phase, which is Research, and the cycle repeats itself.

## RESEARCH PHASE

The Research Phase is where the attacker collects information from the web, articles, news, magazines, observations and subtle queries either through emails, phone calls, or social network interactions.

## DEVELOPING RAPPORT AND TRUST PHASE

This is where the attacker tries to develop intimacy, friendship and trust with the target. He may use insider information, citing people known to the target, plea for assistance, or faking some authority.

## EXPLOITING TRUST PHASE

In this phase, the attacker could fake the requesting of assistance from the victim to perform some action. This could be information or physical actions like transfer of file, money, or, access to some protected service, or building. Another tactic is to psychologically influence the target to seek assistance from the attacker. From the information gathering research phase, the attacker could know that the target may be in need of something. He could then take advantage of this knowledge to tacitly give the impression that he could provide what the target is seeking.

## UTILISING INFORMATION PHASE

In this phase, the attacker could already have achieved the objective. If it is part of a bigger objective, then the attacker would repeat the cycle or revert back to an earlier phase in the cycle and repeat until the final objective is achieved.

## EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING ATTACKS

Other phase-based models are developed from Kevin Mitnick's cycle. All of them have Kevin Mitnick's basic cycle and are only differentiated in detailed sub-phases. Apart from this, there are also conceptual models. These models are purely academic as they focus on the ingredients of each phase, eg. Janczewski and Fu, (2010) proposed a conceptual model where the elements of social engineering attacks are extracted into attacking methods, vulnerabilities, consequences and defences. One drawback of the conceptual model is that it is not intuitive and does not provide a clear picture of how an actual attack unfolds in real life. To meet the shortcomings of these social engineering attack models, Zheng et al. (2019) proposed a model consisting of SED and SES. SED stands for Social Engineering Dialogs whilst SES is an acronym for Social Engineering Session. One complete attack from commencement to completion where the goal is achieved is called an SES. And each SES can be broken down into small logical sections called SED (Social Engineering Dialogs). This is analogous to strategy and tactics. The long term objective and plan of attack is strategy and is comparable to SES, whilst the short term objective of each stage is the tactics, which is analogous to SEDs. The SES model consists of three stages:

1. Preparation of the attack;
2. Implementation of the attack; and
3. Attack gain

Each stage can be implemented using one or multiple SEDs. An SED typically includes the required elements, eg, physical objects, resources, players and script dialog.

## TYPES OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING ATTACKS

Figure 3 summarises the various types of attacks that exist (Salahdine & Kaabouch, 2019). Each of them can be technical based or human based, or a mix of the two.

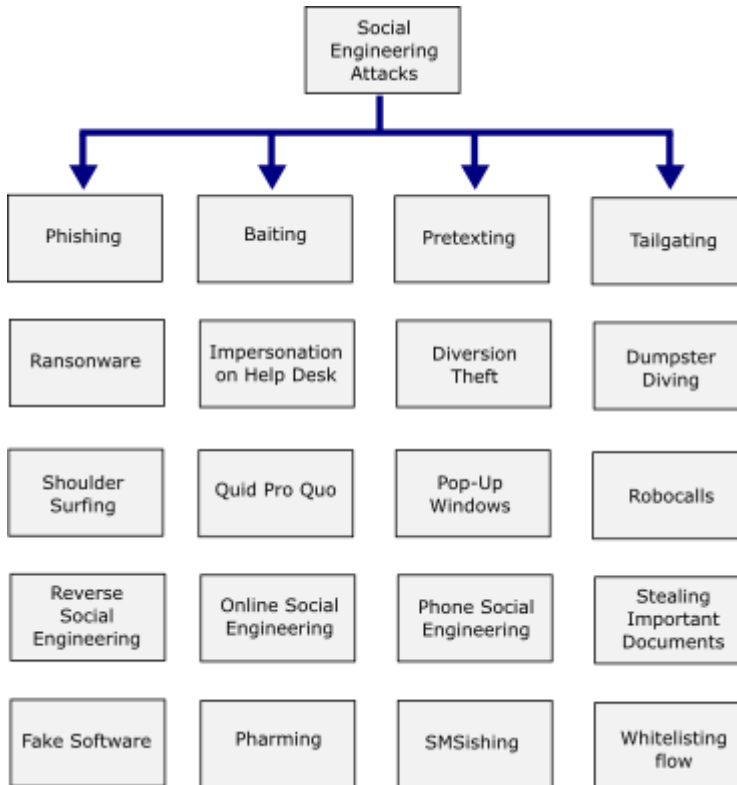


Figure 3: A chart showing Social Engineering Attacks (Salahdine & Kaabouch, 2019)

## PHISHING

This is the most prevalent of all social engineering attacks (Gupta et al., 2017). The attackers' goal is to acquire personal information via emails, telephone calls, sms, social media and websites. Examples include fake emails asking a victim to reactivate his/her bank account by visiting a fake bank login website provided via a link in the email. Another example is a fake message to the victim informing the latter of



some prize money won and requiring the latter to perform some further action to claim the money. Phishing attacks can be sub-divided into Vishing, Business Email Compromise, Whaling, Interactive Voice Response and Spear Phishing. Among these phishing sub-categories, the deadliest of them all is Spear Phishing. This is because the victims are attacked apparently from the inside, eg, a phone call from your bank informing you that someone has used your Identification Card to apply for a credit card and has swiped a sum of money with it. The caller is able to confirm your full name, Identification Card number, address and other details. This makes it difficult to detect the fake caller from a legitimate call from a bank. All these elements combine to make it the phishing attack with the highest success rate (Gupta et al., 2017). Spear Phishing is also known as credential spear phishing as it invariably uses the victim's credentials to exploit the trust mechanism to manipulate the user into performing insecure actions. Figure 4 shows an advisory from a bank alerting customers about a spear phishing attack.

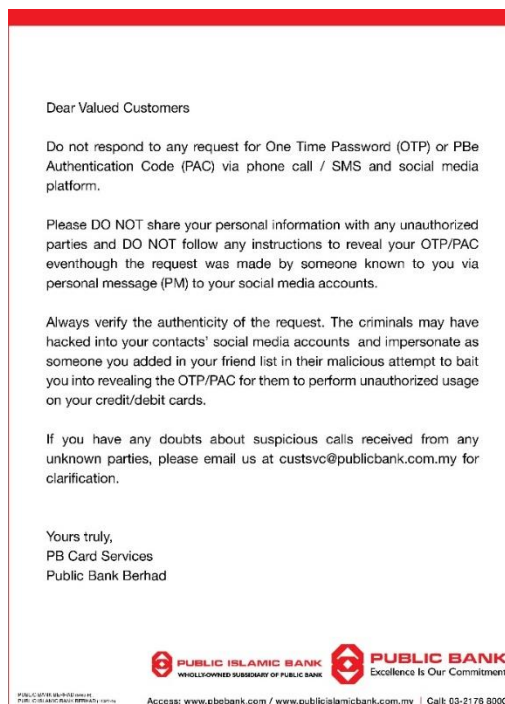


Figure 4: An advisory from a bank on phishing attack

## MITIGATING SOCIAL ENGINEERING ATTACKS

Apparently, one way to prevent such attacks is through creating more awareness among netizens of how such attacks are executed. In order to make good locks, one must first know how to break locks. This is where the media can play a pivotal role in disseminating information effectively. Nevertheless, even today with so many fraud and social engineering cases already reported in the media, people still fall easy prey to scams and deception. This is because the social engineering hacker exploits human nature's innate tendency to trust one another. This trust mechanism is not only used by hackers but also exploited by seasoned marketing professionals to sell products and services. The burning question that remains is how do we create this awareness of social engineering attacks.

Companies and organisations should take the lead. They should make addressing social engineering attacks part of corporate risk management strategies (Osuagwu et al., 2015). Some of the measures that can be taken include reporting hacking incidents, keeping confidential information safe, orientating new employees to secure best practices, sharing list of blacklisted emails, promoting security workshops, educating employees on dangers of social media and communication networks (Foozy et al., 2011). Fake phone calls can be detected by consulting contact lists, avoiding performing actions from unsolicited calls, interrogating callers with answers only known to the recipients and requesting to call back to a publicly-verified telephone number instead of the given one (Kaushalya et al., 2019). Companies could organise discreet practical simulations of phishing attacks where employees take part (Chothia et al., 2019). This practical training would expose employees to what it feels like to be psychologically manipulated in a real attack and as such prepare them to identify future attacks. Ho et al. (2010) proposed a reliable system which would apply a set of scoring criteria on communications based on certain established attacker anomalies to determine whether it is a spear phishing attack. Trojan-based attacks may be thwarted by disallowing others to use your computer, and also using USB scanners and also warning users about the dangers of using picked-up USB devices. Email attachments from suspicious sources should also not be opened.

Of all the counter-measures proposed, only one of them focuses on the crucial element – the human user. Better insight could be gleaned by looking directly at a human user's personalities and traits that make users more vulnerable. Such an approach is in fact advocated by Albladi and Weir (2016). The researchers propose studying the reasons people become victims so easily to psychological manipulation. We need to identify the factors that make people susceptible and build profiles to identify human weaknesses. Once we know how to identify vulnerable groups, training and education could be used to upgrade their awareness and skills to defend against such attacks. As such, a user-centric framework should be created to investigate highly susceptible user profiles. Bakhshi (2018) did a research in which USB sticks marked 'confidential' were strewn about near the office building entrance. It was found that 60% of the office workers who picked up the 'confidential' USB sticks would actually plug it into their office computers to see what was inside. A hacker could deliberately drop trojanised USB sticks outside the entrance of the building or office carparks of the target organisation. We can count on 60% of the employees to pick them up and plug them into their office PCs, thus, giving easy access to hackers from outside the organisation. As such, any kind of user-centric profiling of vulnerable users need to include such human traits.

Another refreshing approach to dealing with social engineering attacks was proposed by Algarni et al. (2016). The researchers did a study on one of the most fertile grounds for social engineering attacks, viz. social networking sites, eg. Facebook. They found that attacks executed in Social Networking Sites had high success rates due to the following factors:

1. Perceived Sincerity
2. Perceived Competence
3. Perceived Attraction
4. Perceived Worthiness

The above four factors combined together increase the source credibility of attackers, hence eliciting high levels of trust. One of the prominent features of Facebook is the Mutual Friends parameter. If a user

sees that a new friend requester has many mutual friends, then she is more inclined to trust him.

Kevin Mitnick also provided a Security Awareness Online Training (Mitnick, 2019). This is a web-based interactive training using live demonstration videos, short tests and scenarios. Topics covered include the major social engineering attack vectors, including spams, general phishing, spear-phishing and ransomware.

## CONCLUSION

Social Engineering Attacks are here to stay. Despite all the technological advances in computer and network security, systems are still vulnerable as hackers will continue to attack the weakest link – human users. This is compounded by the lack of initiative among companies and organisations to take a pro-active role to tackle this issue. With the advent of Internet innovations and the growth of Social Networking Sites, we can expect to see not a decrease, but rather an increase in such attacks as social networking sites will always be fertile hunting grounds for hackers. A core need for humans is the need to interact and to communicate with fellow humans. Each day, more and more resources are being channeled into linking people together – thus unwittingly increasing the attack surface manifold. Needless to say, social engineering attacks will continue to evolve and grow as there will never be a shortage of people whose daily lives are intimately connected to social media and social networking services.

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# **The Study of Takeover Defences and Firm Values Moderated by Firm's Ownership Structure in Malaysia**

**Teoh Siau Teng \***

**Abstract:** By utilising agency theory as an underlying theory, this paper proposes a conceptual framework based on the current corporate governance literatures. The objectives of this paper are twofold - firstly, to study the relationship between the firm's takeover defences and firm value as previous research have exhibited inconsistent results and secondly, to propose the moderating effect of firm's ownership structure (management shareholder and outside investor shareholders) that may have an impact on the takeover defences-firm value relationship. A conceptual framework and four propositions are developed based on a comprehensive literature review for future research direction.

**Keywords:** Takeover defences, firm values, ownership structure, Malaysia

## **INTRODUCTION**

Merger and acquisition activities have come in waves. 76,000 deals were completed globally during the period of 1990 – 2007, with a recorded value of US\$ 4.1 trillion. According to Rahman and Lambkin (2015), data cited from Thomson Reuters, the most recent merger and acquisition wave came in 2010 after the world financial crisis with a total value of US\$2.4 trillion with 37,000 transactions completed in 2012. This active market has drawn a large attention from academicians for widespread research in various disciplines. One of the most common discussions in the merger and acquisition issue is the takeover defence

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strategy. Takeover defences may present itself as a positive mechanism when the target firm uses it during the negotiating stage against the bidder in order to gain more advantages. On the other hand, it can also be a form of resistance strategy from being acquired.

In general, takeover defences can refer to the manager's action in resisting the takeover proposals suggested by external forces to acquire a company. Takeover motives can be classified as hostile takeovers or friendly takeovers (Morck et al., 1988). However, the intensity of the defences can range from mild to severe, which may cause the takeover process to be complicated (Ruback, 1987). Previously, scholars believed that no companies will adopt takeover defences prior to IPOs due to agency cost incurred between the owner-managers and shareholders, which subsequently decreases the IPOs proceeds. This thought remained until the 1990s when there were adequate research evidence showing that many companies adopted takeover defences prior to IPOs (Coates, 2001). In fact, the recent paper published by Mazouz and Zhao (2019), revealed that the risk-averse managers are more likely to adopt takeover defences to protect one's compensation portfolios and avoid the firm's stock price uncertainty as the market is often myopic.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 TAKEOVER DEFENCES

Takeover defences can be distinguished into pre-bid defences and post-bid defences. Pre-bid defences are the defences deployed prior the bid, such as staggered board/ classified board, poison pills, non-voting and/or multiple voting shares and others. Whereas, post-bid defences are the defences adopted once the bid starts, litigation and white squire are the most common measure used (Iannotta, 2010). Poison pills and classified boards are the most popular and effective approaches in takeover defences. Both of these approaches are positively related to the target's share of merger gains, target announcement returns and target premiums when the target firm hires a top-tier advisor. The top-tier advisor is treated as a bargaining tool in utilising takeover defences in the negotiation process by strengthening the target firm's bargaining position,

which helps the firm to seize higher premium and merger gains (Ertugrul, 2015).

Humphery-Jenner, (2014) focused on the “hard-to-value” (HTV) companies by putting the lens to the firm's takeover defences and its impact of managerial entrenchment decision making. The results suggest that takeover defences are beneficial to HTV firms by increased shareholder wealth and firm's innovation intensity. Nevertheless, there are mixed results in market reaction to a takeover defence proposal in managerial share ownership and efficiency. There are indications that although takeover defences will increase the firm's bargaining power, however, it does not apply to those firms with inefficient managers, regardless of the level of the managerial share ownership. The importance of the firm to have effective managers can determine the firm's bargaining advantage position (Malezadeh & McWilliams, 2011).

Another perspective from the bonding hypothesis argued that takeover defences can help to bond the IPO's firm intrinsic and extrinsic commitments to the firm's stakeholders, namely customers, suppliers and strategic partner. On the other hand, it will also facilitate the firm's counterparties to engage in a business relationship, and benefits the IPO firms in the long run (Johnson et al., 2015). Cremers et al. (2008) asserted that the long-term relationship of the firm to the customers and suppliers will lead to greater incentives for the stakeholders to monitor and take takeover defences, especially in product market competitive industries. Ryngaert and Scholten (2010) focused on the shareholder wealth outcome and managerial turnover to those defeated takeover bids firms. The result suggested that for those firms which were successful in their defence from being acquired, the shareholders generally exhibited a better wealth outcome. Conversely, the successful defence from hostile takeover bids do not result in management entrenchment, instead it increases the managerial turnover rate.

By using the US as a sample to study the correlation between religion piety and takeover defence effects on the firm, it is suggested that a stronger religious firm can substitute corporate governance, particularly in the lens of takeover defences. The firm with stronger religious piety is more likely to have takeover defences. However, this course of action will lead to managerial consolidation, subsequently destructing shareholders' interest (Chintrakarn et al., 2015).

Stout (2002) explained that many of the studies focused on ex-post analysis on how anti-takeover defences affect shareholder's wealth after the firms were successfully acquired. Though the firm encouraged non-shareholders to make extra-contractual investment in corporate team production, the takeover defences might increase the shareholder's wealth ex ante. The results suggested that shareholders indeed perceive takeover defences as beneficial ex ante. Yeh, (2014) conducted a post-adoption examination of operating performance to verify the robustness for the managerial entrenchment hypothesis. This empirical study showed there was no significant difference in a firm's performance after adopting takeover defences for two years. Yeh explained that these anti-takeover attributes did not intrinsically alter the manager's behaviour, where the adoption of takeover defences basically was to deter hostile takeovers.

## 2.2 TAKEOVER DEFENCES WITH FIRM VALUE

Takeover defences are often associated with wealth effects to the shareholders. The resistance from the management will lower the possibility of being acquired, and the shareholders will less likely to receive the takeover premium. Furthermore, the defences might also benefit the shareholders through the takeover bid, which may increase the offer price. Additionally, the firm value will also be affected even though the takeover did not succeed (Ruback, 1987; Ryngaert & Scholten, 2010). This causality was further validated by Johnson et al. (2015) and Andres et al. (2019) that there is a significant positive relationship between IPO firm value and the use of takeover defences.

In contrast, Gompers et al. (2003) pointed out that the takeover defence approach will cause fatal effects to the firm. Through the anti-takeover process, the inefficient or opportunistic managers will be segregated from the firm's control. As a result, the takeover defences will cause a managerial entrenchment that will worsen the agency conflict, subsequently lowering the firm's value. By using a large sample in the U.S firms during 1990 to 2006, Hwang and Lee (2012) denoted that the anti-takeover provision exhibited a lower value relevance of earnings. From the investors' perspective, the firm value will be discounted to the firm that adopted a defensive approach as the investors perceive such firms will less likely to generate a satisfying return of investment. Therefore, the firms with takeover defences will deteriorate the investor's

perception of current earnings, and cause the managerial entrenchment rather than increase the firm value.

Based on above discussion, previous research showed a significant yet mixed results between the relationship of takeover defences and firm value. Hence,

*Proposition 1: The firm's takeover defences are significantly associated with the firm value.*

### 2.3 TAKEOVER DEFENCES WITH OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE

According to a study from O'Sullivan and Wong (1999), by using UK as a sample, it showed that the firm's ownership structure and board composition are closely related to the firm's likelihood to becoming hostile takeover targets. Results showed that executive share ownership has a significantly lower probability in becoming hostile takeover targets as compared to the firms that separates its ownership and executive roles. Hostile takeovers are more likely to target firms that possess insufficient equity to defeat the bid, or the bid is too costly for the bidders.

A study in Japan using 130 Japanese firms by examining the relationship of Cumulative Abnormal Return (CARs) and the ownership structure is closely related. Managers with intermediate shareholdings are prone to use takeover defences to attain a better deal from the bidder, and they are more closely aligned with the firm's interest. While managers with less or greater shareholding are more likely to manage entrenchment, likewise they tend to prevent hostile takeovers to maintain their power and control. It can be concluded that the firms with greater outside shareholdings are associated with lower CARs and higher outside shareholding ownership structure implying higher tendency to engage in takeover defences from hostile takeover threats (Yeh, 2014).

There are many literature exploring the consistent result on takeover defences in different types of ownership structure. As previous literatures suggested, the management shareholder will have a higher tendency prone to anti-takeover provisions. Therefore the propositions are formulated as below:

*Proposition 2: Takeover defences are significantly associated to the firm's ownership structure, a) management shareholder, and b) outside investor shareholding ownership.*

#### 2.4 OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE WITH FIRM VALUE

The relation of ownership structure to the firm value has been studied by numerous scholars. The core of this analysis is usually to explain the conflict of interest between internal and external shareholder, as per agency theory proposition (Wei et al., 2005). A comprehensive paper by Lins (2003) covered 1,433 firms across 18 emerging markets in studying the relationship of firm ownership structure to firm value. Those companies with outside investor shareholdings as the blockholders are positively related to firm value and this is noticeable in the countries with lower shareholder protection. Lins has interpreted this result and suggested that outside investor shareholdings play a role as a substitute institutional governance mechanism to restrain the agency cost. Besides that, an empirical research conducted in China with 5,284 private firms that were formerly state-owned firms also demonstrated that ownership structure and firm value are significantly correlated. Wei et al. (2005) noticed when the government retained significant ownership after privatisation, the firm values decreased. When other block shareholders become the dominant shareholder than the government, the firm value increased.

Nevertheless, Shapiro and Gomez (2014) conducted a research in Spanish firms that showed otherwise; where there was a quadratic relationship between firm value to ownership concentration, and also the majority shareholders managed to expropriate the wealth of minority shareholders which differs from the results obtained from UK, US and Japan. The argument of the difference in value-ownership relations needs to be explained in the various corporate governance systems across countries. The variance effect of ownership structure-firm value relationship between the countries was further confirmed by the research of Morck et al. (2000). As the equity ownership structure in Japan is different from the limited equity ownership practice in US, results show that the firm value increases drastically when there is an increase in the managerial ownership. Equity ownership by corporation blockholders is positively correlated with the firm value.

Ownership structure is often seen as the main determinants of firm value. Most of the literature findings showed inconsistent results in the relationship between ownership structure and firm value, especially in different country settings, hence the propositions below:

*Proposition 3: Ownership structure (management shareholder and outside investor shareholding ownership) is significantly associated to the firm value.*

## 2.5 OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE AS MODERATING VARIABLE

Over the years, the perspectives of anti-takeover provisions have polarised into two different ideologies. Some authors (Cohen & Wang, 2013; Field & Karpoff, 2002; Sokolyk, 2011) perceived takeover defences as inefficient firm performance with lower accounting performance and reinvestment rates; where the takeover defences and staggered board's approach do not have any impact on the firm premium during acquisition. Conversely, some authors argue that this provision will cause a managerial entrenchment, subsequently to protect managers from the disciplinary effect of takeover which, in turn, prevents opportunistic bidders by strengthening the firm's bargaining power (Ertugrul, 2015). Andres et al. (2019), Bhojraj et al. (2017) and Ge & Kim (2014) also supports this notion as they found that the manager will be less likely inclined to short-term pressures and manage earnings as takeover defences can mitigate the myopic behaviour by displaying higher commitment to long-term performance to prevent being acquired. This is identified by the higher returns per unit of earnings by surprise in equity market of the firms that inaugurate the takeover defences. There are many determinants for a firm to launch takeover defences as a protection shield from being acquired. However, the advantages of takeover defences to the firm is under great dispute as many literature found there is an inconsistent result to the firm value (Bhojraj et al., 2017; Cohen & Wang, 2013; Ertugrul, 2015; Field & Karpoff, 2002; Ge & Kim, 2014; Sokolyk, 2011).

One of the most widespread determinants in the studies of takeover defences is the firm's ownership structure. Generally, the anti-takeover provision is positively associated with management shareholder type of ownership structure (O'Sullivan & Wong, 1999; Yeh, 2014). Additionally, the relationship of ownership structure also showed a

significant but mixed correlation with firm value (Lins, 2003; Miguel et al., 2001; Morck et al., 2000; Wei et al., 2005).

Based on above arguments and discussion, this paper conceptualises that ownership structure has a moderating effect over takeover defences and firm value relationship.

*Proposition 4: The firm's ownership structure, a) management shareholder, and b) outside investor shareholdings significantly moderate the takeover defences and firm value relationship.*

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

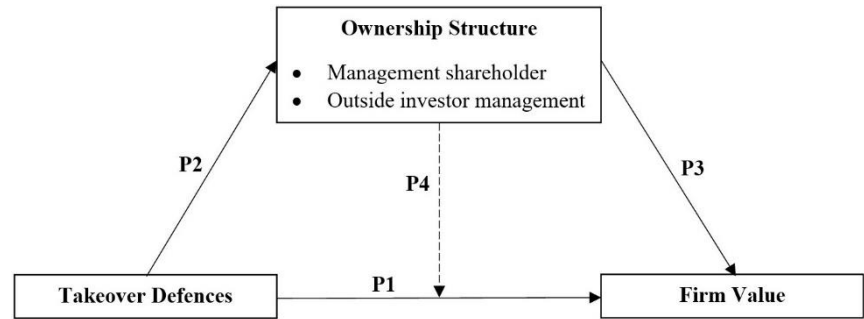


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper intends to make a few contributions to the literature on merger and acquisition studies. Firstly, to fill the research gap on current literature by considering the moderating effect of ownership structure to the takeover defences and firm values to academia dedication. Previous study results on takeover defences to firm values differ and are rather inconsistent; takeover defences are closely related to firm's ownership structure, while the ownership structure was seen as one of the most crucial deciding factors to the firm's value. While there have been significant literature linking takeover defences to firm value, takeover defences to ownership structure, and ownership structure to firm value,

there has been little literature evidence relating these three variables. Secondly, the author recognises the significant effect of the ownership structure to the takeover defences and firm's value by proposing the ownership structure as the moderating factor. Many literature discussed takeover defences and ownership structure from diverse perspectives, though it does not examine it as a proposed framework in this paper, but somehow the correlation to firm performance or firm value is significant. Hence, the author suggests that this framework is relevant to be used for future research framework that intends to enrich the body of knowledge in merger and acquisition.

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# ***Hallyu* Phenomenon: How Long Will It Last?**

**Wahida Asrani Ahmad\***

**Abstract:** The rise of the Korean Wave or *hallyu* started during the Asian Financial Crisis (AFC) in 1997 when many South Korean exports, industries and entertainment were halted due to the economic crisis that affected most of Asia. K-drama or Korean drama was the first South Korean cultural product that garnered global attention. The popularity of *hallyu* due to the growing acceptance of K-dramas at that time has positively affected Korean films too. The success of *hallyu* continued with the arrival of the second Korean wave that brought Korean pop music or K-pop in the mid-2000s. Now, *hallyu* does not only comprise dramas, music and movies, but the phenomenon created by these entertainment products has caused an increased interest in aspects of Korean cultural products, such as fashion, food and beauty products. This paper discusses the success of the Korean Wave in becoming a global phenomenon and its future direction.

**Keywords:** Korean Wave, *Hallyu*, K-pop, K-drama

## INTRODUCTION

The term ‘Korean Wave’ or *hallyu* was coined in China in the late 1990s by Beijing journalists to describe the growing popularity of the Korean pop culture in China (Bok-rae, 2015; Kim, 2007). For the Chinese, the term *hallyu* or it was also called as *hanliu*, has two connotations - firstly to signify the Korean ‘wave’ and secondly, to describe “a fierce wind that is blowing into mainland China” (Bok-rae, 2015). The ‘wave’ refers to the spread of various

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South Korean popular culture including dramas, films, music, food, fashion, online games and cosmetics (Ainslie & Lim, 2015). *Hallyu* started becoming a common term, especially after the Korean television programmes and films have been exported to many Asian and European countries and America in the late 1990s (Kim, 2007). Kim (2007) further states that:

*Hallyu*, therefore, is not a term that is reliant on any particular notion of artistic quality, aesthetic principle or generic content, but rather it is an evaluation of the ‘exportability’ of Korean products. The term inextricably carries with it the notion of selling Korean-ness to the rest of Asia, and has thus become extremely important to Koreans not only as a source of entertainment but also of national pride.

The rise of *hallyu* started during the Asian Financial Crisis (AFC) in 1997 when many South Korean exports, industries and entertainment were halted due to the economic crisis that affected most of Asia (Hong, 2014; Hyejung, 2010). These industries were forced to think of ways to make up for lost revenues. As a result, the South Korean entertainment industry decided to export their films, television shows and music to many parts of Asia (Hong, 2014). The AFC thus became a turning point for South Korea to improve its media industry and broadcasting system as a whole. According to Hyejung (2010), the severe economic depression across Asia during that period had made many buyers of Asian television content switch to South Korean’s television programmes because they were cheap, yet still attractive to audiences. K-dramas were considered cheap alternatives. For example, Taiwanese Gala TV paid US\$1,000 for a one-hour K-drama episode as compared to US\$15,000 – US\$20,000 for a Japanese drama (Jeongsuk, 2011).

Realising the demands by television content buyers, the South Korean government together with television stations, broadcasting associations and telecommunication industries took the opportunity to create better conditions for the media industry and improve the international trade of media content. One of such approaches was to reform the Korean Broadcasting Act of 1990 by encouraging a structural change of the Korean television industry to one that is defined by free market competition and private ownership while supporting multichannel

broadcasting (Hyejung & Soobum, 2015). Gradually, Korean popular culture managed to dominate not only East Asian markets, but Southeast Asian ones as well. The latter had been previously dominated by the Japanese pop culture since 1970. Japanese popular culture, which focused more on its television programmes, has been popular in countries such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, but popularity of its television programmes began to decline since the 1990s (Iwabuchi, 2002).

#### FIRST 'WAVE' OF HALLYU

In the 1990s, K-drama became the first South Korean cultural product to garner global attention. K-dramas, which “have been the major driving force of the Korean Wave” (Jeongsuk, 2011) started to receive overwhelming response in China around 1997 when a K-drama, entitled *What is Love All About*, was broadcasted on state-run Chinese television, CCTV. This followed another drama, *Jealous*, which was imported as the first cultural product from South Korea in 1993 (Kim, 2007). However, during these periods, not only were K-dramas popular. Dramas from Japan, Taiwan and China were also widely consumed by audiences across Asia, especially Japanese dramas. The formulas used in K-dramas were in fact similar to other Japanese productions, such as mixing romance and family-drama genres (Chua, 2012). Thus, when Asia was being hit by the AFC in 1997, Asian television content buyers opted to buy K-dramas because they were cheap but could still attract viewers (Tambunan, 2015).

In the early 2000s, *Winter Sonata* made *hallyu* spread to many parts of Asia. The key success of *Winter Sonata* was due to its well-written script, great acting, stunning scenery, as well as the successful promotional strategy used by the production company which included dubbing and subtitles as well as producing special programmes related to *Winter Sonata* (Hee-Joo & Jae-Sub, 2008). These were some of the factors contributing to the *Winter Sonata* phenomenon. The popularity of the drama had given a boost to South Korea's tourism industry, as fans around the world started to visit the country, especially Nami Island. Nami Island became popular as it was used as a filming location for the drama and has been recorded as the most frequented island by foreign tourists in 2003 (Hee-Joo & Jae-Sub, 2008). Following the success of

*Winter Sonata*, many K-dramas such as *Autumn in My Heart*, *Jewel in the Palace*, *Coffee Prince* and *Full House* had also captured global attention. Daejanggeum Theme Park located in Gyeonggi province, which opened in November 2004 and was used as one of the filming locations for *Jewel in the Palace* has also become famous among foreign tourists. The place was actually restored in the exact manner as seen in the drama, but the Daejanggeum Theme Park was purposefully built at the location to add more interesting activities for the visitors (Kim et al., 2009).

There are many factors that enable K-dramas to attract local as well as international audiences. K-dramas rely on particular approaches, which are fresh and unique, without being heavily influenced by those of Western drama. K-dramas are focused on family values and love, which were often presented in interesting ways that differ from western drama, yet remain successful despite using a language that is not commonly understood by a global audience (Ariffin, 2016). In fact, K-dramas have managed to bring *hallyu* to draw audiences from all over the world because these dramas often emphasise universal human themes such as love and loss, which viewers from different cultural backgrounds relate to (Hogarth, 2013). Not only that, the good looks of the actors and actresses have also contributed to the popularity of K-dramas (Ariffin, 2016). For instance, actor Bae Yong-Joon's popularity skyrocketed because of his role in *Winter Sonata*, while actor and singer Rain admitted that *Full House* made him famous in Asia (Hee-Joo & Jae-Sub, 2008). In Japan, Bae Yong-Joon was a huge star, where the Japanese press coined the term *Yon-sama Syndrome* to describe his massive popularity in the country (Korean Culture and Information Service, 2011). The term *Yon-sama* was coined as a combination of his name *Yong* and the Japanese word *sama*. Normally *sama* refers to the high honour originally reserved for royalty and aristocrats. *Yon-sama* can be translated as "Prince Yong" or "My Dear Lord Yong" (Jung, 2006). The bestowing of honour and high regard upon *hallyu* stars has made many *hallyu* stars among the highest paid entertainers outside Hollywood for they can earn more than US\$10 million a year (Hogarth, 2013).

The popularity of *hallyu* due to the growing acceptance of K-dramas has positively affected Korean films too. For example, *My Sassy Girl* starring Jun Ji-Hyun and Cha Tae-hyun in 2001 was a prominent K-film among Asians. The film became the top box office hit in Hong Kong for

two weeks, earning more than \$1.7 million in box office revenues (Jung-Kim, 2014). *My Sassy Girl* was also a big success in Japan, grossing US\$4 million when it was released in early 2003. Since then, a number of K-films have been distributed globally to countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia (Han, 2011).

## SECOND 'WAVE' OF HALLYU

The success of *hallyu* continued with the arrival of *hallyu 2.0*, or the second Korean wave that brought Korean pop music or K-pop in the mid-2000s (Bok-rae, 2015; Jang & Paik, 2012). K-pop refers to “a wide range of musical styles, a standard formula of combining catchy melodies with signature dance moves” normally performed by boy or girl groups (Kong, 2016). K-pop can be defined as a genre that combines pop, hip-hop, rap, rock, R&B and electronic music (Leung, 2012). It was indeed *Winter Sonata* that has prompted audiences in Asia to also start liking K-pop “because of its beautiful and also familiar soundtracks” (Woongjae, 2009). A song entitled *From the Beginning Until Now* by Ryu, which was the *Winter Sonata*’s theme song, became famous among K-drama fans. In Malaysia, the popularity of the song made a local singer-songwriter, Hazami to produce the Malay version of the song *Sonata Musim Salju* (*Winter Sonata*).

Initially, the growth of K-pop started due to AFC too. During the crisis, whilst key players in South Korean entertainment industry started to actively export television programmes to other Asian countries, the South Korean Ministry of Culture also invested a large amount of money promoting Korean pop music albums in neighbouring countries, especially China (Hogarth, 2013). It was a successful effort, especially when several Korean boy and girl groups such as Clon, H.O.T., NRG, Baby V.O.X., and S.E.S. managed to dominate charts in countries like China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Due to its massive popularity, K-pop music managed to take over the pop culture in Asia, which was previously dominated by Japan. Many Asian fans, especially teenagers could be seen opting for K-pop music by purchasing CDs, posters and buying concert tickets of their favourite K-pop groups (Korean Culture and Information Service, 2011).



When nobody expected that K-pop would produce the second wave of *hallyu* from South Korea, the K-pop world has kept its popularity rising with high domestic and international success (Shin & Kim, 2013). *Gangnam Style*, a popular song by Psy has added to the K-pop success in 2012 (Seung-ho & Joseph, 2014). At the time of writing, *Gangnam Style* remains the most watched music video on YouTube, with over 2.76 billion views worldwide, beating many clips by other international stars such as Justin Bieber, Katy Perry, Taylor Swift and Adele (Geddes, 2017). Although the line is still blurring on what constitutes K-pop, this ambiguity does not stop people from all over the world from consuming the music. In fact, in order to save the K-pop industry from suffering a loss in revenue due to illegal music downloading activities, the South Korean government allocated US\$91 million in 2009 to boost the K-pop industry, and plans included building a concert hall with 3000-seats as well as regulating the country's karaoke rooms to ensure the owners of the *noraebangs* (English: karaoke centres) are paying royalties for all the songs (Hong, 2014).

Besides the efforts taken by the government to boost the allure of K-pop music, the spread of K-pop and the increasing popularity of its 'idols' (a common term in Korea that refers to the boy or girl groups) can be attributed to three leading entertainment companies that has produced many K-pop stars until today - SM Entertainment (SM), YG Entertainment (YG) and JYP Entertainment (JYP). Although more entertainment companies now exist in the industry, these K-pop 'moguls' – Lee Soo-man (the founder of SM), Yang Hyun-suk (YG) and Park Jin-young (JYP) are still dominating the scene because they have been behind the success of many famous artistes such as Bigbang, Psy and 2NE1 (YG); Girls' Generation, TVXQ, H.O.T, S.E.S., Super Junior and EXO (SM); as well as Wonder Girls, 2PM, Miss A and Twice (JYP) (Yun-Jung, 2011). These three major entertainment companies have tried to meet the demand and expectations of K-pop fans around the world, such as producing many songs in various languages like English, Japanese and Mandarin.

One of the distinctive elements of K-pop is the process of shaping its stars into 'idol groups'. This process occurs as many K-pop stars are carefully selected by entertainment companies and trained for a long time, which sometimes could be more than 10 years (Jonghoe, 2012). A

trainee is an idol who is in training before he or she debuts in the entertainment scene during his or her early teens and is recruited through street recruitment, open competitions and auditions (Shin & Kim, 2013). Not only are idols being trained to dance and sing, some companies even sent the trainees to learn foreign languages in order to attract a global audience. Another interesting element of K-pop is that the majority of the artistes are group rather than solo based artistes. Most of the time, a group consists of more than five members. For example Girls' Generation had nine members when they first debuted and Super Junior has 13 members (Hogarth, 2013).

### *HALLYU* IN MALAYSIA

Korean Wave or *hallyu* is not the first East Asian popular culture that has managed to penetrate the regional Southeast Asian market, including Malaysia. Before the arrival of *hallyu*, Japanese cultural products such as *anime* and *manga* have gained much attention, and attracted many Malaysians especially teenagers and children. Chua and Iwabuchi (2008) point out that the colonisation and wars could have influenced the flow of popular cultures. During the Japanese invasion of Malaya (from 1941 to 1945), many local and Western products were banned including entertainment medium like movies and music. During that period, only Japanese films and a few Asian films were allowed (Mahmud et al., 2011). This has led to the exposure of various Japanese cultural products since that era. In 1980s, the introduction of the Look East Policy by then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has also contributed to the presence of more Japanese popular culture in Malaysia. The implementation of this policy, where one of the objectives included strengthening Malaysian-Japanese bilateral relationships through economic cooperation mainly by attracting Japanese capitalists to invest in Malaysia, has made the bond between Malaysia and Japan stronger (Talib, 2016). As a result, many Japanese cultural products were easily brought into Malaysia by local distributors. Japanese popular culture that remained influential in Malaysia included Japanese television programmes such as *Doraemon*, *Sailor Moon* and *Ultraman* series (Yamato et al., 2011). In fact, until today, television programmes and films such as *Ultraman*, *Naruto*, *Doraemon*, *Kamen Rider*, and *Ju-On* are

among the titles which are familiar to a global audience (Omar & Ishak, 2011).

Although Japanese popular culture still has many followers in Malaysia and other parts of the world, the presence of *hallyu* through various cultural products especially K-pop and K-drama has been dominating the entertainment scene today (Lim, 2015). One of the apparent reasons is because of the concerted efforts by the South Korean government in supporting the country's cultural products to strengthen the Korean Wave (St.Michel, 2015). Sustaining *hallyu* has become a crucial point in the South Korean government's cultural policy since the AFC. In 2012, the South Korean's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) launched an advisory committee to look for ways to sustain the Korean wave. Some of the efforts included allocating about US\$230 million to boost the *hallyu* in 2014 and 2015, as well as promoting their cultural products on the MCST, the Korean Culture and Information Service (KOCIS) and Korean Tourist Organization (KTO)'s websites (Tuk, 2012).

Similar to many other Asian countries, South Korean cultural products have also managed to reach Malaysian audiences. However, the entry of South Korean's cultural products into Malaysia was quite late compared to countries such as China and Singapore. Only in the late 1990s were South Korean cultural products such as broadcasting content, movies and popular music brought into Malaysia indirectly by traders from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Kuala Lumpur was the starting point of the arrival of these products (Chung-Sok et al., 2013). Thus, in 2002, *hallyu* started its phenomenon in Malaysia through the debut of the Korean hit drama *Winter Sonata*, which was aired on local television station TV3 (Azizan, 2012). Due to its overwhelming response, other K-dramas including *Autumn in My Heart* and *Full House*, which were also popular in other countries, started being broadcasted in Malaysia. One of the factors contributing to the popularity of K-dramas among Malaysians is the family-oriented values that are featured. Although some aspects of the traditional and family values can be found in certain western drama storylines, audiences find that they are more comfortable watching Korean dramas as it reflects Asian cultures (Ariffin, 2016).

Whilst Korean dramas remain popular among Malaysian fans, K-pop has also managed to increase its number of followers over the last

few years. Although South Korean brands like Samsung and Hyundai are also popular worldwide and have transformed the country into one of the world's major economies, K-pop is now South Korea's other best-known export (Leong, 2014). Aware of this *hallyu* phenomenon, the then-ruling *Barisan Nasional* coalition had even taken advantage of its popularity by organising few events involving K-pop stars as part of its effort to get support from young voters in conjunction with the 2013 General Election (Azizan, 2012). *Barisan Nasional* invited famous K-pop star, Psy to Penang to perform at its Chinese New Year celebration in 2013 (Sabapathy, 2013). It was an obvious attempt to garner ethnic Chinese youth support, especially because the event took place in the opposition-controlled Chinese-majority state of Penang (Muller, 2015). In addition, in 2011, the previous government organised the *One Million Youth Gathering* in conjunction with National Youth Day, which featured a famous K-pop group, *Super Junior M* as one of the performers.

#### *HALLYU AND THE INTERNET*

In 2010, Korean variety shows *Infinity Challenge* and *Running Man* made *hallyu* even more popular in Malaysia. For example, the phenomenon of *Running Man* in this country has led to the establishment of some online fanpages on Facebook such as *Running Man Malaysian Lovers* and *Running Man Malaysian Fans Page* by local fans in the effort to gather or unite all the Malaysian fans of this show. These online pages act as a platform to update not only the latest information about the show, but the members or cast's activities as well as their personal lives. This scenario has also proven that the development of technology plays a crucial role in increasing interest in *hallyu*, especially with the emergence of social media that acts as a platform for fans to get connected with others around the world, be aware of the latest information and interact with their favourite celebrities. Ainslie and Lim (2015) point out that *hallyu* is in fact greatly promoted by the Internet and social media platforms. For example, K-pop group members would upload pictures of themselves doing routine activities like eating, sleeping, exercising and cooking in order to get closer to the fans (Yan, 2010). In addition, one of the social media platforms, Youtube, has become a common channel among youth to consume K-pop music and has made all major K-pop

producers – SM Entertainment, YG Entertainment and JYP Entertainment utilising the same platform to promote their products (Chua, 2015).

The development of digital technologies and social media has indeed contributed to the significant change of this phenomenon and it has become a new driving force of the popularity of *hallyu* in many countries (Jin, 2012). In Malaysia, since the Internet was introduced in 1995 and broadband in 2007, these elements have also become important in Malaysian life (Wok & Mohamed, 2017). These services have allowed people to obtain all types of information from the Internet, as well as consume faster streaming of media content. The development of social media has taken over the Malaysian online world with the presence of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and many more, which have garnered millions of users (Rahman & Hassan, 2015). In relation to the context of *hallyu*, Malaysian fans are using social media such as Facebook to communicate amongst themselves, where they actively post about upcoming performances, new merchandise and use these platforms to connect with larger K-pop fan bases around the world (Lim, 2015,). They can also enjoy K-pop music through various live radio channels, such as *Seoul.FM* and *MyFM K-pop*. In addition, there are many online channels by local and international content providers, which can be assessed legally and for free. For example, a streaming service *Viu*, owned by Hong Kong telecommunication company PCCW, has started providing free streaming of K-Dramas and K-variety shows to Malaysian audiences since 2016. *Viu* provides viewers with latest content from major South Korea's broadcasters such as KBS, MBC and SBS, where subtitles in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Chinese are made available (Lee, 2016).

## A NEW *HALLYU*

*Hallyu* does not only comprise dramas, music and movies. The phenomenon created by these entertainment products has made people start to like other aspects of Korean cultural products too, such as food, lifestyle and customs (Keum-Hyun, 2011). The Korean Wave impacting this country has led Malaysians to have a better understanding of Korean society and culture, and have more favourable views about the Korean language and Korean studies. *Hallyu* has also helped Malaysians to develop more interest in visiting South Korea and enjoy Korean food

(Cho, 2010). According to research, Malaysians aged 26 to 35 contributed an average of 40 per cent to the total Korean food sale in 2015, and the favourite items commonly bought by Malaysians were *pepero sticks*, *ramyun*, *kimchi*, and *toppoki* - a soft rice cake (Dzul, 2016). Many famous restaurants have opened their doors in Malaysia including the Korean famous chicken outlet *KyoChon*, which started its operation in this country in 2014. Various Korean cosmetic and clothing products have been receiving attention by Malaysians (Majelan, 2015). Brands such as Nature Republic, Etude, Face Shop and Laneige, which are using famous Korean celebrities as their brand ambassadors are making inroads in this country. This has happened due to the massive acceptance of K-pop and K-drama in Malaysia, besides offering more affordable prices in comparison to the products from United States, Europe and Japan (International Trade Administration, 2016). In 2016, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) stated that the total amount of goods imported from South Korea was 5.3 percent compared to 4.6 percent back in 2015, showing an apparent trend pointing to the popularity of Korean products among Malaysians (Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, 2017).

## WHERE IT IS HEADING

The popularity of *hallyu* continues despite being around for more than 10 years. The phenomenon has made South Korea become the Hollywood of the East in 2010 (Korean Culture and Information Service, 2011). Today, besides the acceptance of other Korean cultural products such as food, language, fashion and beauty products, the image of *hallyu* stars including the K-pop idols has also captured attention among the fans around the world and led to a wider acceptance of the Korean Wave. Fans have started to imitate the identity and fashion of their favourite Korean stars. This fan-obsession scenario has been widely debated in many countries. In Thailand, authorities are concerned about the craze amongst Thai teenagers to look like 'doll-like' K-pop idols who no longer rely solely on whitening products but undergo plastic surgery (Ainslie & Lim, 2015). In Malaysia, debates about the deterioration of cultural values especially from concerned Muslim parents and religious groups are also getting heated because of *hallyu*. Many Malay and Muslim communities

have deemed K-pop and other Korean popular cultures as ‘threats’ to Islam due to the inappropriate images portrayed by many *hallyu* stars, as well as fan obsession towards the celebrities. One such example is the controversy over K-pop group B1A4 regarding the issue of hugging and kissing female Muslim fans on stage during a concert in Kuala Lumpur on January 10, 2015 (Zuhairi, 2015). A video recording of the incident, which showed the band members hugging and kissing their Muslim fans who donned *tudung* (headscarf) during the concert immediately went viral on social media.

Despite fan obsession towards K-pop stars, *hallyu* became shaky due to the political dispute between South Korea and China over the issue of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD). In July 2016, South Korea agreed to host the THAAD, an advanced American missile defense technology, which is expected to better defend the country against North Korea’s military threats. China, however, has been opposing this idea by stating that the operation of THAAD on the Korean Peninsula would threaten Chinese national security interests (Chandran, 2016). Due to South Korea’s decision to deploy the technology, China retaliated by banning the airing of any forms of Korean content or programmes in the country as well as prohibiting Korean stars to be featured in any Chinese television programmes. In fact, it affected the South Korean tourism industry because China banned tour groups from visiting the country. Of the 1.1 million tourists who visited South Korea in March 2016, more than 500,000 were Chinese, but in May 2017, the number collapsed to 263,788 (Volodzko, 2017). This made the South Korean government resort to taking another pathway to make-up for these losses by attracting Muslim tourists to the country. The number of Muslim tourists who visit South Korea is increasing (Sil, 2017). However, this situation has introduced another perspective to the survival of Korean Wave as China is one of the main ‘consumers’ of Korean Wave together with Japan. As such, this dispute brought about negative impact on the *hallyu* phenomenon as major K-pop entertainment companies - YG Entertainment, SM Entertainment, and JYP Entertainment lost revenue due to the dispute (Sanchez, 2016).

However, in 2017, China lifted the ban on South Korean art and other entertainment forms after high-level talks between the two countries (Movius and Gerlies, 2017, para. 1; “China’s ban on Korean,” 2017). This

change could be seen when a Korean girl group attended a song festival in Sichuan, China on November 1, 2017 where their performance was even broadcasted live (“China's ban on Korean,” 2017). K-dramas have been broadcasted again on television and demand for K-pop music from famous Korean groups like BTS and Blackpink has soared in China (“Could BTS help,” 2019). The power of *hallyu* is said to become stronger now especially due to the massive acceptance of the internationally-renowned K-pop band, BTS which currently has penetrated global market. The band’s worldwide explosion marks a new level of global success for *hallyu* (Suntikul, 2019). BTS has contributed significantly to the South Korean economy. Suntikul (2019) states that besides sales of music, merchandise, and concert tickets, it was estimated that around 800,000 tourists to South Korea, or about 7 percent of all arrivals in 2017 were motivated to visit the country because of their interest in BTS. As for the Korean film industry, Noh (2019) points out that the film exports to China in 2018 showed an increase to 24 percent because optimistic Chinese buyers were still cautiously buying content from Korean sales agents during the ban and stored it with the hope the ban would be lifted. Hancock and Xueqiao (2018) state that Chinese travel companies have resumed the group tours to South Korea, which were halted before this due to the dispute. It is indeed uncertain how the *hallyu* will be expanded in the future. However, it is no doubt that *hallyu*’s popularity will be sustained or even reach a higher level if its cultural products are still widely appreciated and consumed by a global audience.

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# **Kertas Penyelidikan**



## ***Catfish* dan Jenayah Cinta Alam Maya:**

### **Kajian Kes ke atas Ibu Tunggal di Kota Kinabalu, Sabah**

**Mohd Hanafi Bin Jumrah\* & Aisah Hossin\*\***

**Abstrak:** Kisah cinta alam maya seringkali menghiasi berita dan surat-surat khabar tempatan. Kepesatan teknologi bukan sahaja membuka ruang dan peluang dengan lebih mudah kepada pelbagai lapisan masyarakat dari aspek komunikasi dan kehidupan harian malah ianya juga membuka peluang kepada si pendamba cinta untuk mendapatkan cinta sejati seperti yang diimpikan. Penggunaan media sosial sebagai satu platform untuk bersuai kenal telah menjadi satu trend yang akhirnya memerangkap diri sehingga menjadikan ibu tunggal sebagai mangsa individu yang digelar *catfish*. Justeru, objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti siapa sebenarnya yang digelar sebagai *catfish* dan mengenalpasti bagaimana ibu tunggal boleh terjebak dan seterusnya menjadi mangsa jenayah cinta alam maya. Data diperolehi melalui temu bual secara mendalam dan pemerhatian di lapangan ke atas lima belas orang informan (ibu tunggal) yang memiliki pengalaman sebagai mangsa *catfish*. Dapatan kajian mendapati medium utama yang digunakan oleh *catfish* dalam memerangkap ibu tunggal adalah aplikasi *Facebook* dan modus operandi yang digunakan adalah perhatian dan cinta sementara sehingga mangsa sanggup memenuhi kehendak dan impian si *catfish* dengan rela dan akhirnya mengundang penyesalan kepada diri sendiri.

**Kata Kunci:** *Catfish*, jenayah cinta alam maya, ibu tunggal, mangsa cinta, media sosial

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## PENDAHULUAN

Media sosial memberi ruang dan peluang kepada pelbagai lapisan masyarakat untuk saling mempercepatkan perkongsian maklumat, mencari kenalan baru dan lama serta menjadikannya sebagai platform untuk berniaga dan menambahkan pendapatan (Mohd. Noorhadi dan Zurinah, 2017; Faradillah et al., 2015). Media sosial dilihat sebagai salah satu daripada kemajuan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi yang sangat memainkan peranan penting dalam kehidupan pada masa kini. Walaupun pada asasnya media sosial dijadikan sebagai satu medium yang positif dan dapat membantu dari pelbagai aspek, namun penyalahgunaan terhadap media sosial kerap berlaku sehingga ianya mengundang pelbagai masalah kepada masyarakat.

Media sosial boleh didefinisikan sebagai satu platform untuk membina profile, membuat eksplisit dan perhubungan (Boyd dan Ellison, 2008). Media sosial seperti aplikasi *facebook*, *wechat*, *whatsapp* dan *twitter* pada dasarnya dicipta untuk memudahkan lagi jaringan perhubungan tidak kira pada jarak yang dekat atau jauh asalkan memiliki rangkaian internet. Antara tujuan atau peranan utama yang menjadikan media sosial sebagai nadi kehidupan masyarakat selai daripada untuk mendapatkan maklumat adalah untuk membentuk persahabatan. Ini kerana melalui media sosial, pengguna dan pengguna lain berupaya untuk mengetahui dan mengikuti perkembangan aktiviti dan kehidupan sesiapa sahaja yang mereka ingini (Siti Ezaleila, 2016).

Keadaan ini secara tidak langsung telah memberi ruang kepada sesiapa sahaja untuk menjadi *catfish* atau menjadi mangsa alam maya. *Catfish* boleh didefinisikan sebagai seseorang yang membuat profile palsu untuk berhubung dengan individu dan mengumpan mereka melalui hubungan atas talian (Consumers International, 2019). Oleh itu, dengan hanya menggunakan mekanisme hubungan persahabatan sebagai asas kepada pembinaan hubungan baru dan seterusnya memupuk kepercayaan serta beralih dari sosial media kepada media yang lain seperti telefon dan pesanan segera (Yang et al., 2013) menyebabkan seseorang itu menjadi mangsa *catfish*. Tempoh pengenalan yang singkat tetapi disulami dengan elemen kepercayaan dan ingin mengenali dengan lebih rapat menjadi tiket kepada *catfish* untuk memulakan langkah memasuki kehidupan mangsa sehingga menyumbang kepada jenayah alam maya.

Jenayah alam maya menjadi sesuatu yang semakin membimbangkan banyak pihak dan menjadi tanda tanya bukan sahaja di kalangan masyarakat tetapi para sarjana di dalam mengurangkan dan mencari solusi untuk membantu para pengguna media sosial agar lebih berhati-hati semasa menggunakan laman maya atas pelbagai tujuan yang boleh mendedahkan mereka kepada golongan *catfish*. Rentetan itu juga, peningkatan terhadap bilangan mangsa yang terdiri daripada golongan ibu tunggal menambahkan lagi kegusaran ini. Hal ini kerana, kebanyakan golongan ibu tunggal berusia pertengahan dilaporkan cenderung menjadi mangsa sindiket penipuan *love scam* atau jenayah cinta alam maya yang didalangi oleh lelaki warga asing (Bernama, 2016).

Justeru, pengetahuan terhadap siapa itu *catfish* dan modus operandi yang biasa digunakan untuk memerangkap mangsa khususnya ibu tunggal perlu diteliti bagi membantu golongan ini mendapat gambaran serta cara untuk mengurangkan risiko daripada menjadi mangsa dan lebih bijak dalam mengendalikan situasi yang akan berlaku kelak. Ibu tunggal dijadikan sebagai fokus kajian ini disebabkan kekerapan ibu tunggal yang menjadi mangsa dalam jenayah cinta alam maya (mStar, 2016). Tambahan lagi kajian Azianura Hani et al. (2018) menegaskan bahawa wanita memiliki peratusan yang lebih tinggi untuk terdedah kepada jenayah cinta alam maya berbanding dengan lelaki. Keadaan ini menjadikan kajian ini penting untuk mengisi kelompangan yang ada dalam mengurangkan peningkatan jenayah cinta alam maya dan seterusnya menurunkan jumlah statistik sedia ada dari semasa ke semasa.

## OBJEKTIF KAJIAN

Dalam kajian ini, objektif utama yang dibincangkan adalah (i) mengenalpasti siapa sebenarnya yang digelar sebagai *catfish* pada era teknologi ini dan (ii) mengenalpasti bagaimana ibu tunggal boleh terjebak dan seterusnya menjadi mangsa jenayah cinta alam maya. Kajian ini dilakukan ke atas ibu tunggal yang telah menjadi mangsa jenayah cinta alam maya sehingga terpaksa menanggung beban hutang serta terganggu dari aspek psikologi. Penelitian terhadap tindakan dan tindak tanduk *catfish* semasa mendekati mangsa dan berupaya memperdayai mereka dilihat sebagai satu bentuk pendekatan yang holistik untuk memberi

pengajaran kepada wanita lain khususnya di kalangan ibu tunggal sendiri dan generasi Z untuk lebih berhati-hati dan menggunakan alat telekomunikasi dengan lebih bijak dan berhemah.

## METODOLOGI KAJIAN

Penelitian ini adalah berdasarkan kepada kajian yang dilakukan di Kota Kinabalu yang melibatkan lima belas orang informan pada tahun 2018 menggunakan kaedah temu bual mendalam menggunakan kaedah pensampelan bertujuan. Informan yang dipilih adalah dari kalangan ibu tunggal yang telah melalui pengalaman terlibat di dalam jenayah cinta alam maya. Selain itu, pemerhatian turut serta turut digunakan bagi membantu mendapatkan maklumat berkenaan dengan jenayah cinta alam maya dari perlbagai sudut seperti persekitaran dan keadaan mangsa itu sendiri dalam mengharungi dugaan yang menimpa diri mereka sebagai mangsa jenayah cinta alam maya. Selain itu, bagi menyokong dapatan kajian, sumber sekunder turut digunapakai dalam kajian ini.

Kota Kinabalu dijadikan kawasan kajian ini kerana Kota Kinabalu merupakan ibu negeri bagi Sabah, lebih terbuka dan mendapat pendedahan yang lebih utama melalui kepesatan teknologi khususnya telefon pintar berbanding di kawasan-kawasan yang lain. Temu bual secara bersemuka bersama informan telah dijalankan bagi mendapatkan maklumat berkenaan dengan objektif kajian seperti bagaimana mereka boleh terjebak, aplikasi yang digunakan untuk berhubung, cara *catfish* untuk memperdaya dan juga kesan jenayah cinta alam maya kepada mereka.

Temu bual dilakukan di kawasan rumah informan bagi mewujudkan suasana selesa kepada informan. Durasi temu bual adalah lebih kurang 45 hingga 65 minit dan bahasa yang digunakan adalah Bahasa Melayu dengan menggunakan alat perakam suara atas persetujuan daripada informan. Data yang diperolehi telah dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik seperti yang disarankan oleh Braun dan Clarke (2006) untuk menjawab objektif kajian.

## DAPATAN KAJIAN

Daripada analisis tematik yang dilakukan, terdapat dua dapatan kajian yang utama diperoleh bagi mencapai objektif kajian. Ini termasuklah, (i) cinta dan *catfish* dalam jenayah cinta alam maya dan (ii) *Facebook* sebagai modus operandi jenayah cinta alam maya.

## CINTA DAN *CATFISH* DALAM JENAYAH CINTA ALAM MAYA

Bila bercakap berkenaan dengan cinta, terdapat pelbagai definisi dan perspektif yang akan dikeluarkan oleh pelbagai jenis lapisan manusia tidak kira agama, bangsa dan juga warna kulit. Ianya bersifat subjektif dan menjadi satu keperluan di dalam kehidupan. Ini kerana cinta bukan hanya tertumpu kepada perasaan di antara berlawanan jantina atau sebaliknya, tetapi meliputi perasaan kasih sayang yang diberikan kepada individu yang lain sehingga diri sendiri berusaha sehabis daya untuk membahagiakan orang-orang yang dicintainya itu. Tambahan lagi cinta boleh menjadi satu kuasa yang memungkinkan sesuatu kehendak mereka yang dicintai tertunai sehingga boleh mengetepikan kehendak diri sendiri (Nurulwahidah et al., 2015).

Disebabkan cinta itu bersifat subjektif dan akhirnya boleh mengundang kepada pengetepian kehendak diri, maka jenayah cinta mula mengambil tempat bagi memenuhi kelompangan rasa yang ada di dalam diri individu. Walaupun cinta pada dasarnya membahagiakan, namun pentafsiran dan tindakan yang kurang bijak boleh mengundang kepada jenayah sehingga *catfish* melihat setiap tafsiran dan tindakan tersebut sebagai peluang untuk mendapatkan kesenangan dengan cara yang mudah. Sejajar dengan itu, dapat dilihat bahawa jenayah cinta alam maya yang didalangi oleh *catfish* semakin menjadi-jadi dan sering menghiasi dada-dada akhbar dan berita tempatan.

Ini diperkukuhkan dengan beberapa kajian daripada sarjana seperti Ahmad Safwan et al. (2015); Rege (2009) dan Grudgings (2014), mendapati bahawa jenayah cinta alam maya di Malaysia lebih cenderung melibatkan warganegara Nigeria dan pada tahun 2016, jenayah cinta alam maya yang melibatkan *catfish* adalah sebanyak 2,497 kes dengan anggaran kerugian hampir mencecah sebanyak RM 100 milion. Keadaan

ini mengalami peningkatan setiap tahun yang mana sejak tahun 2014, 1,026 kes telah dilaporkan dengan kerugian sebanyak RM 52.8 milion dan diikuti pada tahun 2015, meningkat kepada 1,841 kes dengan catatan kerugian sebanyak RM 63 milion (Audrey, 2017).

*Catfish* telah menggunakan segala maklumat yang ada di dalam media sosial mangsa dengan sebaiknya dan menjadikan maklumat-maklumat tersebut sebagai satu laluan untuk mendekati mangsa dengan lebih rapat lagi. Justeru, kesedaran terhadap siapa dan bagaimana *catfish* bertindak memberi satu langkah awal kepada semua pengguna media sosial khususnya golongan ibu tunggal dan wanita agar lebih berhati-hati semasa menggunakan media sosial mereka. *Catfish* boleh didefinisikan sebagai individu yang menggunakan identiti kedua (Aisha, 2013) untuk menarik perhatian mangsa jenayah cinta alam maya dengan memberikan bayangan yang sempurna kepada lawan bicaranya.

Ini secara tidak langsung menjadikan mangsa lebih cepat selesa dan menaruh harapan dan kepercayaan yang tinggi kepada *catfish* walaupun belum pernah bersua muka. Jenayah cinta siber ini merupakan hubungan romatik yang terjalin di antara dua individu dengan adanya sasaran jumlah kewangan tertentu daripada *catfish* (Koon dan Yoong, 2013). Pada dasarnya, perbuatan *catfish* ini adalah untuk memerangkap mangsa bagi mendapatkan duit dengan cara yang mudah dan tidak dapat dikesan oleh mangsa dan hanya disedari oleh mangsa apabila *catfish* menukar cara komunikasi mereka ke arah memutuskan hubungan. Contohnya, dengan cara menutup akaun media sosial atau menyekat mangsa daripada berhubung terus dengan mereka (*catfish*).

Walau bagaimanapun, tindakan dan cara layanan *catfish* yang dilihat sebagai individu yang baik, penuh perhatian, memahami dan akhirnya membawa kepada perasaan cinta telah menyakinkan mangsa bahawa mereka telah menemui pasangan yang terbaik untuk mengisi kekosongan hati mereka. Ini diperkukuhkan dengan pandangan informan:

“...dia seperti tahu dan memahami perasaan saya...dia tahu apa yang saya mahu dan sentiasa ada ketika saya perlukan teman untuk bercakap...ada masa dia akan bagi saya nasihat dengan lembut dan memberi kata-kata semangat setiap kali saya meluahkan masalah saya...itu yang menyebabkan saya rasa selesa dengannya sehingga perasaan sayang ada...” (I5, 35 tahun).

Situasi ini menyebabkan mangsa terleka dengan perasaan sendiri dan akhirnya masuk ke dalam perangkap *catfish*. Jangka masa yang diperlukan oleh seorang *catfish* dalam memerangkap mangsa adalah dalam lingkungan seawal tiga hingga lima bulan sahaja. Bermula daripada salam perkenalan untuk hanya sekadar suka-suka, *catfish* mula menjalankan peranan sebagai individu yang memahami serta mengeluarkan kata-kata yang manis sehingga dengan mudah dapat menyakinkan mangsa ianya merupakan satu perhubungan yang serius dan akan membawa kearah perkahwinan. Ini diperkukuhkan dengan pandangan informan:

“...saya berkenalan dengan Micheal ndak juga terlampau lama...baru juga dalam dua tiga bulan tapi cara dia layan dan perhatian yang dia berikan buat saya selesa dan dihargai...suami saya dulu pun tiada buat apa yang dia buat...dia dengar semua luahan saya dia pandai pujuk masa saya merajuk walaupun hanya dengan panggilan telefon atau chat biasa...dia juga selalu berikan saya kata-kata untuk ke arah hubungan yang lebih serius dan kahwin...semua ciri-ciri yang saya suka dia ada...” (I13, 45 tahun).

Justeru, tanpa disedari, pakej-pakej sempurna yang cuba dipertontonkan oleh *catfish* kepada mangsa telah menarik mangsa secara perlahan-lahan untuk semakin dekat dan percaya kepada mereka.

#### *FACEBOOK* SEBAGAI MODUS OPERANDI JENAYAH CINTA ALAM MAYA

Jenayah cinta alam maya telah menjadi satu fenomena sosial yang boleh mengundang pelbagai masalah dan kerugian bukan sahaja kepada mangsa itu sendiri tetapi juga kepada masyarakat di sekelilingnya. Melalui bantuan teknologi yang menjadi satu mekanisme baru dalam medium perhubungan yang semakin pesat membangun telah berjaya mendapat tempat di hati masyarakat dari pelbagai peringkat usia. Ia bukan sahaja digunakan sebagai alat perhubungan untuk memudahkan dan mempercepatkan lagi perkongsian maklumat berlaku tetapi ia turut menjadi tempat untuk meluahkan rasa dan mempamerkan kebutuhan diri serta kehidupan peribadi.

Kepesatan teknologi ini bukan sahaja memberikan satu inovasi baru kepada pengguna tetapi turut digunakan dengan sebaiknya oleh para penjenayah dalam melakukan jenayah cinta alam maya. Daripada sorotan literatur dan analisis kajian serta pemerhatian yang dilakukan mendapati bahawa aplikasi utama yang digunakan oleh mangsa dan *catfish* dalam melakukan perhubungan sosial secara maya adalah melalui aplikasi *Facebook* (FB). Penggunaan aplikasi FB yang lebih mudah untuk difahami dan cepat menjadikan aplikasi ini lebih banyak digunakan dan dijadikan sebagai satu medium perhubungan untuk mencari kawan lama dan baru dengan lebih mudah dan cepat.

Tambahan lagi, kecenderungan mangsa yang suka meluahkan dan berkongsi kehidupan mereka secara terbuka memberi peluang kepada *catfish* untuk lebih memahami corak keperibadian mangsa dan menggunakan data yang ada untuk lebih rapat dengan mangsa. Ini diperkukuhkan dengan pendapat informan:

“...dia seolah-olah tahu semua benda berkaitan dengan diri saya...dia tahu apa kesukaan saya apa yang saya tidak suka...dia membuatkan diri saya dihargai dan disayangi...dia seorang yang matang dan pendengar yang setia...dia jug romantik dan selalu cakap yang lembut-lembut pada saya...tambah lagi dia tahu banyak pasal saya dan membuatkan saya seperti sudah kenal dia lama...” (I10, 39 tahun).

Keadaan ini secara tidak langsung memberi kondisi yang selamat, tenang dan perasaan disayangi oleh mangsa. Walaupun pada asalnya, mangsa hanya berkenalan dan berbual secara bebas dengan *catfish* tanpa ada apa-apa komitmen atau menjalani satu perhubungan yang serius tetapi perkongsian masalah dan cerita menjadikan mereka semakin rapat dan selesa di antara satu dengan lain. Analisis kajian turut menunjukkan bahawa, FB dijadikan sebagai medium utama perhubungan di antara *catfish* dan mangsa disebabkan oleh kemudahan aplikasi ini yang boleh dilihat dan digunakan dengan bebas oleh sesiapa dan di mana sahaja sahaja termasuk di dalam dan di luar negara tanpa ada sekatan. Aplikasi FB yang mesra pengguna dan tempat untuk menambah kenalan dilihat sebagai lubuk emas oleh *catfish* untuk mendapatkan kesenangan dengan mudah. Ini disokong dengan pernyataan informan:

“...pada asalnya cuma accept sebagai kawan dan berbual biasa...lama kelamaan jadi selesa dan terus berhubung...kenal pun sebab dia yang mulakan dulu dan tidak rasa apa-apa sebab dari negara lain jadi hanya sangka itu cuma untuk suka-suka...tidak tahu macam mana dia boleh dapat fb saya...” (I1, 38 tahun).

Didapati bahawa, setelah menjadi ibu tunggal, FB merupakan satu aplikasi media yang mereka jadikan peneman untuk meluahkan perasaan dan berkenalan dengan ramai orang. Justeru, apabila ada individu yang menawarkan diri untuk berkenalan secara rapat, mereka tanpa ragu menerima perlawaan tersebut. Ini disokong dengan pernyataan informan:

“...saya rasa sunyi dan perlukan kawan untuk berbual dan berkongsi masalah saya...ada masa saya perlukan seseorang untuk mengisi kesunyian hati saya...iya saya ada anak yang perlu dijaga dan diberi perhatian dan masa saya tertumpu kepada mereka tetapi ada juga masa-masa tertentu saya rasa tertekan dan sedih sebab itu saya aktif di FB dan mula mengupdate setiap pergerakan saya...apa saya makan apa saya buat saya pergi mana...saya berkawan dengan semua orang dan accept sesiapa yang mahu berkawan dengan saya...” (I3, 41 tahun).

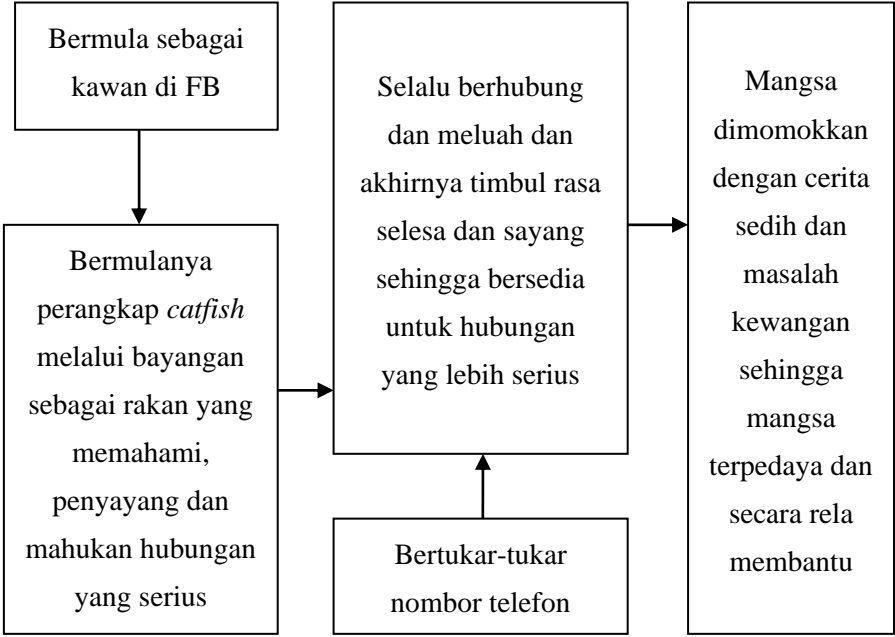
Ini turut diperkukuhkan dengan pernyataan informan yang lain:

“...kalau dulu tiada masa pun mau aktif adalah tengok sekejap lepastu minggu depannya baru tengok lagi kadang cuma tengok sepintas lalu sahaja sebab mau jaga anak, suami lagi tetapi sejak jadi ibu tunggal, anak-anak pun ada aktiviti mereka sendiri di sekolah, bermain dengan kawan jadi saya tidak tahu sudah mahu buat apa selain scroll tu FB...kawan-kawan banyak kasi nasihat dan buka minda saya untuk kasi cantikkan diri dan saya mula berjinak dengan FB dan media sosial sambil search tentang produk kecantikan...” (I2, 31 tahun).

Keadaan ini secara tidak langsung memberi ruang kepada *catfish* untuk mudah mendekati dan seterusnya menjadikan mereka sebagai sasaran. Analisis daripada dapatan kajian dan pemerhatian di lapangan



mendapati bahawa kronologi jenayah cinta alam maya yang terjadi di antara ibu tunggal dan *catfish* boleh disimpulkan seperti carta alir 1.1:



Carta Alir 1.1: Kronologi Jenayah Cinta Alam Maya

PERBINCANGAN

Daripada penelitian dan analisis yang dilakukan, dapatan kajian menunjukkan persekitaran sosial menjadi salah satu faktor utama yang menyebabkan ibu tunggal seringkali menjadi mangsa jenayah cinta alam maya disebabkan oleh persekitaran sosial dan tarikan interpersonal yang dimiliki oleh pemangsa (*catfish*). Kesunyian, didapati menjadi pendorong paling utama kepada ibu tunggal untuk aktif di media sosial seperti FB. Walaupun pada dasarnya, ibu tunggal memiliki tanggungjawab dalam menjaga dan membesarkan anak-anak secara bersendirian tanpa pasangan, namun mereka tidak dapat menolak daripada turut merasa sunyi selain merasakan bahawa keperluan untuk mencari pasangan hidup yang boleh menjaga mereka dan anak-anak itu masih ada.

Ini menjadikan ibu tunggal terdorong untuk mencari satu platform baru untuk melepaskan tekanan dan kesunyian mereka dan cara yang

dilihat lebih mudah dan efektif adalah melalui media sosial. Ini kerana, media sosial membolehkan mereka meluahkan perasaan mereka secara bebas dan seterusnya mendapat tindak balas secara langsung daripada kenalan mereka. Tambahan lagi pemaparan konsep kebahagiaan yang ditonjolkan oleh rakan-rakan dan masyarakat di sekitar mereka melalui media massa menjadikan ibu tunggal ingin merasakan kebahagiaan yang sama dan berusaha keras ke arah perhubungan yang serius dengan *catfish*. Dengan berlandaskan kepada pujuk rayu dan kata-kata manis, *catfish* berjaya memujuk mangsa untuk melaburkan sejumlah wang kepada *catfish* tanpa ada perasaan ragu-ragu.

Selain itu, pengalaman sendiri yang dialami oleh ibu tunggal di dalam perhubungan yang lepas tidak mematahkan semangat mereka untuk terus mencari pasangan yang terbaik dan mampu menjadi penjaga serta pembimbing mereka di masa depan. Sehubungan itu, kebanyakan informan kajian bersetuju bahawa mereka perlu meneruskan kehidupan dan mencari dan melakukan sesuatu perkara yang boleh membuatkan mereka berasa gembira. Melalui tarikan interpersonal yang dipertontonkan oleh *catfish* secara maya, didapati bahawa semasa informan berkomunikasi dengan *catfish*, mereka bukan sahaja berinteraksi dalam keadaan menyampaikan isi pesanan yang mereka ingin sampaikan tetapi dalam masa yang sama mereka sebenarnya sedang menentukan kadar perhubungan di antara mereka.

Ini menjadikan mereka secara tidak langsung lebih rapat dan berkongsi banyak cerita sehingga tanpa disedari ia membuka peluang kepada *catfish* untuk lebih mudah dan cepat melaksanakan misi mereka. Tarikan interpersonal seperti tarikan fizikal yang membolehkan mangsa tertarik dengan rupa paras yang ditonjolkan oleh *catfish* menerusi gambar profil mereka di FB memberikan bayangan yang sempurna kepada mangsa. Wajah dilihat sebagai alat komunikasi visual (Freddy, 2000) yang dapat memainkan peranan penting dalam menarik orang lain untuk berinteraksi dan merasa selesai dengan mereka. Ini kerana, walaupun wajah dipamerkan secara kaku namun mimik muka yang dipamerkan oleh seseorang individu khususnya *catfish* mampu menarik minat mangsa untuk lebih bersikap terbuka dan tertarik dengan mereka sehingga mereka berhubung dengan lebih rapat dan memberikan banyak pelaburan ke atas hubungan tersebut seperti masa, perasaan, emosi dan wang ringgit.

Tarikan interpersonal kedua adalah dari aspek tarikan kemampuan dan kesamaan, dapatan kajian mendapati bahawa mangsa cenderung untuk tertarik dengan seseorang yang mempunyai peribadi, minat, sikap, nilai dan latar belakang yang sama. Tarikan kesamaan ini diperlihatkan oleh *catfish* dengan mereka-reka cerita sama dengan informan untuk menarik minat informan untuk meneruskan perbualan dengan mereka. Selain itu, *catfish* juga seringkali dilihat cuba mempamerkan situasi yang sedih dan meraih simpati dengan berkongsi pengalaman dan keadaan diri mereka yang malang dan perlukan sokongan serta perhatian. Contohnya menipu mangsa bahawa ibu mereka menghidap penyakit kanser dan sudah berada pada tahap yang keempat dan mereka pernah melalui kegagalan dalam percintaan atau perkahwinan berulang kali pada masa lalu.

Selain itu, keserasian di antara mangsa dan *catfish* turut diwujudkan dengan menunjukkan perkongsian minat, sikap, keperibadian dan latar belakang pengalaman yang sama dengan mangsa. Tambahan lagi, di awal perkenalan, *catfish* cuba untuk mempamerkan kepada mangsa bahawa mereka merupakan individu yang berjaya dan memiliki status kewangan yang baik dan sudah stabil serta bersedia untuk mendirikan rumahtangga dengan mangsa. Kepercayaan yang diperoleh daripada mangsa menjadikan *catfish* semakin berani untuk mengorak langkah seterusnya dengan mencipta pelbagai situasi untuk meraih simpati mangsa dan menggalakkan mangsa untuk memindahkan wang ke akaun bank mereka. Walaupun pada hakikatnya, mangsa tidak memiliki sejumlah wang yang diminta oleh *catfish*, tetapi demi ikatan perhubungan dan janji manis daripada *catfish*, mangsa telah berusaha sehabis daya mereka untuk mencukupkan jumlah wang yang diperlukan dan menghantarnya kepada *catfish*. Keadaan ini berlarutan sehingga mangsa terbeban dengan hutang sehingga menjurus kepada berlakunya pergaduhan dan *catfish* hilang tanpa dapat dijejaki oleh mangsa.

Terdapat banyak kajian lepas yang menyelidik tentang penggunaan media sosial atau media baharu. Antaranya, kajian kuantitatif oleh Hanafi, K. & Mohd Helmi Abd. Rahim (2017) yang meneliti faktor penggunaan media sosial dan pengaruhnya terhadap pembentukan gerakan pemimpin pelajar universiti di bandar Indonesia. Penemuan kajian menggariskan media sosial seperti *Facebook*, *Whatsapp*, *Twitter*, *Instagram* dan *Line* antara platform sosial yang kerap digunakan untuk

membentuk gerakan sosial. Kajian ini turut mendapati platform media sosial mempunyai kontribusi utama dalam pembentukan gerakan sosial dan memandu ke arah kehidupan berdemokrasi kumpulan mahasiswa.

Kajian tentang *How social is Twitter use? Affiliative tendency and communication competence as predictors* (2014) pula memberi hala tuju kepada kajian pada masa akan datang dengan memberi cadangan supaya menjalankan kajian tidak hanya berfokuskan kepada *Twitter* tetapi juga kepada penggunaan *Facebook* dan juga rangkaian media sosial yang lain. Dapatan kajian ini juga menyatakan rangkaian media sosial merupakan lanjutan hubungan komunikasi berbanding dengan dapatan yang menyatakan media sosial merupakan alternatif kepada hubungan bersemuka.

Kajian Mohd Zaidi & Bahiyah (2013) yang mendapati tiga motif yang mempunyai hubungan signifikan dengan kekerapan penggunaan *Facebook* iaitu merasa hebat berteman, menghiburkan dan mencari maklumat. Manakala motif menghiburkan dikenalpasti sebagai faktor penyumbang dominan yang signifikan kepada model regresi penggunaan *Facebook* dalam kajian ini. Limitasi yang terdapat dalam kajian ini adalah ia hanya mengukur satu medium rangkaian sosial sedangkan pelajar terdedah kepada pelbagai rangkaian media sosial tanpa sebarang had.

Kajian yang dijalankan oleh Ika Destiana dan rakannya Ali Salman dan Mohd Helmi (2013) mensasarkan 298 pelajar ijazah sarjana muda di Palembang, Indonesia yang berumur 17 sehingga 25 tahun. Hasil kajian turut menunjukkan bahawa penerimaan media sosial dipengaruhi oleh beberapa faktor terutamanya faktor mudah guna, faktor kaitan dan rangkaian antara peribadi dan sosial.

Kajian yang dijalankan oleh Gitimu dan Sponcil (2012) menyimpulkan bahawa hampir kesemua pelajar menggunakan salah satu bentuk rangkaian sosial. Kajian turut mengenalpasti bahawa 99% pelajar menggunakan *Facebook*. Menurut pengkaji, mereka bersependapat dengan penemuan kajian yang ditemui oleh Lenhart et al, (2010) iaitu *Facebook* dikenalpasti sebagai rangkaian media sosial yang paling popular. Kajian ini menggunakan persampelan stratifikasi mengikut gender dan juga umur. Sebanyak 96 informan digunakan untuk menjawab *survey* atas talian bagi mengkaji penggunaan media sosial oleh pelajar

kolej dan kesan penggunaan media sosial terhadap komunikasi terhadap orang lain dan juga konsep pembentukan diri.

Rumusannya, kesemua kajian lepas menggunakan reka bentuk kuantitatif dan menggunakan borang soal-selidik bagi mencapai objektif kajian mereka dan hampir kesemua kajian menggunakan pelajar sebagai informan serta menggunakan kaedah persampelan tujuan atau purposif. Pendekatan yang dipilih pengkaji untuk kajian ini menonjolkan kelainan berbanding kajian kerana pemilihan kumpulan informan yang kecil sedangkan hasil penelitian kajian lepas mendapati menggunakan bilangan informan yang besar bagi reka bentuk kuantitatif.

## KESIMPULAN

Persekitaran sosial dan tarikan interpersonal menjadi faktor penyumbang utama yang mendorong mangsa untuk terjebak di dalam jenayah siber. Analisis tematik yang dilakukan mendapati mangsa pada asalnya tidak sedar mereka sebenarnya sudah termasuk ke dalam jerat *catfish* sehinggalah *catfish* secara perlahan-lahan meninggalkan mereka dan memperdayakan mereka dengan janji manis. Selain itu, *Facebook* yang seharusnya digunakan untuk menjadi satu mekanisme perhubungan yang pantas dan mudah telah menjadi satu modus aplikasi utama untuk menjerat mangsa kerana aplikasi ini lebih mudah untuk dipelajari dan diterima pakai oleh seluruh dunia. Jenayah cinta alam maya siber jika tidak ditangani dengan sebaiknya akan menyebabkan lebih ramai lagi wanita khususnya ibu tunggal terjebak dan mengalami kerugian yang berlipat kali ganda bukan sahaja dalam bentuk perasaan tetapi juga wang ringgit dan masa. Justeru, kajian seperti ini dapat sedikit sebanyak membantu untuk memahami corak perlakuan *catfish* dan cara yang mereka gunakan untuk menjerat mangsa sehingga terpedaya. Ini secara tidak langsung boleh membantu meningkatkan keupayaan ibu tunggal untuk lebih bersedia dan bijak mengatur langkah agar tidak menjadi mangsa *catfish* yang seterusnya.

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# **Femme Fatale, Patriaki dan Maskuliniti: Representasi Gender dalam Filem Kala Malam Bulan Mengambang**

**Muhamad Farid Bin Abdul Rahman\***

**Abstrak:** Pada tahun 2008, Mamat Khalid telah menghasilkan sebuah filem yang mempunyai stail sinematik *neo noir* berjudul, *Kala Malam Bulan Mengambang (KMBM)* yang mengisahkan tentang seorang wartawan yang ingin menyelesaikan kes-kes misteri di pekan Senduduk Rimbun yang akhirnya menemukannya dengan pelbagai kisah dan individu misteri di dalam pekan tersebut. Seperti filem-filemnya yang lain, dalam filem (*KMBM*), Mamat Khalid menggunakan parodi dan satira untuk mengkritik isu-isu sosial dalam filem tersebut, seperti isu sosial terhadap masyarakat Melayu, isu etika media serta kritikan terhadap keadaan politik di negara ini. Dalam filem tersebut, watak hero sengaja dilakonkan sebagai seorang yang naif dan mengalami keretakan maskuliniti, namun watak-watak perempuan yang bertindak sebagai *femme fatale*, telah mengukuhkan kedudukan wanita dalam filem tersebut. Namun, stereotaip terhadap perempuan atau '*male gaze*' masih terdapat dalam filem tersebut yang dipaparkan sebagai lemah, seksi, dan memerlukan pertolongan lelaki. Kajian ini akan melihat dua perkara utama, yang pertama ialah keretakan maskuliniti watak hero dalam filem *KMBM* yang dipaparkan sebagai lemah, dan yang kedua ialah bagaimana watak *femme fatale* diapaparkan dengan peranan mereka serta pemberontakan mereka dalam melawan sistem patriaki.

**Kata Kunci:** Parodi dan satira, *neo noir*, keretakan maskuliniti, *femme fatale*, *male gaze*

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## PENDAHULUAN

Parodi dan satira merupakan satu medium yang kerap digunakan di dalam filem arahan Mamat Khalid, seperti di dalam filem *Man Laksu* pada 2006, *Zombi Kampung Pisang* pada 2007 dan *Hantu Kak Limah Balik Rumah* pada 2010. Dalam filem *Kala Malam Bulan Mengambang (KMBM)*, parodi dan satira digunakan bersama dengan stail sinematik *neo noir*. *KMBM* telah memenangi anugerah Filem Terbaik dan Pengarah Filem Terbaik di Festival Filem Malaysia yang ke-21 pada tahun 2008. Filem tersebut juga telah dipilih untuk ditayangkan di beberapa festival filem di Itali, New York, dan Korea Selatan.

Mamat Khalid menerangkan bahawa filem *KMBM* dibuat untuk memberi penghormatan kepada filem-filem klasik Melayu yang terdahulu daripada zaman Era Keemasan Filem Melayu yang merupakan zaman dimana, filem-filem Melayu disambut begitu popular dalam masyarakat. Pemerhati budaya kebanyakannya telah mengatakan bahawa filem Melayu dalam era tahun 50-an dan 60-an adalah sangat dekat dan popular dalam masyarakat kerana kebanyakan filem yang dihasilkan pada era tersebut adalah filem-filem yang baik dan bukanlah kerana kurang saingan antara filem-filem dari negara lain. Persaingan yang benar-benar wujud dalam sinema Melayu pada ketika itu adalah umumnya daripada filem-filem Hong Kong, Indonesia dan Amerika, kenyataan bahawa sinema Melayu pada era tersebut popular disebabkan tidak mempunyai persaingan adalah salah kerana sinema dalam Era Keemasan adalah sangat unik dan mempunyai identiti yang tersendiri dalam naratif dan estetikanya (Wayang, 2017). Oleh itu, beberapa babak dalam *KMBM* telah menggunakan set seperti dalam filem *Ali Baba Bujang Lapok* pada 1960, dan terdapat babak yang dilakonkan semula seperti dalam filem *Sumpitan Rachun* pada 1961, dan *Si Tora Harimau Jadian* pada 1964.

Filem yang terhasil dengan elemen stail sinematik *neo noir* umumnya menggunakan watak protagonis hero yang selalunya mengalami dilema dan hidup dalam keterasingan yang mempunyai perasaan positif terhadap apa yang akan berlaku di dalam hidupnya. *Neo noir* juga mendedahkan bagaimana beberapa watak mengkianati sesama sendiri di dalam plot tipikal filem yang mempunyai stail tersebut (Silver dan Ursini, 1999). Terdapat juga watak wanita yang bertindak sebagai '*femme fatale*' yang mempunyai agendanya yang tersendiri dengan

menggunakan watak hero dalam mencapai agendanya (Silver dan Ursini, 1999). Seperti peranan watak *femme fatale* dalam filem *KMBM*, kesemua mereka memainkan peranan dalam membawa watak hero menjadi pasif. Dalam buku *Film Noir* pada 2012, Luhr juga mengatakan, penceritaan filem *noir* adalah menurut perspektif *narrator* yang juga membawa penonton kedalam emosi kebimbangan, kegagalan dan perasaan terperangkap yang dihadapi oleh watak protagonis.

Ideologi dalam filem dan lain-lain produk budaya memperlihatkan keadaan sosial dan budaya dalam sesebuah masyarakat dan telah distruktur agar ia boleh diterima oleh masyarakat sebagai satu keadaan semula jadi yang tidak perlu dipersoalkan (Juliana dan Mahyuddin, 2009). Di Malaysia, penguasaan dominan dalam masyarakat masih lagi dikuasi oleh golongan lelaki melalui struktur ideologi patriaki. Dominasi kaum lelaki dalam masyarakat juga terdapat dalam naratif filem di Malaysia, hal ini dapat dilihat apabila watak hero atau watak dominan adalah kebanyakannya terdiri daripada lelaki dan wanita dipaparkan secara lemah serta memerlukan watak lelaki untuk menyelamatkannya. Sebagai contoh, filem *Pendekar Bujang Lapok* pada 1959 arahan P. Ramlee, kesemua watak wanita di dalam filem tersebut memerlukan watak lelaki untuk menyelamatkan mereka daripada watak-watak antagonis dan filem tersebut jelas mencerminkan realiti masyarakat pada ketika itu yang didominasi oleh kaum lelaki.

Gender dilihat sebagai satu konstruk oleh masyarakat, dan peranan gender dalam setiap bidang adalah lain termasuklah filem. Walaupun kemunculan pengarah-pengarah beraliran feminis pada tahun 1990, melalui pergerakan *Malaysia New Wave*, yang dipelopori oleh Suhaimi Baba dan Erma Fatima, yang memaparkan watak wanita sebagai dominan, dan tidak lagi pasif. Pengarah filem di Malaysia kebanyakannya gagal untuk melihat perkara tersebut sebagai satu revolusi penentangan terhadap diskriminasi kaum wanita dan terus memaparkan watak wanita sebagai pasif dan seakan mengukuhkan lagi stereotaip negatif terhadap wanita di dalam kebanyakan filem di negara ini.

Justeru kertas ini akan mengkaji keretakan maskuliniti watak hero dan pemaparan serta stereotaip watak-watak *femme fatale* dalam filem *KMBM* dengan persoalan-persoalan yang wujud bagi menjawab objektif kajian iaitu, bagaimanakah watak hero di dalam filem *KMBM*

menguatkan maskuliniti? dan bagaimanakah watak-watak *femme fatale* menentang pengukuhan patriaki di dalam filem *KMBM*?

## STREOTAIP WANITA DALAM FILEM

Stereotaip gender merupakan ciri-ciri representasi gender secara tradisional yang mempunyai perbezaan antara fungsi feminine dan fungsi kebiasaan maskulin dalam masyarakat (Baker dan Raney, 2007; Coyne et al., 2014; Mayes dan Valentine, 1979). Stereotaip gender terhasil dengan ciri-ciri seperti, wanita dianggap sebagai emosional, lelaki dianggap kuat berbanding wanita dan menjadi ketua untuk memimpin keluarga. Stereotaip gender juga mampu wujud dalam pekerjaan harian seperti perempuan sebagai jururawat, sekuteriat, dan lelaki pula sebagai bomba, juruterbang dan petani (Krahn, 2015).

Menurut Eagly (1987), kajian stereotaip gender telah menunjukkan bahawa majoriti kepercayaan masyarakat adalah berdasarkan perbezaan antara lelaki dan wanita yang dibahagikan kepada dua bentuk iaitu *communal* dan *agentic* (Krahn, 2015).

*Communal qualities* merupakan ciri-ciri yang tidak mementingkan diri sendiri dan bersifat prihatin terhadap individu lain. Lain pula dengan *agentic qualities* yang merupakan sifat yang tegas terhadap diri serta merangkumi pengembangan diri yang tegas dalam menguasai sesuatu perkara. Wanita telah dilihat mewakili nilai-nilai *communal* manakala lelaki mewakili nilai-nilai *agentic* (Diekman dan Eagly, 2000; Eagly, 1987; Eagly dan Steffen, 1984; Hoffman dan Hurst, 1990). Namun, stereotaip terhadap wanita dilihat seakan diperkukuhkan dalam struktur masyarakat patriaki.

Dalam struktur masyarakat patriaki, eksploitasi terhadap wanita sering kali dikukuhkan bagi mencapai kehendak sosial dan budaya kaum lelaki yang dominan dalam struktur masyarakat tersebut. Seperti yang dikatakan oleh Marx, asas pembentukan masyarakat adalah faktor-faktor pengeluaran seperti tanah, modal, ekonomi dan perdagangan. Pembentukan sesebuah masyarakat baru adalah hasil daripada perjuangan antara kelas untuk menguasai ekonomi. Ini bermakna setiap bahagian masyarakat mempunyai tujuan dan kehendak yang berbeza antara satu sama lain (Shaharuddin, 2013). Kata-kata Marx telah mencerminkan bagaimana kaum lelaki dalam masyarakat patriaki telah mengeksploitasi

kaum wanita dalam struktur masyarakat agar kaum lelaki lebih dominan dan mencapai kepentingan yang ingin mereka perolehi berdasarkan eksploitasi terhadap kaum wanita.

Eksplotasi tersebut berterusan sehingga telah membentuk imej stereotaip wanita yang negatif dalam struktur masyarakat patriaki. Dalam konteks wanita Melayu pula, mereka juga tidak lari daripada selalu distereotaipkan sebagai golongan yang lemah, tidak berkuasa dan perlu menurut kata-kata kaum lelaki seperti yang dikatakan oleh Ruzy Suliza (2006), wanita Melayu tradisional digambarkan sebagai yang pasif, setia, tekun, pasrah, submisif dan suci. Selain itu, dalam sastra lisan Melayu, watak wanita cantik digambarkan dengan watak yang sentiasa menanti kedatangan lelaki yang akan membantunya pada saat yang penting. Pergantungan wanita pada lelaki menunjukkan kelemahan wanita dan kekurangan ikhtiar mereka untuk berdikari (Ruzy Suliza, 2006). Stereotaip juga dibentuk daripada pemerhatian yang dihasilkan daripada melihat aktiviti masyarakat dan aktiviti tersebut telah ditentukan oleh peranan seseorang itu yang telah membangkitkan stereotaip wanita dan lelaki apabila melakukan peranan berbeza dalam kehidupan sosial. Tren stereotaip gender ini berterusan termasuklah di dalam filem, sehingga menimbulkan ketidakseimbangan pemaparan gender dalam filem. Stereotaip negatif terhadap kaum wanita juga dapat dilihat dalam pelbagai medium media antaranya seperti di dalam filem.

Juliana dan Mahyuddin (2009) mengatakan bahawa filem dapat dilihat sebagai satu medium untuk menstrukturkan proses pengeluaran makna dalam masyarakat. Konsep yang dibangunkan dalam tradisi Marxist adalah merupakan ideologi yang memperkatakan bagaimana masyarakat distruktur supaya kelas atasan mempunyai kuasa dan kawalan terhadap orang bawahan (Juliana dan Mahyuddin, 2009). Sebagai contoh, lelaki seringkali mendominasi sebagai watak hero dan perempuan hanyalah pelengkap di dalam sesuatu filem yang memegang sebagai watak yang lemah, dan memerlukan pertolongan lelaki (Hassan, 2013). Perkara ini jelas dapat dilihat dalam filem *Gerimis* pada 1968 yang menceritakan tentang Leela yang mahu berkahwin dengan Kamal namun tersekat dengan sistem dominan patriaki, keluarga, dan agama. Watak Leela juga dipaparkan sebagaimana yang dimahukan dalam visual *male gaze*. *Male gaze* merupakan struktur sinematik gabungan antara kamera,

watak lelaki dan penonton. Menurut Anneke Smelik (2016) *male gaze* adalah;

‘...to enhance the visual pleasure, the woman’s body is “cut up” into close-ups through framing and editing. The male gaze works in cinema as a form of voyeurism objectifying the woman’s body and turning it into a passive spectacle’

Dalam kritikan sinema teori *male gaze* telah dibahas oleh Laura Mulvey dalam tulisannya, ‘*Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*’ pada 1975. Dalam tulisan tersebut Mulvey membahaskan tentang naratif filem Hollywood seperti filem *noir* yang menggunakan wanita untuk menghasilkan imej-imej stereotaip wanita yang didefinisikan sebagai ‘*pleasurable visual experience*’. Struktur filem naratif Hollywood telah membentuk renungan atau apa yang dikenali sebagai *male gaze* yang dominan kepada audiens terutamanya lelaki. *Male gaze* menurut Mulvey (1975);

‘...male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote ‘to-be-looked-at-ness’

Dalam struktur naratif filem-filem klasik, watak lelaki adalah dominan dalam membentuk penceritaan dalam sesebuah filem, manakala wanita hanyalah sebagai objek pemuas nafsu visual audiens (Mulvey, 1975). Ini dapat dilihat melalui watak wanita sebagai *femme fatale* dalam filem *noir* yang dilihat sebagai *voyeuristic-scopophilia* ataupun sentiasa memaparkan diri mereka dalam keadaan hiperseksualiti. Hal ini adalah apa yang dibahas melalui *male gaze* sebagai contoh melalui watak *femme fatale* yang membolehkan audiens melihat secara terus representasi seksualiti wanita seperti badan yang seksi sehingga menimbulkan ransangan kepada audiens terhadap visual tersebut.

Hal ini dapat dilihat sebagai contoh melalui watak Leela dalam filem *Gerimis* pada 1968 dengan pemaparan imej penari yang berpakaian tradisional India di kelab malam dan ini seakan mengukuhkan apa yang

dikatakan stereotaip terhadap wanita di dalam filem kerana pemaparan tersebut telah memperkukuhkan nilai-nilai *male gaze* terhadap filem tersebut terutamanya melalui watak Leela. Keadaan ini telah membentuk ideologi-ideologi tertentu dalam perletakkan pemaparan gender dalam filem.

Ideologi dalam filem dan lain-lain produk budaya memperlihatkan keadaan sosial dan budaya dalam sesebuah masyarakat dan telah distruktur agar ia boleh diterima oleh masyarakat sebagai satu keadaan semula jadi yang tidak perlu dipersoalkan (Juliana dan Mahyuddin, 2009). Ideologi dalam konteks tersebut adalah apa yang benar-benar wujud seperti yang dikatakan Althusser (1984) bahawa ideologi merupakan pengalaman kehidupan kita yang sebenar. Ideologi patriaki dalam filem misalnya telah membentuk stereotaip negatif wanita yang dilihat telah didominasi dan dieksploitasi oleh kaum lelaki dan media filem juga dilihat sebagai agen yang lebih berkesan untuk menyalurkan stereotaip tersebut terhadap masyarakat dalam sfera awam.

## MASKULINTI DAN STEREOTAIP DALAM MASYARAKAT

Menurut Argyo (2010), hal yang menentukan sifat perempuan dan lelaki adalah budaya. Maskuliniti dengan jelas merupakan sebuah konsep yang dikonstruksi oleh masyarakat dan budaya sesebuah masyarakat yang meletakkan apa dan bagaimana seseorang lelaki itu perlu bertindak untuk menjadi lelaki sebenar dalam masyarakat. Secara umumnya nilai maskuliniti tradisional adalah memandang tinggi nilai kekuatan, kekuasaan, ketabahan, tingkah laku, pengawalan diri, kepuasan diri, dan kerja (Argyo, 2010). Dalam kehidupan sosial, jika nilai-nilai maskuliniti tradisional tersebut tiada dalam diri seseorang lelaki, mereka dianggap gagal dalam kehidupan dan kerana itulah lelaki sering ditekan untuk menjadi maskulin sebagai panduan ahli masyarakat terhadap lelaki yang sebenar. Menurut Asmah (1984), tiap-tiap kebudayaan mempunyai sistem nilai dan norma tertentu yang menjadi panduan ahli-ahli masyarakat dalam mengendalikan kehidupan seharian. Walaupun konsep kesamarataan terhadap gender sering kali diperkatakan, namun konsep tersebut masih belum dicapai dan diburukkan lagi dengan stereotaip terhadap gender yang berbeza, masih wujud di dalam pelbagai masyarakat yang berlainan di dunia.

Maskuliniti menurut Hatty (2000), dalam bukunya telah membincangkan pendapat Connell (1987) yang mengatakan bahawa masyarakat menentukan ciri-ciri femininiti dan maskuliniti dan ia menjadi struktur dasar utama bagi hubungan antara manusia yang mendefinisikan suatu bentuk 'hegemoni maskuliniti' dalam masyarakat. Dalam konteks ini, 'hegemoni maskuliniti' dibina dalam kaitannya dengan maskuliniti pelbagai subordinasi serta dalam hubungannya dengan wanita (Yep, 2007). Contoh yang diberi oleh Hartley (1974) tentang maskuliniti ialah, lelaki dihalang daripada melakukan perkara yang selalunya dilakukan oleh wanita seperti tidak boleh menangis dan tidak boleh berlemah-lembut. Menurut beliau, lelaki dilihat berbeza dengan wanita dan lelaki kebiasaannya bertanggungjawab ke atas hal-hal penting seperti bekerja keras, selalu melakukan sesuatu untuk orang lain dan seharusnya lebih berani daripada wanita.

Menurut Anafiah (1996) pula, tanggapan masyarakat terhadap perbezaan utama antara lelaki dan wanita ialah lelaki memperoleh kelebihan dalam apa juga bidang yang diceburi sama ada mengkehendaki pemikiran yang mendalam, tujuan atau imiginasi ataupun kematangan fikiran. Maskuliniti dilihat sebagai suatu imej lelaki yang berubah mengikut perkembangan zaman dalam stereotaip lelaki yang mengikut nilai maskuliniti, Jariah (2002) telah meletakkan tiga stereotaip bagi lelaki iaitu *No Sissy Stuff* yang merujuk kepada lelaki yang mempunyai stigma kepada sifat feminin. Contohnya, lelaki yang lembut atau penakut akan digelar sebagai *mama's boy*, 'pondan' dan sebagainya. Justeru, lelaki yang mempunyai sifat maskulin tidak boleh menangis atau bersifat lembut dan haruslah mengelakkan diri daripada segala sifat feminin untuk menjadi lelaki sejati (Yep, 2007). Stereotaip kedua ialah *The Big Wheel* iaitu sifat yang berjaya, berstatus, dihormati dan tahan lasak supaya boleh mengharungi pelbagai cabaran. Seperti yang dikata oleh Wood (2009), budak lelaki diharapkan berjaya dalam sukan dan aktiviti lain manakala lelaki dewasa diharap mencapai kedudukan dalam profesion mereka. Menurut Yep (2007) mengatakan bahawa sifat *the big wheel* dianggap sebagai aspek penting yang menunjukkan kemampuan seseorang lelaki untuk menjadi orang yang penting serta berstatus tinggi dalam masyarakat.

Stereotaip yang ketiga ialah, *Give 'em Hell*, menurut Yep (2007) stereotaip ini merujuk kepada sifat maskulin yang semulajadi iaitu suka

mencabar, agresif dan ganas. Secara tradisional, maskuliniti bergantung kepada kekuatan fizikal dan sifat agresif (Aliyah, 2007). Walau bagaimanapun, Airil (2008) berpendapat bahawa lelaki belajar dan diajar menjadi agresif dan ganas demi membuktikan sifat fizikal mereka sebagai lelaki ‘tulen’. Lelaki ‘diharapkan’ menjadi insan sebegini untuk membuktikan maskuliniti yang ada padanya. Seperti contoh yang diberi oleh Connell (2005), lelaki secara semula jadi lebih agresif daripada wanita.

Konsep maskuliniti telah berubah mengikut peredaran zaman. Menurut penulisan oleh Argyo (2010), beliau telah menyenaraikan beberapa peringkat maskuliniti mengikut perubahan daripada tahun 1980 hingga ke tahun 2000, namun kajian-kajian terdahulu hanya seakan memberikan definisi maskuliniti dan tidak membincangkan dan tidak mempersoalkan perkara-perkara yang boleh memecahkan stereotaip maskuliniti dan adakah nilai maskuliniti masih diperjuangkan di dalam filem, dan jika ya, apakah puncanya? Justeru kajian ini akan menjawab lebih lanjut keretakan maskuliniti di dalam filem yang disebabkan beberapa faktor yang menyumbang kepada keretakan maskuliniti terutamanya terhadap watak hero di dalam media filem.

## KERANGKA TEORI FEMINISME

Feminisme merupakan gerakan yang memperjuangkan keadilan dan persamaan hak antara wanita dan lelaki dalam pelbagai bidang. Teori feminis mula mendapat tempat di kalangan ahli-ahli sosiologi sejak tahun 1960an. Teori tersebut menekankan bahawa kehidupan wanita adalah berbeza dengan lelaki kerana wanita diberi tanggungjawab membesarkan anak, juga kerana keperluan fizikal dan emosi yang lebih. Ahli-ahli feminis sering menggambarkan keadaan masyarakat kini adalah berasaskan sistem patriarki iaitu masyarakat didominasi oleh kaum lelaki yang mendapat ganjaran hasil dari dominasi tersebut (Coleman dan Cressey, 1999).

Gamble (2006) memberikan definisi umum feminisme sebagai kepercayaan bahawa wanita sentiasa dilayani secara tidak adil dan dianggap negatif hanya kerana fungsi tradisional mereka yang telah menjadikan masyarakat membahagikan kedudukan dominan antara lelaki dan wanita dalam masyarakat. Feminisme juga merupakan gerakan sosial



yang bertujuan untuk mengubah status subordinat perempuan dalam masyarakat yang mengutamakan perspektif lelaki dan bertujuan untuk mengakhiri penindasan terhadap wanita (Komang dan Suwastini, 2013). Feminisme dapat dirumuskan sebagai keyakinan, gerakan dan usaha untuk memperjuangkan keserataan posisi perempuan dan lelaki dalam masyarakat yang bersifat patriaki. Sehingga kini, feminisme mempunyai pelbagai cabang aliran yang wujud, yang telah berlaku dalam tiga gelombang daripada tahun 1792 hingga kini yang membawa kepada perjuangan wanita dalam menuntut keadilan terhadap status dan peranan mereka dalam masyarakat.

Kajian ini akan menggunakan aliran feminisme radikal dan mengaplikasikan teori feminisme radikal kerana filem *KMBM* menunjukkan sistem patriaki mengalami keretakan dan teori ini juga digunakan bagi membantu pengkaji melihat bagaimana pemaparan wanita dalam filem *KMBM* dipaparkan kerana aliran ini bersesuaian dalam tujuannya untuk memulihkan sesuatu sistem yang tidak seimbang dalam masyarakat terutamanya dalam struktur masyarakat patriaki yang menjadi punca utama dalam kewujudan aliran ini.

Feminisme radikal dikatakan muncul di Eropah dan di Utara Amerika (Dean, 2011). Aliran ini muncul sebagai reaksi atas budaya seksisme atau dominasi sosial berdasarkan gender di Barat pada tahun 1960-an. Aliran ini melawan kekerasan seksual dan industri pornografi. Aliran ini turut berpegang kepada pandangan bahawa penindasan terhadap wanita terjadi adalah akibat daripada sistem patriarki. Tubuh perempuan merupakan objek utama yang ditindas oleh kekuasaan lelaki dalam struktur patriaki. Penganut aliran ini juga menolak adanya institusi keluarga secara teori dan praktikal.

Menurut Maznah dan Ng (2006), politik feminisme radikal muncul pada lewat 1960-an berikutan dengan gerakan wanita di Amerika Syarikat serta pergerakan perang anti-Vietnam. Kebanyakan pengasas radikal feminisme terdiri daripada orang kelas putih, pertengahan, wanita terpelajar dan sekumpulan orang yang terlibat dengan kumpulan berhaluan kiri yang kecewa dengan dominasi lelaki. Aliran ini percaya bahawa sistem patriaki telah 'menghalalkan' perkhidmatan domestik wanita di rumah tanpa gaji serta pengeksploitasian badan wanita melalui perkahwinan, hamba seksual, pornografi, reproduksi dan rogol. Oleh itu, feminisme radikal menganggap wanita telah ditindas oleh lelaki kerana

disebabkan oleh kelas sosial yang dominan terhadap pengaruh dominasi lelaki dalam masyarakat (Maznah dan Ng, 2006).

Millet mendakwa bahawa dominasi lelaki ke atas wanita merupakan ideologi yang paling berpengaruh dalam budaya dalam masyarakat patriaki serta telah membentuk struktur kuasa paling asas dalam masyarakat. Dalam konteks ini, masyarakat tersebut merupakan masyarakat patriaki yang separuh daripada lelaki mengawal separuh populasi wanita (Lindsey, 2015).

Menurut Maznah dan Ng (2006), aliran ini juga percaya bahawa ancaman keganasan dan rogol merupakan cara patriaki mengawal semua wanita dan lelaki dipercayai berpotensi menggunakan keganasan fizikal terhadap wanita termasuk rogol dan membunuh (Lorber, 1997). Cara pemaparan wanita dipaparkan sebagai objek seks dalam media massa, pornografi dan eksploitasi global wanita dan kanak-kanak dalam dunia pelacuran juga dibenci oleh wanita.

Namun aliran ini dikritik kerana hujahnya yang tidak merujuk kepada sejarah walaupun aliran feminisme radikal ini berlainan dengan Marxist dan aliran feminisme sosialis, namun feminisme radikal telah melihat kepada pembinaan sosial sebagai peristiwa yang tidak boleh dikaitkan dengan mana-mana fenomena sejarah (Maznah dan Ng, 2006). Namun aliran feminisme radikal turut dikritik kerana dilabelkan sebagai '*class blind*' kerana tidak menerangkan hubungan ketidaksetaraan dan konflik yang berlaku antara lelaki berkulit gelap yang miskin dan wanita putih yang kaya.

## KRISIS MASKULINITI WATAK SALLEH

Watak Salleh yang diparodikan oleh Mamat Khalid menjadikan watak tersebut berlainan daripada konvensi watak hero dalam kebanyakan filem klasik *noir* yang lain. Watak Salleh yang senang diperdayakan telah menonjolkan sifat feminin di dalam dirinya serta pemaparan emosi kebimbangan, kegagalan dan perasaan terperangkap yang dihadapi oleh watak Salleh menunjukkan watak tersebut mengalami situasi keretakan maskuliniti. Penyebab utama keretakan maskuliniti watak Salleh adalah disebabkan oleh watak-watak *femme fatale* yang menjadikan watak Salleh lemah dan tidak lagi mempunyai ciri-ciri maskulin watak hero.

Antara babak awal yang menunjukkan keretakan maskuliniti watak Salleh yang diparodikan oleh Mamat Khalid adalah apabila, Salleh didatangi oleh seorang wanita Cina yang berbadan besar yang merupakan pengurut dan pelayan lelaki di dalam Rumah Tumpangan Kum Ah. Permulaan babak itu menunjukkan watak Salleh yang binggung dan gelisah tentang Kumpulan Tangan Merah dan kaitan keris yang dipegangnya dengan jembalang yang dikatakan oleh penduduk. Sudut kamera *high angle* menunjukkan watak Salleh yang sedang berada dalam keadaan bercelaru dan lemah, pencahayaan yang bersifat *low-key lighting* yang sinonim digunakan dalam kebanyakan filem bergenre *noir* juga digunakan dalam babak ini untuk menimbulkan mood suspen dan perasaan watak utama yang sedang dalam keadaan gelisah. Dalam babak tersebut, wanita Cina berbadan besar tersebut cuba menggoda Salleh dengan pakaian yang seksi dan memaksa Salleh untuk berasmara dengannya walaupun Salleh enggan. Dalam babak tersebut, Mamat Khalid telah menggunakan elemen *exaggerate* dengan menimbulkan bayang-bayang Salleh yang bersifat 'noir-ish' pada dinding bilik hotel tersebut.

Bayang-bayang Salleh dilihat diangkat dan dipusing-pusing oleh tukang urut tersebut. Dalam babak ini dapat dilihat ciri maskuliniti watak Salleh semakin berkurangan dan lemah dengan pemaparan bayangan Salleh pada dinding. Dapat dilihat juga, watak Salleh dicampak ke katil sebelum dirogol oleh tukang urut tersebut yang lebih bersifat feminin iaitu dalam keadaan menjerit-jerit dan kelakuannya seperti perempuan dan menjerit meminta tolong dengan dialog '*jangan saya masih teruna*'. Dalam babak tersebut watak Salleh adalah tidak lagi menjadi watak hero yang dominan dan tidak lagi kelihatan macho selepas didatangi oleh tukang urut perempuan Cina tersebut.

Dalam babak tersebut, dapat dilihat bahawa, konvensi filem *noir* telah diparodikan oleh Mamat Khalid bukan sahaja terhadap keretakan maskuliniti watak Salleh namun watak seksual dalam babak tersebut juga dipersembahkan dengan keadaan terbalik iaitu wanita yang menjadi dominan dan bukan lagi watak lelaki. Watak hiperseksual *femme fatale* tukang urut yang menggoda Salleh juga dipaparkan sebagai seorang yang kuat, yang lebih dominan berbanding watak Salleh yang fizikalnya lemah.

Selain itu, salah satu watak *femme fatale* yang bernama Che Puteh telah menyebabkan Salleh tersekat dalam misteri kampung tersebut, walaupun Salleh jauh di dalam dirinya, tidak mahu lagi terlibat dalam kes misteri tersebut. Ini dapat dibuktikan dalam minit ke 1:15:16 iaitu apabila Salleh kelihatan sedang mengemas barang-barangnya untuk meninggalkan pekan tersebut, namun dirinya tersekat dengan perasaan cintanya terhadap Che Puteh. Dialog yang dapat membuktikan penjelasan ini adalah monolog watak Salleh pada minit ke 1:15:16;

“aku tidak pernah ambil pusing dengan hal cinta tapi kau Puteh, tingkah gayamu dan keayuanmu, sangat menghayalkan jiwaku ini, baru sekarang aku sedar, baru sekarang aku faham, apa ertinya cinta, rupa-rupanya cinta itu sangat mengasyikkan, aku rindu kau Puteh, dimana kau?”

Dengan babak tersebut dapat dilihat bahawa nilai maskuliniti Salleh telah terjejas kerana dia sangat mengharapkan Che Puteh untuk menyempurnakan hidupnya dan tidak lagi dilihat sebagai seorang wartawan yang boleh berdikari. Ini juga merupakan stereotaip wanita yang terdapat dalam diri Salleh yang mengharapkan pertolongan daripada wanita untuk meneruskan hidupnya yang juga membuatkan dirinya terus tersekat dalam misteri pekan tersebut.

## FEMME FATALE DAN KERETAKAN PATRIAKI

Perletakan watak lelaki sebagai watak dominan dengan stereotaip gender adalah kebiasaan dalam filem genre. Ini juga telah mengukuhkan lagi status gender didalam kelas sosial masing-masing. Seiring dengan itu, filem *noir* juga dikaitkan dengan krisis identiti watak lelaki yang disebabkan watak wanita yang merupakan *signifier* terhadap dilema yang dihadapi oleh watak lelaki dalam filem bergenre *noir* (Neale, 2000).

Dalam filem *KMBM*, terdapat beberapa watak wanita yang memainkan peranan dalam meruntuhkan stereotaip gender didalam filem melalui watak *femme fatale* yang secara tidak disedari telah menjadikan filem tersebut sebagai produk budaya yang juga menentang kepada sistem patriaki. *Femme fatale* atau '*fatal woman*' dalam filem *noir* adalah dekat terhadap hubungan dan pengaruhnya kepada watak lelaki.

Umumnya *femme fatale* merupakan watak wanita cantik yang membawa mudarat kepada watak lelaki dalam filem *noir* (Hishamuddin, 2015). Watak *femme fatale* juga dalam kebanyakan filem *noir* terlibat dalam bahaya yang juga membawa watak protagonis lelaki kedalam kesengsaraan tersebut yang dapat dilihat dalam konvensi naratif filem *noir*. Ini dapat dilihat melalui salah seorang watak wanita yang memainkan watak *femme fatale* iaitu Che Puteh.

Watak Che Puteh pada awalnya menunjukkan ciri-ciri sebagai perempuan Melayu yang cantik, suci dan tunduk kepada sistem patriaki dalam keluarganya iaitu menurut kata-kata dan suruhan abangnya iaitu Jongkidin. Che Puteh juga dipaparkan sebagai gadis yang tersepit dan bergantung dalam sistem masyarakat patriaki, ianya dapat dilihat apabila dirinya sentiasa dalam keadaan sedih dan muram kerana kematian tunangnya iaitu Amran yang mirip mukanya sama dengan Salleh dan Che Puteh dipaparkan sebagai seorang wanita yang lemah dengan hanya meletakkan nasib hidupnya kepada arwah tunangnya yang sudah tiada lagi dan hanya meletakkan hidupnya yang dikawal oleh abangnya. Pemaparan watak Che Puteh merupakan stereotaip watak wanita dalam filem-filem yang mengikut konvensi sistem masyarakat patriaki iaitu dengan ciri-ciri stereotaip wanita dalam filem seperti pasif, setia, tekun, pasrah, submisif dan suci yang ada dalam diri Che Puteh.

Namun begitu, Che Puteh juga yang bertindak sebagai salah satu watak *femme fatale* telah menarik Salleh ke dalam kancah kekeliruan dan permasalahan dirinya yang mengakibatkan Salleh tersepit dalam membuat keputusan samada untuk terus menjadi wartawan ataupun menunggu cinta Che Puteh, ini dapat dibuktikan dengan dialog Che Puteh kepada Salleh pada minit ke 1:37:32 iaitu "*Aku hanya berpura-pura mencintai kamu*" dan watak Salleh yang dipengaruhi oleh kecantikan Che Puteh menjadikan dirinya akur akan perkara tersebut dan membalas "*itu aku tahu, tapi cinta itu sudah jadi kenyataan bukan?*".

Ini juga boleh dikategorikan sebagai salah satu stereotaip gender dalam filem iaitu pemaparan Che Puteh yang hanya merupakan watak yang menggoda dengan tubuh badannya dan mukanya yang cantik dan seterusnya dilihat dapat dieksploitasi dalam sistem masyarakat patriaki yang hanya mengiktiraf kekuasaan lelaki dan dominasi terhadap wanita.

Stereotaip wanita juga dapat dilihat melalui watak Che Puteh yang lemah dan memerlukan pertolongan lelaki dan ini boleh dilihat pada

minit ke 0:37:51 iaitu sewaktu Salleh memukul sekumpulan gangster Cina yang ingin membawa Salleh keluar daripada Senduduk Rimbun, selepas pergaduhan itu terlerai, Che Puteh dipaparkan dengan wajahnya yang ketakutan dan hanya berdiri dibelakang Salleh. Ini juga merupakan salah satu stereotaip wanita dalam filem yang menunjukkan kelemahan wanita yang hanya mengharapkan bantuan daripada watak hero. Watak Che Puteh yang lemah juga dapat dilihat dengan dialognya pada babaknyanya dengan Salleh pada minit ke 0:48:38;

“aku telah kehilangan orang yang aku cintai, dan sekarang abangku, tolonglah aku Salleh”.

Dialog ini dapat membuktikan bahawa Che Puteh seakan berputus asa akan hidupnya kerana tiada lagi tempatnya untuk bergantung hidupnya selepas kehilangan abangnya dan kematian tunangnya, ini juga membuktikan dirinya hanya bergantung kepada lelaki dan seakan sebatikan dengan sistem patriaki.

Selain itu, watak Miss Rogayah juga merupakan watak *femme fatale* yang memujuk Salleh untuk keluar daripada Senduduk Rimbun melalui kecantikannya dan memberi harapan kepada Salleh dengan kata-katanya untuk mengahwini Salleh. Pemaparan Miss Rogayah memenuhi ciri-ciri watak *femme fatale* iaitu dipaparkan sebagai wanita cantik, pandai, dan berpura-pura dengan mempunyai sebab-sebab tertentu dalam untuk mendapatkan sesuatu. Miss Rogayah sentiasa dipaparkan sebagai seorang yang seksi dan berbeza daripada Che Puteh, pemakaian dan penampilan Miss Rogayah dipengaruhi dengan fesyen kolonial yang bersifat *western modernity* yang juga membuatkan panggilan namanya menggunakan Miss dan bukannya Cik. Dalam babak kemunculan Miss Rogayah, iaitu pada minit 0:23:31 syot kamera *tilt-up* digunakan sebagai satu simbol Miss Rogayah sebagai objek seks dalam babak tersebut. Syot kamera yang digunakan oleh Mamat Khalid yang menunjukkan kaki Miss Rogayah dan perlahan-lahan menunjukkan paras badannya yang seksi berserta baju yang ketat telah mengukuhkan lagi visual *male gaze* dalam babak tersebut.

Dalam babak tersebut juga dapat diperhatikan, Miss Rogayah menyanyikan lagu yang bergenre *modern jazz* yang seolah-olah simbol ataupun *signifier* terhadap moderniti dalam masa tersebut iaitu budaya

dan gaya hidup moden. Dalam hal ini juga, Miss Rogayah yang bertindak sebagai *femme fatale* yang juga dipaparkan secara visual mewakili ciri-ciri *male gaze* telah mencerminkan pengaruh luar kedalam negara kita iaitu pengaruh kuasa kolonial British, dalam kata lain, Miss Rogayah melambangkan kemunculan moderniti dalam negara ini.

Selain itu, Miss Rogayah yang disimbolkan sebagai objek seks dalam filem tersebut juga telah menjadikan pemaparan wataknya sebagai stereotaip negatif terhadap watak wanita dalam filem. Walaupun pada akhirnya, dia mengaku bahawa dirinya merupakan ahli *Police Department of Malay State* iaitu menunjukkan kekuasaan wataknya adalah sama dengan kuasa yang dimiliki oleh lelaki dalam sistem sosial masyarakat pada ketika itu namun, dirinya juga disekat oleh sistem patriaki iaitu menurut kata-kata bapanya untuk berkahwin dengan sesiapa sahaja asalkan dirinya dijaga oleh lelaki.

Ini dapat dibuktikan dengan babak intimnya bersama Salleh diatas katil pada minit ke 0:25:52 yang dapat dilihat Miss Rogayah memujuk Salleh untuk mengahwininya dan tinggalkan pekan itu, Salleh yang hampir digoda tersekat apabila ibupapa Miss Rogayah ada bersama mereka didalam bilik tersebut, namun Miss Rogayah meneruskan perbualannya bersama Salleh dan mengatakan kepada Salleh;

“mereka ingin aku menamatkan pekerjaan aku sebagai penyanyi kabaret dan menjadi suri rumah sepenuh masa, aku sendiri sudah bersedia menerimamu”.

Dalam babak tersebut, kamera memfokuskan secara *close-up* kepada muka dan gaya seksi Miss Rogayah yang berbaring di atas katil bersama solekan dimukanya dan pakaian seksinya. Secara jelasnya, ianya telah menunjukkan bahawa watak Miss Rogayah sekali lagi mewakili watak *femme fatale* yang tidak berfungsi sepenuhnya iaitu walaupun wataknya berjaya mengelirukan Salleh dan membawa Salleh kedalam bencana, namun stereotaip gadis Melayu yang menurut perintah sistem patriaki masih lagi ada didalam dirinya yang menurut kata bapanya untuk mengahwini jejaka di pekan tersebut dan dia telah bersetuju untuk menjadi suri rumah yang menunjukkan bahawa stereotaip wanita dalam filem hanyalah terhad kepada watak yang lemah dan memerlukan pertolongan lelaki dan Miss Rogayah telah membuktikan bahawa

wataknya yang mungkin dipandang sebagai penentang patriaki namun, dirinya masih lagi mengikut konvensi masyarakat bersistem patriaki.

## KESIMPULAN

Kajian mendapati bahawa terdapat dua tema utama dalam kajian ini iaitu, wanita sebagai alat pengaruh kepada keretakan maskuliniti lelaki, dan ketidakseimbangan gender dalam sistem patriaki. Tema-tema ini telah menjawab objektif dan persoalan kajian dan merumuskan bahawa wanita masih lagi didiskriminasi dalam sistem patriaki dan masih lagi distereotaipkan dengan negatif terhadap pemaparan dan peranan watak mereka dalam filem.

Dalam kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa watak wanita yang ingin melawan arus sistem patriaki juga tidak berjaya diakhirnya kerana sistem sosial tersebut seolah-olah telah dipersetujui oleh masyarakat yang hanya melihat kepada negativiti wanita terutamanya dalam perletakan watak dalam filem yang dapat dilihat dalam filem *KMBM* yang menjadikan watak wanita sebagai watak yang sengsara dan juga terpaksa mengikut sistem patriaki walaupun watak wanita tersebut dilihat mahu melawan sistem tersebut.

Dapat dilihat juga bahawa perletakan watak wanita adalah negatif walaupun watak hero tersebut dilihat lebih feminin perwatakannya namun fungsi wanita dalam filem adalah sama dalam filem-filem genre yang tipikal dengan menggunakan wanita sebagai watak yang sengsara, takut dan juga sebagai objek seks kepada lelaki dalam filem tersebut. Oleh itu dapat disimpulkan bahawa patriaki masih lagi kukuh dalam sistem sosial masyarakat yang dapat dilihat melalui filem *KMBM* yang menunjukkan bahawa sebesar manapun protes wanita dalam melawan arus patriaki, ianya tidak mampu untuk mengubah peranan sosial dan peranan gender yang telah ditetapkan dalam masyarakat bersistem patriaki yang pada akhirnya hanya lelaki dilihat berkuasa dalam sistem masyarakat yang mengamalkan sistem patriaki.

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