

## **A Content Analysis of Propaganda in Harakah Newspaper**

\*Shamsiah Abd Kadir, Ahmad Sauffiyah bin Abu Hasan

Centre for Media and Information Warfare Studies (CMIWS)  
Faculty of Communication and Media Studies  
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

\*shamsiah.abdkadir@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyse propaganda technique used in alternative Malaysian print media, by using the 'Harakah' as a case study. The two objectives of this study are to identify a) the types of propaganda that are in use by Harakah to influence its readers and b) the techniques of propaganda employed by Harakah to influence its readers. Qualitative media content analysis is conducted in this study; a specialised sub-set of content analysis as well as being a well-established research methodology. Data collected is analysed to determine the frequent types and techniques of propaganda used in Harakah. Data collected are derived from the National Section of Harakah within the limits of a three-month period from February 2013 until April 2013. Each article is analysed using existing guidelines on propaganda types and techniques as recognised by the Institute of Propaganda Analysis. Results are then evaluated according

to the objectives of the study, based on past literature reviews and mostly, the researcher's interpretations. The findings showed that the most frequently used type under the type category is white propaganda by 79 articles, and that card-stacking is the most frequently used technique under the technique category by 107 articles, from a total of 161 articles; hence the study aims are met. With better understanding of Harakah's propaganda, the government could enhance its political strategies to counter the issues being played by the opposition. The Malaysian public could be nurtured to reach a level of political maturity in their thinking, with the ability to make rational, informed and better judgments on information being fed by the media. In the context of media and information warfare studies, this study could benefit future researchers who are interested in this field, with various possibilities of extensive expansion of the subject.

**Keywords:** *Harakah, media content analysis, types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda.*

---

## **1.0 Introduction**

This study focuses on Harakah's newspaper reports on the current social, political and economic issues in Malaysia. Harakah is one of the alternative media in Malaysia owned by the opposition political party, *Parti Islam Semalaysia* or Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS). Harakah was established in 1987 as the official newspaper of PAS. According to [1], in its early days, high confidence in good circulation revenue had made the paper to choose not to be reliant on any initial capital from its members; dealers of Harakah paid upfront instead. The decision to make the newspaper self-reliant proved justified when Harakah emerged as one of the party's main source of income. Published twice weekly, its sale was at an average of about 75,000 copies daily by the mid-1990s. [1] further added, in 1999, as the general election came closer, the party acknowledged that in the fast-paced election campaign, the state-controlled newspapers and broadcast stations would outpace Harakah, as the paper's publication was confined to only twice a week since its existing permit did not allow publication to be extended on a daily basis. PAS then launched the '*Harakah Daily*' in its web-site a week prior to election-day as a way of providing feedback or counter-information on mounting inevitable assaults on PAS by the Government. Although political attacks by the Government was seen as a strategy to gain votes in the election, PAS continued to take serious steps to use the website and the Internet as new mediums to disseminate all sorts of information related to their political agenda in the 1999 elections.

[1] also stated that when Harakah's publishing license expired in February 2000, the authorities released a statement that the new licence would restrict its publications to only twice monthly, down from nine issues per month. The restrictions were a massive blow to PAS's party revenue and constrained its ability to disseminate information in a timely manner. Subsequently, in March 2000, Harakah re-launched the *HarakahDaily.net* as a daily news site online, complete with web television. Editor-in-Chief of Harakah, Zulkifli Sulong, acknowledged a debt to the dozens of smaller sites that have blazed the reform path and showed the possibility of empowering Internet. For good measure, Harakah also submitted a permit application for publishing its daily newspaper, the *Purnama*, which was never granted. Perhaps, Harakah uses

propaganda to promote the party's agenda amongst its readers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine and identify the types and techniques of propaganda employed by Harakah.

In a general context, propaganda can be seen as an appeal to the emotions rather than to the intellect. Advertising and public relations share a common propaganda technique, where the propaganda could play a role in promoting a commercial product or even shaping the perception of an organisation, person or brand.

Modern propaganda can be seen as an attempt to influence opinion through the communication of ideas and values of a specific persuasive purpose. It is also consciously designed to serve the propagandist's interests either directly or indirectly. In this case, the propaganda can be separated from information that serves to transmit the objective facts that can open the minds of the audience.

Today, many people are continuously bombarded with persuasive messages on a daily basis. These persuasive messages are generally disseminated via the media, such as newspapers, television broadcasts, radio, magazines, advertisements etc. Most times, these media are cluttered with paid advertisers and organisations that put their own interests foremost in their minds. From this study's perspective, all units behind these messages share common interests and ideas in mind, for example, a political organisation would want to convince people to concur with the message presented and accept it as their own beliefs and to reject the point of view of the "other" side. The messages are referred to as propaganda, a term denoting the use of deceptive persuasive techniques aimed at target audiences to promote the propagandists' interests.

Propaganda can be categorised according to the source and nature of the message. There are three types of propaganda, namely, white propaganda – coming from an openly identified source; black propaganda – identified as being from one source, but actually from another; and grey propaganda – one which is without any identifiable source or author [2].

As regards the techniques of propaganda, the Institute of Propaganda Analysis (IPA), a United States based organisation composed of social scientists, opinion leaders, historians, educators, and journalist, has identified seven devices that can transmit such propaganda. These are name-calling,

glittering generality, transfer, testimonial, plain folks, card stacking and bandwagon [3]. This study uses the seven techniques recognised by the IPA as a guideline because they are simple and commonly used in propaganda materials. They also appear to be well known.

Propaganda can be communicated and disseminated via a variety of mediums, including print media, such as newspapers, magazines, brochures and posters, and also via electronic media such as television, radio broadcasts, and film. According to [4], print propaganda is often communicated in the form of newspapers, especially through political newspapers owned by certain political parties and also through political cartoons and caricatures in the newspapers. A current issue discussed in the newspaper, for example, can stir up conversation about the given topic, which can also be misappropriated to intensify strain between opposing groups.

Propaganda in the newspapers usually arises when there are pressures and constraints on the production of news arising from the current economies and political realities of the countries. The individual or even the overall editorial policy can identify the news in newspapers that are usually written in a piece of comment [5] .

For example, the newspaper's strength usually lies in providing an overt political bias in the news. The issue then centres on the manipulation of news that is being played up by the newspaper. Propaganda will exist when there are differences in the political agenda.

The set issues that are the subjects of decision-making and debate within a given political system at any one time can be referred to as political agenda. When the mass media—the newspapers, in particular, point out a topic, the audience receiving the message will consider the topic as important [6].

According to [7], with regard to issues and sources, a high degree of convergence between different media outlets came into existence due to daily contacts between the journalists and the competitive media environment. Despite of this media influence, diverging newspaper and television political agenda had set effects on political agendas, as found by several studies.

A possible speculation is that newspapers, by reason of their in-depth and complete coverage, could be more capable of affecting policy makers. One other possibility is that newspapers rather than television, affect politicians to

a greater extent as they themselves are more personally exposed to newspapers rather than television news by reason of the easier and more flexible processing of paper material.

Newspapers in Malaysia can be classified into various mediums, such as the mainstream media (such as *Berita Harian*, *The News Straits Times*, *Utusan Malaysia*, and *The Star*) or alternative media (such as *Suara Keadilan*, *Harakah*, and *Aliran*). The views expressed in the news or editorial vary according to different newspapers. This is clearly reflected by political issues, especially during elections. Newspapers are used as a medium to play up an issue; elements of propaganda are included to discredit the enemy in order to attract votes. Newspapers can also downplay certain issues while portraying the image of a political personality.

Given that newspapers represent an important medium for the spread of propaganda by political parties, this study thus attempts to identify and classify the types and techniques of propaganda used by *Harakah*, the opposition newspaper, by the use of the content analysis method.

### *1.1 Problem Statement*

In Malaysia, the amount of news disseminated by political parties which is infused with propaganda is overwhelming. The level of manipulation is high and would thus most likely create confusion among the readers. Opposing political parties adopt this practice more vividly. Their objective is simple, to garner votes. Such use of propaganda for manipulative purposes can be seen in *Harakah*. According to Farish Noor (2003), as cited by [1], *Harakah* is “as guilty as a nemesis slavishly serving as a propaganda vehicle for their political masters”.

According to [8], in January 2000, Zulkifli Sulong, then Editor in Chief of *Harakah*, was charged with sedition for publishing a paragraph accusing that state prosecutors and the courts acted as a tool in Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad’s conspiracy against Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. Zulkifli Sulong was convicted three years later and paid a fine of RM5000 instead of being sentenced to six months in prison.

[1] stated that Harakah's coverage focused more primarily on political issues with emphasis on activities and statements by leaders of PAS, news of things going wrong in Malaysia under the leadership of the ruling party United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), and the never-ending war of words between the Government and the opposition. Activities such as baseless allegations against their opponents become their primary propaganda strategy. This particularly worsened when it concerns going against the Government.

According to [9], the Federal Youth Chief of PAS, Kamaruzzaman Mohamad, stated that Harakah had deviated from its main objectives. Kamaruzzaman proposed that a committee be established to supervise and filter the newspaper's contents. Harakah was criticised for being too generous in allowing much room for the Democratic Action Party (DAP) and the *Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (People's Justice Party) (PKR) leaders to use Harakah for their benefits. In fact, many PAS representatives dislike the fact that the newspaper published front-page stories with little or no benefit to PAS. [9] also stated that many representatives of PAS were in agreement with Kamaruzzaman that Harakah was lost, but not for reasons of their too-open policy which did not benefit the party. The reason was more because they published stories which only served to accuse UMNO leaders and the Government of wrongdoings, whilst at the same time becoming the agent for spreading hate among Muslims.

It was not altogether impossible that the criticism made by Kamaruzzaman was actually a criticism directed at the very person behind Harakah, Kamaruddin Jaafar, its Managing Director. According to [9], it was a well-known fact that Kamaruddin Jaafar was a close friend of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, *Pakatan Rakyat's* leader. Kamaruzzaman also stated that many representatives of PAS had in time, realised Datuk Seri Anwar's control over Harakah. Being well aware of the importance of media, Datuk Seri Anwar would definitely use Kamaruddin Jaafar as a means to spread his agenda [9].

Moreover, according to [9], in respect of PAS, PKR and even DAP, their agenda was always in juxtaposition with the objective of winning the 13th General Election and to appoint Datuk Seri Anwar as the Prime Minister. Thus, if Harakah's allied parties were given more credibility by Harakah compared to PAS itself, there should be no room for complaint by PAS Youth because

it was time for them to accept allied leaders from DAP and PKR as their own leaders. This means acceptance of the fact that issues that were brought up by Harakah, whilst serving little or no benefit to PAS, would indeed help promote *Pakatan Rakyat*'s huge agenda. As it was, PAS needed to give in, to win, hence, Harakah was just playing its 'scheming' role of spreading hate to ensure that *Pakatan Rakyat* would win instead of PAS alone.

Harakah in general, writes news in a way that is easy for readers to understand. For them, mainstream press hides behind the closet and do not tell the truth. This study finds that local research have not placed much focus on the subject of this study i.e. the types and techniques of propaganda employed by the Harakah newspaper. This is perhaps due to the need to emphasise on such other topics which better serve the research's needs and interests at the time.

The Government has neither conducted any effective strategy nor taken any efforts to try to counter such propaganda practices. This may be due to its inability to identify and trace the types and techniques of propaganda used by opposition newspapers—namely Harakah—or by other media that can influence the society.

This study attempts to address this weakness by identifying the types and techniques of propaganda that were being used by Harakah in various publications. Towards the end of the study, the most frequent types and techniques of propaganda used by Harakah will be demonstrated and explained.

## **2.0 Review of Literature**

### *2.1 Types of Propaganda in Media*

Generally, advertising and public relations share a technique of propaganda in the sense that propaganda can promote a commercial product or even shape the perception of an organisation, person or brand. The word "propaganda" more typically refers to political or nationalist settings. These words were used generally in post-World War II to promote a set of ideas. Propaganda has become more common in the political context.

To encourage or discourage certain forms of behaviour, governments or

political parties would use public information campaigns, which also have much in common with propaganda. Again, the emphasis is more political in propaganda. Propaganda can take the form of leaflets, posters, television, radio broadcasts, newspapers and also extend to any other medium.

For the purpose of changing people's actions or any expectations in ways which are desirable to a certain group that have an interest, generally, the propagandist would tend to change the way of understanding in any kind of issues or situations with their own interpretations or perceptions. In this sense, propaganda can serve as a corollary to censorship in which the same purpose is to achieve it, and not by filling people's mind with approved information. But, that propaganda would prevent people from being confronted with opposing points of view. For example, the leaders of an organisation know the information to be one sided or untrue, but this may not be true for the rank and file members who help to disseminate the propaganda.

According to [2], propaganda can be categorised according to the source and nature of the message. There are three types of propaganda, namely, a) white propaganda, b) black propaganda and c) grey propaganda. Generally, white propaganda comes from an openly identified source, and it is characterised by gentler methods of persuasion, such as standard public relations techniques and one-sided presentation of an argument. As mentioned by [10], in his book entitled *'Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes'*, white propaganda can basically be seen as the public awareness of attempts being made to influence them. Typically, this type of propaganda are used by opponents—for example, political parties, and generally the purpose is to persuade people, for reasons that essentially the source is known and its aim and intentions are identified. The author also mentioned that white propaganda could serve as a means to cover black propaganda in certain propaganda campaigns, for example, when the propagandist tries to mask the former's issues. White propaganda also presents accurate information, although it can be slanted, omitted and distorted. However, most of the real sources are declared.

Black propaganda is identified as being from one source, but which is in fact, from another. This type of propaganda is most commonly used to disguise the true origins of the propaganda, be it from an enemy country or from an organisation with a negative public image. This type of propaganda

also shows false information, which is the substance that asserts to be on one side of conflict; but is in fact from the opposing side [11]. [11] further stated that black propaganda basically functioned so as to denigrate, humiliate or misrepresent the enemy. Those who use this propaganda generally have a covert agenda, in which the sources are hidden and not easy to reveal.

According to [10], when the audience is not conscious that someone is trying to influence them, and cannot feel that they are being pushed in a certain direction, this can be classified as the major characteristics of black propaganda. This propaganda asserts to originate from a source other than the real source. [10] also mentioned that at times the source of black propaganda is concealed or credited to a false authority and has the possibility to spread lies, forgeries and deceptions.

Black propaganda may also depend on the receiver and the extent to which they are willing to accept the credibility of the source. If the propagandist does not adequately know their intended audience to spread the information, the message that has been disseminated may be misunderstood or seem suspicious [12]. As an example, some political parties usually use black propaganda operations for two different reasons. Firstly, when they use this type of propaganda, they are more likely to succeed in persuading their target audience. This is because the information that they are seeking to influence is disguised and the motivations are not really noticeable. The second reason is diplomatic. In this situation, black propaganda can obfuscate their involvement in any kind of activities that may be detrimental to their foreign policies.

According to [2], grey propaganda can be classified as one without an identifiable source or author. The author makes enemies believe falsehood by using straw arguments, which are the misrepresentation of an opponent's person. It has the objective of advancing viewpoints which are of interests to the originator, but which target audience would find more receptive than official statements. These stems from the fact that whilst propaganda materials from a known propaganda agency might convince some, what would be more persuasive are similar ideas presented by seemingly neutral outlets.

Articles in newspapers written by a disguised source can be seen as part of the application of grey propaganda. Other tactics include wide dissemination of ideas put forth by certain others, e.g. media outlets both local and international,

foreign governments, institutions, private groups or individuals. A very common type in news world is material assistance given to groups that set out views deemed useful to the propagandist. An example would be where certain people have expressed their gratitude or dislike on the Government's move to ban opposition rallies on the streets.

These different types of propaganda can also be defined by the potential of true and correct information to compete with the propaganda. For example, white propaganda is often readily found and may slightly discredit the propaganda source. Grey propaganda, when revealed, often by an inside source, may create some level of public outcry, whilst black propaganda's source is often unavailable and may be dangerous to reveal. This is because public cognizance of black propaganda tactics and sources would undermine or backfire the very campaign the black propagandist supported [2].

## *2.2 Techniques of Propaganda in Media*

Political propaganda can be classified as propaganda techniques or medium used to disseminate relevant information [2]. Political propaganda has existed as long as there have been politicians angling for votes and public approval. This study identifies that at present, political propaganda is frequently used to conscript or enrol and retain voters or followers via a seemingly endless stream, especially in media. For example, in election campaigns, the media, through television commercials or even mainstream newspapers, will present only the best qualities of party candidates. Meanwhile, commercials from the opposition's side or their representatives will employ propaganda techniques such as name-calling, fear and glittering generalities, which are commonly used in political propaganda. An example would be the framing of the issue at hand in political cartoons. Some political groups use these propaganda techniques to win the people's hearts and minds in respect of certain issues being manipulated by others in the form of one-sided information.

[13] stated in her article "*Fourteen Propaganda Techniques Fox 'News' Uses to Brainwash Americans*", that in the era of 24-hours cable news network and "reality" programming, the news ratio of overall veracity of information had declined precipitously. The author mentioned that Americans spent about 50 hours a week on average, using various forms of media. Not only do

the mainstream media now tolerate gross misrepresentations of the facts and history by public figures, but most media also actually legitimise these displays. Nowadays, most of the media channels disseminate information or facts at their whims, impulse and by outrageously incompetent analysis of its so-called reporters.

An example would be the enormous amount of misinformation that was taken for the truth by *Fox News* audiences. These include the belief that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and that he was involved in September 11 event, the belief that climate change was not real or man-made and the belief that all Muslims are terrorists. From the author's perspective, all of these claims are demonstrably false, and yet *Fox News's* viewers will maintain their veracity with incredible enthusiasm.

The curiosity towards *Fox News's* propaganda and also other propagandists disguised as media led the author to identify the techniques of propaganda utilised by *Fox News*. [13] also stated that the propaganda techniques used, helped to explain the simultaneously powerful identification of *Fox News* towards media audiences with the network, as well as their ardent and reflexive defences of it. The fourteen propaganda techniques used by *Fox News* as identified by the author were panic mongering, character assassination or ad hominem, projection or flipping, rewriting history, scapegoat, conflating violence with power and opposition to violence with weakness, bullying, confusion, populism, invoking the Christian God, saturation, disparaging education, guilt by association, and last but not least – diversion.

As earlier discussed, this study finds that there are seven propaganda devices or techniques relevant for the purposes of this study. These are a) name-calling, b) glittering generality, c) transfer, d) testimonial, e) plain folks, f) card stacking and g) bandwagon, all of which were recognised by the Institute of Propaganda Analysis (IPA). This study will apply the said seven techniques as a guideline.

The first of such techniques is name-calling. According to Lee and Lee (1939), as cited by [3], name-calling can be identified as giving an idea as a bad label, which can make audiences reject and condemn the idea without examining the evidence. Name-calling appears in politics and other areas of public discourse. A simple idea on how to understand the uses of name-calling

are two current examples—terrorists and terrorism. “*One person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter*”, - which can be seen as the old maxim of interpretation [3]. As pointed out by the general semanticists, our purpose, our projections, and our evaluations determine what we call a person, yet such person does not change when we change the label.

The second technique of propaganda recognised by IPA is glittering generality. According to Lee and Lee (1939) as cited by [3], this technique is more on associating something with a virtue word – which can be used to make audiences accept the thing in question without examining the evidence. Glittering generality commonly appears in advertising and also in politics and business. As an example, in political propaganda, glittering generality are linked to highly valued concepts and sometimes the words used by the opponents have different positive meanings for individuals. When used, these words demand approval without thinking, merely because it involves such an important concept.

According to Lee and Lee (1939), as cited by [3], when someone is asked to do something in “defense of democracy”, the audiences are likely to have the same opinion, in general. Most of the audiences agree with that position because the concept of democracy has a positive connotation. It is because, for them, the concept is linked to something which is of some value. This study observes that the virtue words of glittering generality which is commonly used in the concepts of democracy, are *honour, glory, love of country, and freedom*.

The third main propaganda techniques identified by the IPA is the transfer technique. Basically, this technique carries the idea that the authority, sanction and even prestige of something respected are revered over to something else in order to make the latter more acceptable. According to [15], transfer usually works through a process of association. Transfer is generally akin to “admiration by association” rather than “guilt by association”. This technique can also be seen to take place through the use of symbolic objects [3]. For example, those who wear yellow coloured shirts in the ‘*Bersih*’ rallies organised by a non-profit organisation in Malaysia to ensure a clean election, commonly represent a symbol for a clean election.

Testimonial, the fourth propaganda technique, is when something consists of having some respected or hated person, say that a given idea or program or product or even a person, is good or bad [15]. Testimonials can be seen as the endorsement, in or out of context, which can generally connect a good person with a product or item. According to the author, this technique is commonly used in advertising.

The fifth technique is plain folks. According to Lee and Lee (1939), as cited by [3], plain folks can be seen as the method by which a propagandist encourage their audience that his or her ideas are good because they are the people of the plain folks. Other than that, the propagandist will often attempt to use the specific phrase or expression or even jokes with a specific intonation of a specific audience.

The plain folk's technique is commonly used in politics rather than in advertising. For example, as cited by [3] in their book '*Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media*', more than 40 percent of voters did not like the nominated candidates, as found by the political professionals in their effort to get Bill Clinton elected as the president. Bill Clinton was perceived as a "wishy-washy", fast-talking career politician, who did not try to "talk-straight" with the voters. His wife, Hillary Clinton was liked even less for being in the race for herself, "going for power", and for her intent on "running the show" [14]. The chief strategist and Clinton's polling experts thus agreed to create a new image for both Mr. and Mrs. Clinton as "an honest, plain folk's idealist and his warm and loving wife", [14].

Card stacking is the sixth technique of propaganda identified by the IPA. This technique involves the selection and use of facts or falsehoods, illustrations or distractions and logical or illogical statements in order to give the best or worst possible case for an idea, program person or product [15]. Card stacking is essentially alike with the general semantics to the slanting technique. Generally, the arguments that do not support the position will be ignored, because the card-stacking technique will basically only select the arguments or evidence in support of the position taken. However, the argument or evidences selected, can either be true or false [3]. According to the author, card stacking probably works most effectively when the evidence is true. This technique is extremely effective in convincing the public, thus it is used in almost all forms of propaganda.

The seventh recognised technique is the bandwagon technique. This happens when the propagandist attempts to convince and persuade the audience that since all the members of a group to which they belong accept his or her program, they must therefore follow this particular crowd. In simple words, the bandwagon technique appeals to the subject to follow the throng and to join it because others are doing so as well [15].

Fundamentally, the bandwagon propaganda tries to convince the subject or audience that one side is the winning side, and that it is such because most people have joined it. As such the audience is made to believe that since so many people have participated, the conquest is expected and defeat is impossible. As many typical individuals always want to be on the winning side, they are compelled to join in. They will thus follow and ‘jump on the bandwagon’.

From this study’s perspective, no matter what types or techniques of propaganda are used by the media, it is impossible to avoid them. The simple truth is that, very few organisations, politicians or even religious groups are going to voluntarily disclose information, which will dispute their beliefs and goals. Thus, to be truly informed on any given topic, it is necessary for the audiences to conduct at the very least, some background research of their own by using reliable sources. Only after studying all of the key components or elements of propaganda used by the media; political parties especially, can one make an informed decision on whether the message is true or has a covert agenda.

### *2.3 Agenda-Setting Theory*

According to Heath and Bryant (1992), as cited by [16], agenda setting focuses on issues played by the media which possibly invoke people’s reactions either consciously or unconsciously, although not in reality.

Kiousis et al. (2005) stated in their studies, as cited by [16], that agenda setting can be seen as the conceptual framework used to identify how the media influence the public to perceive certain issues as important. Agenda-setting depicts the media’s ability to persuade people about the importance of an issue as compared to another.

According to [19], as [18] in their studies, the authors classified that agenda setting also involves three keys elements which are media agenda, the public agenda and the policy agenda. Thus, according to the authors, the media has the option on what news should be given greater emphasis; such is referred to as the media agenda.

[18] explained that the media agenda would act by shaping the people's perception, which can be seen and called as the public agenda. In the policy agenda, policy makers would review all the issues raised by the media so that immediate and appropriate action could be taken for the benefit of the people and nation.

[19] proposed that the concept of agenda setting could involve the knowledge of social change and social stability. [18] convinced that in politics, where a political issue that was controversial was seen in a greater light by the public, this was the agenda. This is so because it is enclosed under lawful procedure of the nation. As for an issue, [20] defined this as a dispute between groups on the matter of procedures and regulation relating to distribution of position or resources.

Basically, this theory demonstrated that news which is believed to have high impact will be given more attention in terms of coverage. According to [21], agenda setting basically lays in the relationship between the media and public opinion.

Other than that, [22] emphasis was on the power and influence of the media pertaining to politics. Temoney also stated that the media acted as the vehicle that could educate voters on certain issues. The individuals receive most information about politics from the media and the voters would tend to evaluate the relevance of the issues by how the information was covered [22].

It is evident at present that there would always be an issue which will become the primary topic in the Malaysian media. Agenda setting usually takes place in the earlier part of the news. For example, the newspapers' main headlines are the main agendas. In the agenda setting theory, the media tend to make an issue look important compared to the others by putting them in a place which is easily readable by the audience, or else allocating an exclusive space for that issue [23].

Given the above, the agenda setting theory would be the ideal theory of this study as it involves the public perception of issues played up by the media and the way in which it tends to perhaps influence the public to think and act.

#### *2.4 Qualitative Media Content Analysis*

There are a number of procedures used by qualitative researchers to analyse their data. According to [23], in their study of *'Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis'*, content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique. Rather than being a single method, current applications of content analysis show three distinct approaches: conventional, directed, or summative. [24], also stated that, there were three approaches in use, such as conventional content analysis, directed content analysis and summative content analysis, to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm. The major differences among the approaches are coding schemes, origins of codes, and threats to trustworthiness. In conventional content analysis, coding categories are derived directly from the text data. With a directed approach, analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes. A summative content analysis involves counting and comparing, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context.

However, this study focuses more on media content analysis, which can be seen as a specialised sub-set of content analysis, a well-established research methodology. [25] described content analysis as “the primary message-centred methodology” and cited studies such as [26] and [27], which reported that “in the field of mass communication research, content analysis has been the fastest-growing technique over the past 20 years or so”.

Content analysis is used to study a broad range of ‘texts’ from transcripts of interviews and discussions in clinical and social research to the narrative and form of films, TV programs and the editorial and advertising content of newspapers and magazines. Media content analysis was introduced as a systematic method to study mass media by [28], initially to study propaganda [29]. In addition, [29] also stated that, media content analysis became

increasingly popular as a research methodology during the 1920s and 1930s for investigating the rapidly expanding communication content of movies. In the 1950s, media content analysis proliferated as a research methodology in mass communication studies and social sciences with the arrival of television. Media content analysis has been a primary research method for studying portrayals of violence, racism and women in television programming as well as in films.

According to [30], changes in media and communication research approaches and paradigms contributed to the expanding interest in qualitative approaches to studying the mass media. It became apparent that traditional approaches to understanding many documents, such as the mass media, were inadequate in dealing with newer information and perspectives about how documents were constructed and the ways in which media were being shaped and used by claims makers, journalists, and different audiences. This has especially become the case with the emergence and expansion of social media.

The development of Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) – a distinctive version of qualitative media analysis – and its use by researchers was influenced by an awareness by many researchers that simply studying the content of the mass media was not enough; it was important to be aware of the process, meanings, and emphasis reflected in the content including discursive practices [30]. [29] also stated in their book entitled '*Qualitative Media Analysis*', that the media looked much different to consumers as well as theorists and researchers. The general theory of media logic continued to be examined and explicated with specific applications as part of the ecology of communication to clarify how information technology, communication formats and social activities – including communication styles – change. There was more awareness that methods such as ECA were essential to discover, clarify and document the process, formats and cultural meanings, and the emphasis and discourse that were being presented to audiences [30].

In general, ethnography refers to the description of people and their culture [31]. Many scholars view ethnography as a product or report of careful description, definition and analysis of aspects of human interaction, even arguing that ethnography is the writing of culture [32]. In this sense, the subject

matter – human beings engaged in meaningful behaviour – guides the mode of inquiry and the orientation of the investigator. A key part of conducting an ethnographic study is to be immersed in the context, environment, situations and life worlds of the subject. If the meaning of an activity remains paramount, however, ethnography can also be considered as a methodological orientation independent of a specific subject matter [30]. Fieldwork essentially means getting deep into content that is relevant for the researcher's research question. Immersion and discovery are central. Products of social interaction, such as documents, can also be studied reflexively, looking at one feature in the context of what is understood about the other features, allowing for the constant comparison suggested by [33].

According to [30], ECA is used to document and understand the communication of meaning, as well as to verify theoretical relationships. Its distinctive characteristic is the reflexive and highly interactive nature of the investigator, concepts, data collection and analysis. Unlike quantitative content analysis (QCA) in which the protocol is the instrument, in ECA, the investigator is continually central, although protocols may be used in later phases of the research. Like all ethnographic research, the meaning of a message is assumed to be reflected in various modes of information exchange, format, rhythm and style, for example, aural and visual style, as well as in the context of the report itself, and other nuances.

[30] also stated that ECA consists of reflexive movement between concept development, sampling, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation. The aim is to be systematic and analytic, but not rigid. Although categories and “variable” initially guide the study, others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. Thus, ECA is embedded in constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings and nuances [33].

To this end, ECA draws on and collects numerical and narrative data, rather than forcing the latter into predefined categories of the former as is done in QCA. ECA is oriented to check, supplement, and supplant prior theoretical claims by simultaneously obtaining categorical and unique data for every case study in order to develop analytical constructs appropriate for several investigations [34]. Further, data are often coded conceptually so that

one item may be relevant for several purposes. In short, while items and topics can still be counted and put in emergent categories, ECA also provides good descriptive information.

Since ECA focuses on documents, the unit of analysis is likely to be more apparent and to entail less time for discovery. ECA is strongly oriented to qualitative analysis, which involves description, attention to nuances, and openness to emerging insights. ECA acknowledges the role of reflexive observation as one becoming immersed in relevant documents, but the aim remains, to identify similarities and differences in how the documents – or parts thereof – reflect other aspects of culture, including other communication and mass media materials that are part of the cultural context [30].

ECA is more oriented to sensitising concepts that can lead to concept development, data collection, and emergent data analysis [30]. The assumption behind ECA is that the general process of data collection, reflection, and protocol refinement is more significant for a study and that, details involving coding procedures, practices, and categories do emerge. In addition, ECA is not primarily oriented to theory development but is more comfortable with clear descriptions and definitions compatible with the materials, which can help generate concepts appropriate for theoretical testing with other types of document. Nevertheless, ECA provides rich data compatible with an extensive array of sociological concepts with theoretical relevance [30].

[30] was intended to fill a gap in research methods between traditional “content analysis” and systematic techniques for the objective study of characteristics of message and qualitative method such as participant observation and focused interviewing. Moreover, [30] approach is to blend the traditional notion of objective content analysis with participant observation to form ECA, or how a researcher interacts with documentary materials so that specific statements can be placed in the proper context for analysis.

[30] agreed that “qualitative analysis is a process that requires the exploration, organisation, interpretation and integration of research materials (data)”. Document can be defined as any symbolic representation that can be recorded or retrieved for analysis. Document analysis on the other hand, refers to an integrated and conceptually informed method, procedure and technique for locating, identifying, retrieving and analysing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning.

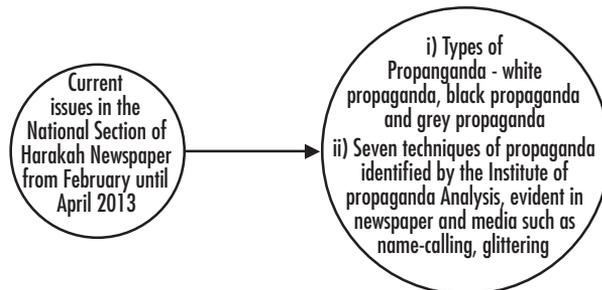
There are three classes of documents relevant to researchers. First are primary documents, which are the object of study, which include, for example newspapers, magazines, TV newscasts, diaries, text messages, photographs or videos, and even archeological artifacts. Next are secondary documents, which are records about primary documents and other objects of research. This includes field notes, published reports about primary documents (e.g., a newspaper analysis of campaign speeches). The last category of documents is a catchall that may be referred to as auxiliary documents, which can supplement a research project or some other practical undertaking, but are neither the main focus of investigation nor the primary source of data for understanding the topic [30].

### **3.0 Methodology**

The study evaluates the information which is then written into the Findings section according to the formation of the types and techniques of propaganda. Figure 1 stated below is the research construct of the study.

#### *3.1 Research Design*

This study conducts a qualitative media content analysis. According to [30], a qualitative media content analysis can also be called the ‘Ethnographic Content Analysis’ (ECA). As earlier discussed, ECA is oriented to documenting and understanding the communication of meaning, as well as verifying theoretical relationship. A major difference, however, is the reflexive and highly interactive nature of the investigator concepts, data collection and



*Figure 1: Research Construct*

analysis. Unlike in the Quantitative Content Analysis (QCA) in which the protocol is the instrument, the investigator is continually central in ECA, although protocols may be used in later phases of the research.

According to [30], ECA may be contrasted with conventional approach, or leaning more towards QCA in its approach towards data collection, data analysis and interpretation. Table 1 below provides an overview of these approaches on several dimensions.

Table 1 shows the differences between QCA and ECA approaches on several dimensions. Basically, the research goal for QCA is verification of hypothesised relationship, while the ethnographic research goal is to discover the document or understanding the communication meaning, as well as

**TABLE 1**

Quantitative Content Analysis (QCA) and Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA)

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>QCA</b>	<b>ECA</b>
Research Goal	Verification	Discovery; Verification
Reflexive Research Design	Seldom	Always
Emphasis	Reliability	Validity
Progression from Data Collection, Analysis, Interpretation	Serial	Reflexive; Circular
Primary Researcher Involvement	Data Analysis and Interpretation	All phases
Sample	Random or stratified	Purposive or Theoretical
Training Required to Collect Data	Little	Substantial
Type of Data	Numbers	Numbers; Narrative
Narrative Description and Comments	Seldom	Always
Concepts Emerge During Research	Seldom	Always
Data Analysis	Statistical	Textual; Statistical
Data Presentation	Tables	Tables and Text

verifying the theoretical relationship [30]. Directly, the research goal for this study can be achieved through the discovery of the types and techniques of propaganda that were employed in the Harakah newspaper. In verifying and identifying the types and techniques of propaganda used in Harakah, this study follows the existing guidelines which have been recognised by the IPA. The reason for this is to be in line with the IPA's concern on the escalating amount of propaganda being used in public. The IPA's objective was to educate the public about propaganda and assist them to recognise and deal with it. Of greater concern then was the possible weakening of the peoples' ability to analyse and to think rationally about issues due to the increasing amounts of propaganda [3].

As opposed to QCA, ECA always practices a reflexive design, in which the researcher has complete control of the study through interpretations. For example, throughout the data collection and analysis, the texts and phrases chosen were based on the researcher's understandings on the types and techniques of propaganda. In QCA, on the other hand, through survey method for example, the researcher does not control the data collection because the analysis is based on the data collected from respondents.

The QCA emphasises on reliability while the ECA stresses on the validity of the research. For this study, the validity is determined by four criteria of qualitative validity, which are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Progression from data collection, analysis and interpretation will be done in series under a QCA research, while an ECA research revises all the data collection in a reflective and circular manner. This study revises past literature reviews and uses the IPA's guideline for types and techniques of propaganda during data collection, in order to enable the study to better understand the ways of classifying them.

The primary researcher in a QCA research is only involved in analysing and interpreting the data collection, while the ECA researcher is involved in all phases throughout the research. For the purpose of this study, the researcher's involvement is maximised in all phases especially during the data collection stage. This study identifies and evaluates the data that consist of the types and techniques of propaganda that were employed in the Harakah newspaper.

Thereafter, for the data sampling, the QCA research data are collected randomly or stratified, while the ECA research collects the data purposively and theoretically. In this study, the researcher purposively collects the data in Harakah newspaper, and analysed such data during a three-month period, from February until April 2013, which were derived from specific articles containing current issues as reported in National Section of the Harakah newspaper. The period identified was at the peak of the 13th General Elections campaign in Malaysia where political propaganda reached its peak. Although there is no theoretical relationship to follow, the types and techniques of propaganda set out by the IPA are deemed as the best guidelines to be followed as their objectives and concerns are most suitable to this study.

The QCA research only involves the least or little training requirement to collect data. Meanwhile, the ECA research involves substantial training for data collection. In this sense, the researcher is trained to understand the definitions of the types and techniques of propaganda by reviewing past literature and also the specific guidelines recognised by the IPA. This method is important as a way to better comprehend the classification of the types and techniques of propaganda and also as a way to avoid biasness.

The type of data in a QCA research consists only of numbers, while an ECA research consists of both numbers and narrative. This study contains numbers with regards to the totalling of the types and techniques of propaganda that were employed in the Harakah newspaper (as later discussed in the Findings section), whilst the data is narrative in form once the data collection is complete.

The QCA research seldom practices narrative description and comments, while the ECA research is always descriptive through analysis, as can be seen during the data collection stage of this study. In addition, concepts seldom emerge during a QCA research. This is different from an ECA research, where concepts [30], a protocol can be seen as a list serving as a guide in the process of data collection that consists of questions, items, categories, or variables from documents. In this study, the articles that contain current issues in Harakah are gathered to detect the categories based on the types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda. Once the types and techniques of propaganda employed in Harakah are identified, the article is saved. Each category

**TABLE 2**

Category A for Types of Propaganda

<b>Types of Propaganda</b>	<b>Category A</b>
White propaganda	A1
Black propaganda	A2
Grey propaganda	A3

**TABLE 3**

Category B for Techniques of Propaganda

<b>Types of Propaganda</b>	<b>Category B</b>
Name-calling	B1
Glittering generality	B2
Transfer	B3
Testimonial	B4
Plain folks	B5
Card stacking	B6
Bandwagon	B7

consisting of the types and techniques of propaganda portrayed in different articles are grouped and summarised for data analysis. Thereafter, the summary for each category – types and techniques of propaganda, is reviewed for assessment, upon which the data collection completes. The study revises and refines the protocol, until it reaches the levels required of the study topic and methodology. The revised protocol is then used for the study.

### *3.2.3 Types of Propaganda and Techniques of Propaganda Identification*

The third step of the procedure is the identification of the types and techniques of propaganda. The example of types and techniques in Table 2 and Table 3. This step starts once the study determines the sampling rationale and strategy. The specific articles that contain current issues in the National Section of Harakah are reviewed to identify the types and techniques of propaganda employed. As previously mentioned, this study uses content analysis to examine and identify the types and techniques of propaganda. Thereafter, data is categorised under two categories – types and techniques of

propaganda, based on the contents of the specific articles that discuss current political, social and economic issues.

#### *3.4.4 Data Collection*

The next step of the procedure is data collection. Presentation of the data collection involves tables and text. Therefore, the data is narrative in form. The study collects the data by using preset codes – coding sheets, with the descriptive examples. The standard coding sheet is formatted based on *Altheide Research Team Protocol for Studying News Reports about Fear* [30]. For the purposes of this study, adjustments are made to the coding sheet as relevant to the study. Note that every coding sheet is used to code according to the individual type and technique of propaganda utilised in the articles. The conceptual refinement is made when necessary. Thereafter, the data coding and analysis is performed.

#### *3.4.5 Data Analysis*

Data analysis is the final step of the procedure. For the purposes of the study, the results are gathered into tables which set out the types and techniques of propaganda used in each article. Thereafter, the information are evaluated, and then written into the Findings section of the study according to the formation of types and techniques of propaganda.

### **4.0 Findings**

A total of 161 specific articles containing current political, social and economic issues are reviewed and analysed from the National Section in the *Harakah* newspaper during the three-month period of February 2013 to April 2013. This study finds that the most prominently used type of propaganda within the three-month period of the study is white propaganda with 79 articles collectively, whilst the least prominently used type of propaganda is black propaganda with eight articles. Meanwhile, for the techniques of propaganda, the study finds that the most prominent technique used is card stacking with 107 articles. The least prominent technique used is testimonial with five articles collectively. In this section, the phrases are selected to match with the relevant types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda during data collection. The results are stated below.

**TABLE 4**

Types of Propaganda in the Harakah Newspaper within the Months of February, March and April 2013

Month	Total Number of Articles	Category A (Types of Propaganda)		
		A1 (White Propaganda)	A2 (Black Propaganda)	A3 (Grey Propaganda)
February	47	35	4	23
March	70	34	2	23
April	44	10	1	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>54</b>

4.1 Types of Propaganda

4.1.1 White Propaganda

Table 4 is referred. In white propaganda type, the authors used identified sources; widely open to the audiences for verification and also truthful in their origins. For example, in article ‘Ragu peranan SPR Wan Ahmad Omar mesti letak jawatan’, by Aziz Muda. The author used the Royal Commission of Inquiry’s (RCI) role in support of the argument that the opponent party would seem to be really at fault in the instance. The phrases is stated below.

*“Pemberian IC itu telah diakui sendiri oleh Mahathir ketika disiasat oleh Suruhanjaya Siasatan Diraja (RCI)”. (para.3).*

*“Timbalan Pengerusi Umno Sabah, Dato’ Seri Mohd Salleh Tun Said dilaporkan menafikan pembabitan Umno negeri dalam pengeluaran IC kepada rakyat asing yang didakwa sesetengah pihak sebagai usaha mengubah demografi Sabah yang menguntungkan parti itu”. (para.4)*

Other than that, white propaganda can be categorised as being the gentler method of persuasion. It can be seen as the public’s awareness of attempts being made to influence them. . Generally, the purpose is to persuade people towards the reasoning that essentially the source is known and its aim and intentions are identified. A concise example of when this was applied is

in the article *'Manifesto Rakyat, kempen awal Pakatan tawan Putrajaya'*. The phrases that can be seen as having contained the gentler method of persuasion are stated below.

*"Manifesto kita lebih mudah untuk rakyat faham tidak seperti BN. Kita akan pastikan perkara ini tidak berlaku kepada Pakatan. Manifesto ini mengambil kira penyelidikan bukan sahaja kepada Umno-BN, tetapi di seluruh negara,"*. (para.4).

*"Manifesto adalah janji kita kepada rakyat. Kita yakin kandungan manifesto akan kita laksanakan. Termasuk perincian mengikut tahun kita tadbir seperti lima tahun pertama, 10 tahun dan seterusnya," kata Rafizi"*. (para. 6).

*"Dasar dan manifesto Pakatan pada PRU 13 kerana tawaran Pakatan memberi penekanan kepada kesejahteraan rakyat"*. (para.9).

Additionally, white propaganda involves only a one-sided presentation of argument. The argument given is accurate information although it can perhaps be slanted, omitted and distorted. However, the real sources are declared. The example of this characteristics of white propaganda can be seen in the article *'Kerajaan BN yang perlu dijatuhkan,'* by Arif Atan,. The relevant phrases are stated below.

*"Bukti kerajaan Umno-BN belot terhadap negara semakin terserlah apabila satu demi satu salahguna pemberian kad pengenalan kepada warga asing dibongkar oleh Suruhanjaya Siasatan Diraja (RCI)"*. (para.1).

*"Timbalan Presiden PAS, Mohamad Sabu mendakwa, pemberian taraf kerakyatan di Sabah hanya bertujuan untuk memenangkan Umno-BN dalam pilihan raya"*. (para.6).

*"Tuntutan Pakatan Rakyat supaya kerajaan membersihkan senarai daftar pemilih kini terbukti ada asasnya. Penipuan pilihan raya benar-benar berlaku bukan cubaan," jelasnya sambil berseloroh di hadapan kira-kira 300 hadirin"*. (para.8).

#### *4.2 Techniques of Propaganda*

**TABLE 5**

Techniques of Propaganda in the Harakah Newspaper within the Months of February, March and April 2013

Month	Total No. of Articles	Category B (Techniques of Propaganda)						
		B1 (Name-calling)	B2 (Glittering Generality)	B3 (Transfer)	B4 (Testimonial)	B5 (Plain Folks)	B6 (Card Stacking)	B7 (Bandwagon)
February	47	13	6	5	0	1	29	4
March	70	0	0	3	4	5	48	4
April	44	0	2	3	1	0	30	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>8</b>

4.2.1 Card Stacking

Table 5 is referred. Card stacking is identical to the general semantics technique of slanting. This technique involves the selection and use of facts or falsehoods, illustrations or distractions and logical or illogical statements in order to present the best or worst possible case for an idea, program, person or product.

As an example, the article entitled ‘*Ada hantu dalam hati Najib, Mahathir*’ – only utilised the selection issue, the uses of fact and logical statements in order to portray the best case for the party – Pakatan Rakyat. In this situation, the source only presented information, which is positive to an idea or proposal and omitted information contrary to it. The phrases that demonstrate the application of card stacking is stated below.

*“Pakatan Rakyat tidak akan menyalahgunakan kuasanya jika berjaya memerintah negara nanti kerana Pakatan Rakyat sememangnya berbeza dengan BN yang menggunakan kuasanya sesuka hati untuk kepentingan politik mereka sendiri.”* (para.4).

*“Jika menang PRU13 nanti, Pakatan Rakyat sememangnya akan melakukan pembersihan dalam pentadbiran dan ketika itu pembongkaran demi pembongkaran terhadap skandal yang mereka lakukan pasti terdedah”.* (para.5).

In the above phrases, the source only highlighted the positive aspect of the idea whilst the negative or side effects were downplayed. Thereafter, based on this article, the political party – Pakatan Rakyat, only emphasised

the good that they will do for their constituency. Arguments or evidence that did not support the position taken were neglected whilst those that supported the position was selected.

Another characteristic of the technique of propaganda is the selection and use of falsehood, distractions and illogical statements in order to present the worst possible case for an idea, program, person or product. As an example, the article '*BN akan buat 'Arab Spring' jika tewas PRU13*', had used card stacking or selective omission in respect of a few persons mentioned – Tan Sri Musa Hassan (former Inspector General of Police), Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (former Prime Minister of Malaysia), and also the party – Barisan Nasional. The application of the card stacking technique of propaganda is stated in the phrases below.

*"Jika sesiapa yang lancarkan 'Arab Spring' itu sudah pasti dari pihak BN," kata Naib Presiden PAS Salahuddin Ayub." (para.5).*

*"Sebelum ini dilaporkan **Tan Sri Musa Hassan** berkata pihak yang kalah dalam pilihan raya akan datang mungkin akan melancarkan 'Arab Spring' "untuk menjatuhkan kerajaan." (para.9).*

*"Sebagai bekas ketua polis negara, beliau harus berhenti membuat spekulasi seperti ini," penganalisi politik." (para.10).*

*"Bekas perdana menteri **Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad** mendakwa terdapat konspirasi pembangkang cuba membuat yang sama seperti di Asia Barat sekiranya Pakatan Rakyat gagal menawan Putrajaya." (para.13)*

According to the article as evident from the phrases above, Tan Sri Musa Hassan allegedly made a speculation about 'Arab Spring', stating that the defeated political party in the next election will probably launch the 'Arab Spring' method to overthrow the Government. In this situation, the source used the straw argument – *Bernama*, to show that the selected person was being truthful about the worst possible case that would happen in the speculative riots. The phrases in this scenario are stated below.

*"Bernama turut melaporkan Musa menuduh terdapat anasir asing yang akan campur tangan dalam politik Negara, dengan mengatakan Pakatan Rakyat cuba mempromosi fahaman liberalisme Barat yang bertentangan dengan Islam yang merupakan agama Persekutuan" (para.15)*

*“Dakwaan Musa timbul selepas beliau di lihat membuat kenyataan pro-pembangkang mengkritik salahlaku kerajaan dan timbul spekulasi beliau menyertai Pakatan Rakyat.” (para.16)*

## **5.0 Validity & Discussion**

### *5.1 Validity*

Since this study is a form of qualitative media content analysis, the researcher controls the reliability of the study. However, a discussion on the study’s validity is important to strengthen the integrity of this study. Since this study is qualitative in form, the thoroughness of validity is judged alternatively rather than quantitatively, as articulated by [35], in which the four criteria of qualitative validity were proposed, which are, credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

#### *5.1.1 Credibility*

According to [35], the credibility criterion refers to that of determining whether the results of qualitative research are believable from the perspective of the researcher. From the study’s perspective, the purpose of qualitative research is to identify and evaluate the types and techniques of propaganda from the researcher’s interpretations. As such, the researcher is the only one who can legitimately judge the credibility of the results.

In this study, the researcher judges the credibility of the study by cross referencing and reviewing vast amounts of past literatures and articles that can reinforce the study’s integrity. Additionally, the researcher also follows the existing guidelines of types and techniques of propaganda recognised by the Institute of Propaganda (IPA). The IPA’s initial objective was to educate the public on the amount of propaganda being used. Thereafter, the Institute’s greater concern then was the possible weakening of the people’s ability to analyse and think rationally about issues due to the increasing amount of propaganda [3]. In this sense, the guidelines set out by the IPA are deemed appropriate and credible for usage in so far as this study’s objectives of identifying the types and techniques of propaganda employed by Harakah to influence its readers.

Furthermore, in methodology, the researcher systematically follows the protocol for media content analysis set out by [30] in order to aptly determine

and analyse the findings of the study. To this end, the researcher judged that this study as credible for reasons that the aims, objectives and findings of the study connect each other, combined with the help of comparable past literature and article, and by employing the guidelines of propaganda types and techniques available.

### *5.1.2 Transferability*

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings [35]. The key is to conduct a thorough undertaking of describing the study context and the statements that were central to the study. In this study, the researcher explains the main ideas of the topic in Introduction, and conducts an in-depth analysis of the results of the study.

[34] also implied that the person who wishes to “transfer” the results to a different context judges the sensibility of the transfer, and therefore the researcher is deemed responsible for it. The researcher generalises the results obtained in different months, that being the three-month period from February 2013 until April 2013, from data collected from the National Section of Harakah. This study examines and evaluates each of the current political, social and economic issues gathered from the article’s content. Each of the article’s content used in this study is analysed to determine the types and techniques of propaganda through the same methodological approach. Based on the findings showed and discussed before, it is proven that the Harakah newspaper employed all three types of propaganda and all seven techniques of propaganda in disseminating information, hence, in this sense, the transferability of this study is therefore proven by the researcher.

However, the researcher has not transferred the results into a wider setting, such as to other news media other than the Harakah newspaper. This is due to the study’s limitation in terms of time constraints, which limits the researcher’s initiative and ability to further transfer the results into a much wider context.

### *5.1.3 Dependability*

Dependability of the study highlights the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which the study occurs [35]. The researcher is accountable for describing the changes that occur in the setting and how these changes affect the way the author approaches the study.

At the initial stage of the study, the researcher outlined only the basic idea for the topic of the study, involving the application of types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda in the media, especially in the newspaper context. The concept has been found to be too general, and therefore, during the process of conducting the study, the researcher refined the application of the agenda-setting theory, especially those on political agenda setting, so as to relate to the study's discussion. This relation of the political agenda setting with the discussion is carried out because most of the current issues set out in the National Section of Harakah within the months of February 2013 until April 2013, consisted mostly of politically bias.

Moreover, in this study, changes are minor and within the control of the researcher. For example, there are a few changes during data collection in terms of identifying and analysing the differences between Transfer and Testimonial techniques of propaganda within phrases in an article, because the Testimonial technique is closely associated with the Transfer technique in the sense of there being an attempt made to connect an agreeable person to another thing, in both techniques. Transfer can appear to be Testimonial, *vice versa*. This problem is however settled when the researcher refers to the relevant definitions and the existing guidelines recognised by the IPA for both techniques, and by cross referencing and reviewing past literatures and articles which consist of these techniques of propaganda.

The study collects the data by using preset codes – coding sheets, with descriptive examples. However, changes of the standard coding are made when the researcher made some adjustments to the coding sheets for the purposes of this study. The standard coding sheets are actually formatted based on the *Altheide Researcher Team Protocol for Studying News Reports about Fear* [30].

#### *5.1.4. Conformability*

In a qualitative research, each researcher is assumed to convey a unique perspective to the study. According to [36], consider that a key criterion for conformability is the extent to which the researcher admits his or her own predispositions. To this end, beliefs underpinning decisions made and methods adopted should be acknowledged within the research report, the reasons for favouring one approach when others could have been taken explained the weaknesses in the techniques actually employed.

In this study, the researcher documents the protocols for checking and rechecking the data throughout the study. Contradicting results or guidelines that are unclear or redundant are adjusted and refined in relevance to the study. As an example, one of the substances found in the original draft of the protocol for studying media content analysis is to describe the headlines of the articles. This substance is considered unnecessary because the researcher believes that this study is not conducted under a media-framing theory, thus the protocol is refined to avoid misleading results and context-related confusion during data analysis.

In addition, throughout the study the researcher practices a balanced and impartial outlook. Hence, in order to prevent potential for bias or distortion, judgments are made by the researcher by re-examining the protocols and procedures in data collection and analysis. Nevertheless, according to the researcher's interpretation, the level of complications in avoiding biasness is very low, because most of the articles analysed are written with a balanced and independent style and thus, has impacted the collection analysis of the results of this study.

#### *5.2 Discussion*

Based on the research objective, the coding sheets prepared for the collected data are to enable easier organising according to the types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda. As a way to identify the types and techniques of propaganda, the study follows the existing guidelines on the types of propaganda (white propaganda, black propaganda and grey propaganda) and techniques (name-calling, glittering generality, transfer, testimonial, plain

folks, card stacking and bandwagon), which have been recognised by the IPA. The basis of usage of these seven techniques as a guideline lies on the fact that they are considered simple and are well-known and commonly used in propaganda materials.

To achieve the purpose of this study, which is to identify the types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda employed in Harakah, specific articles on current political, social and economic issues are classified from the National Section of the Harakah newspaper. The content analysis of the data collection are formulated and organised within the three-month period from February 2013 until April 2013.

As indicated in *Findings*, from the total of 161 articles scrutinised, 79 articles were identified as containing white propaganda, 55 articles consisted of grey propaganda and seven articles consisted of black propaganda. The research findings directly showed that white propaganda is the most applied type of propaganda as compared to the other two types.

As mentioned by [2], propaganda is generally classified according to the source and nature of the message. There are three different types of propaganda which are generally used in the media, out of which the white propaganda is often used by the propagandist to influence their audiences. This is for the reason that this type of propaganda can basically be seen as the public's awareness of attempts being made to influence them, according to [10].

Based on the results, the study identified that most of the articles in the National Section of Harakah used the gentler method of persuasion to convince the audiences. Obviously, the ultimate terms and motivation of the political parties were to win the elections and form a government of their own. Directly, the gentler method of persuasion can be seen as one of the tactics deployed by the political parties to downplay the opponents and magnify their own strengths to garner public support. This can also be deemed as being part of the political agenda-setting. According to [37], agenda setting can be seen as the conceptual framework used to identify how the media influence the public to perceive certain issues as important, especially when the media deals with political issues.

According to [22], the audiences receive most of the information about politics from the media. Where events of the general election are concerned, the

voters would tend to evaluate the relevance of the issues by how the information is covered. In this sense, it can be speculated that, political parties are armed with their own agenda; in some instance, some even have a few agendas, which are independent from one another, more or less. Various governmental branches make up politics. Each has their proper dynamic, logic, competences, interest and procedures which affect their susceptibility for media coverage.

Additionally, [10] also stated that white propaganda is generally used by political parties for the purpose of persuading people for reasons that the source is essentially known and its aim and intentions, are more or less identified. This is because this type of propaganda generally would identify the source, which is widely open to the audience to verify, as compared to the other types of propaganda. According to [2], grey propaganda can be classified as one without an identifiable source or author, where the audience is made to believe facts or falsehood by using strong arguments, which are the misrepresentation of an opponent's person. Meanwhile, for black propaganda, there is generally an underlying covert agenda, in which the sources are hidden and not easy to reveal [2]. The latter two characteristics may be some of the possible reasons why the Harakah newspaper placed less reliance on grey propaganda and black propaganda.

Based on the study findings, most of the articles in the National Section of Harakah emphasised their identified sources and the truthfulness of their origins. In terms of journalism practice, the news articles in the media would seem to be more accurate and credible when the author includes the identified sources, even though the sources do not show the truthfulness of the evidence to prove them [10]. This is one the elements of white propaganda which was used in Harakah, where accurate information was included, although it could be slanted, omitted and distorted.

In terms of the techniques of propaganda, based on the results of the research findings, the study finds that, from the total of 161 articles in the National Section of Harakah, 107 articles are examined and identified as card stacking, which can be categorised as the most prominent technique of propaganda employed within the three-month period of the study. It is opined that the card stacking technique seems to be the most effective technique to be used when finger pointing is required, apart from the fact that it is basically

similar to the general semantic technique of slanting. When finger pointing, the end desired effect of presenting the negative and worst possible case of an opponent is achieved with the card stacking method as the effects are emphasised with every bit of negativity portrayed.

As earlier discussed, the IPA has recognised that the card stacking technique of propaganda involves the selection and use of facts or falsehoods, illustration or distractions and logical or illogical statements in order to portray the best or worst possible case for an idea, program, person or product [15].

Based on the results, the study identifies that Harakah prominently used this technique to highlight the negative and worst possible case as against their opponents. It is of the public's general acceptance and understanding that Harakah is one of the alternative media owned by political party – namely PAS. Based on the evidence in the study, Harakah obviously played up the political issues which are damaging to the ruling party's interest - the *Barisan Nasional* (BN). For example, each of the articles identified and examined which were categorised under the card stacking technique had basically selected specific issues, ideas, person or even the product from the opponents. The Harakah's aims of disseminating the ideas and information are identified, which are to influence and convinced the audience [38].

Within the three-month period of the study, the research finds that most of the issues played up in Harakah, especially in the National Section, contained selective omission towards their opponent – UMNO-BN, with negative assumptions and accusation, as a way to influence the audience during the election campaign. The study finds that Harakah – which is owned by PAS, emphasised and highlighted the party's positive aspects whilst its negative aspects or side effects were always downplayed. This could perhaps be seen as one of the more effective tactics used by the opposition party to gain votes for the elections. This argument can be characterised as the media's political agenda setting role in the election campaign. According to [39], the media's autonomous selection of issues and their discretion to exclude or include information of political actors or parties are the underlying factors that form the agenda setting power of journalism in election times. However, in this sense, the argument, evidence or even information given of the issues can be true or false [3].

Based on the research findings, the study finds that the least prominent techniques of propaganda employed are the testimonial technique. From the total of 161 articles, only five articles are categorised as falling under this technique of propaganda. According to [15], the testimonial technique can be seen when something consists of having some respected or hated person say that a given idea or program or product or even a person, is good or bad. The study finds that this type is least applied in the National Section of the Harakah because most of the articles in this section generally placed more emphasis on the issues at hand rather than on the testimonial aspect. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the testimonial technique can be seen to work best in advertisements where there is visual impact involved, for example in television advertisements, where the audience could relate to the visual images shown, or in magazines, where pictorial messages help the audience to relate better to the message being sent, for example, a model's 'before' and 'after' pictures in a diet supplement advertisement.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

Harakah is one of the alternative media in Malaysia owned by the opposition party, Pan-Islamic Malaysia Party (PAS). As discussed before, the main aim of this study is to prove that PAS uses the Harakah newspaper as one of its medium in delivering and disseminating information of interests to people and as a means of spreading its propaganda to the general public. Propaganda is spread when such information, targeted to reach the general public, has been manipulated so as to influence and shape their ways of thinking and behaviour. The media, newspapers especially, has the ability to influence and form the public opinion towards certain issues.

The study successfully conducts a qualitative media content analysis of the collected data and the results of such analysis in Findings has answered the research questions, which are to identify the types of propaganda and techniques of propaganda employed in Harakah. For this purpose, the study followed the existing guidelines on the propaganda types (white propaganda, black propaganda and grey propaganda) and techniques (name-calling, glittering generality, transfer, testimonial, plain folks, card stacking and

bandwagon), which have been recognised by the Institute of Propaganda Analysis.

The study analysed the contents of the National Section of Harakah, identified and examined the types and techniques of propaganda used in Harakah. The study findings showed that the Harakah newspaper employed all three types of propaganda and all seven techniques of propaganda in disseminating information, especially when political issues are concerned. From the total of 161 articles examined, in terms of propaganda types; 79 articles are identified and categorised as white propaganda, whilst 57 articles are categorised as grey propaganda. Meanwhile, for the techniques of propaganda, 107 articles are identified and categorised as card stacking, 13 articles as name-calling, 11 articles as transfer, eight articles as glittering generality and bandwagon, followed by six articles as plain folks and lastly, five articles are categorised as testimonial.

Based on the overall data analysis and findings, the study identifies that most of the articles covering the current political, social and economic issues in the National Section of Harakah had utilised the types and techniques of propaganda identified, within the three-month period of study. This could lead to increased negative perception of the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) government amongst the general public.

The study findings could provide valuable insights on policy makers or the Government, society and also be beneficial for future researchers. As for the Government, the study findings could be used as reference to better understand how their opponents play up issues. The findings could perhaps also act as counter-information, to determine which one of the issues are actual truths and which ones is mere manipulation by way of propaganda. This is important because the dissemination of information can influence the public's way of thinking; hence shape their opinions towards certain issues, those concerning the ruling government in this context. Moreover, it would also assist society to view matters more objectively so as to better understand the political scenario, especially in the Malaysian context. Without such an understanding, the Malaysian public may not be able to reach the level of political maturity in their thinking, where there would at least be some sense of balance, in the form of having the ability to make rational, informed and

better judgments on information being fed by the media. With this, it is hoped that the Malaysian public will not be easily swayed by the hidden agenda of propagandistic pieces in politically-biased media.

### **Acknowledgement**

My utmost appreciation goes to my main supervisor, Dato' Dr. Mohd. Yusof Ahmad, who offered valuable advice and insights throughout the course of this study. Not forgetting also my lecturers, Associate Professor Dr. Anitawati Mohd Lokman for her never ending support and guidance. These amazing persons were ever ready to guide me with their stimulating intellects and have definitely contributed much towards my dedication to complete this study. Once again, I express my sincere thank you to them for the time, ideas and the many reference materials. I take this opportunity also to thank my friends and classmates, especially to Noratikah Mohd Ashari, Ahmad Azran Awang, Saiful Azhar Shaharun and Nur Hilyati Hamdi for always being there to lend a helping hand throughout the research process. Above all, thank you for everything.

### **References**

- [1] C. George, *Contentious journalism and the internet: towards democratic discourse in Malaysia and Singapore*. Singapore University Press, NUS Publishing. Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore, 2006.
- [2] D. R. Wilcox, *Propaganda, the press and conflict: The Gulf War and Kosovo*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York (UMI No: 0-415-36043-9), 2005.
- [3] W. J. Severin and J. W. Tankard, *Communication Theories*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 2010.
- [4] A. Hoyt. (2012). *How propaganda works*. [Online]. Available: <http://people.howstuffworks.com/propaganda2.htm>. Retrieved April 18, 2013
- [5] C. Sparks, "Extending and Refining the Propaganda Model," in *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, vol. 4(2). University of Westminster, London, 2007, pp68-84.
- [6] F. R. Baumgartner, "Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics

- and in Political Science,” in *Journalism and Communication*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2000.
- [7] S. Walgrave and P. V. Aelst, “The contingency of the mass media’s political agenda setting power: toward a preliminary theory,” *Journalism of Communication*. Department of Political Science, Media, Movements and Politics (www.m2p.be). University of Antwerp, Belgium, International Communication Association, University of Antwerp, Belgium, 2006.
- [8] S. Satwant and P. Senyyah. “Harakah Editor, Printer Charged.” *News Straits Times* (January 14, 2000) Malaysia.
- [9] S. M. Amin. (2012). “Pas youth: ‘Harakah Has Failed Us.” *Malaysian Digest*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.malaysiandigest.com/news/36-local2/168411-pas-youth-harakah-has-failed-us.html>. Retrieved Jun 30, 2013.
- [10] J. Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men’s Attitudes*, p. 16. Trans. Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner. Vintage Books, New York. ISBN 978-0-394-71874-3, 1973.
- [11] L. Doob, “Goebbels’ Principles of Nazi Propaganda,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 3, vol. 14(3), pp. 419–442. JSTOR 2745999, 1950.
- [12] G. S. Jowett, J. Garth and O. Victoria, *Types of propaganda*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, United States of America, 2006.
- [13] C. Boaz. (2011). *Fourteen propaganda techniques Fox “News” uses to brainwash American*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/1964:fourteen-propaganda-techniques-fox-news-uses-to-brainwash-americans>. Retrieved March 19, 2013.
- [14] M. Kelly, *The making of a first family: A blueprint*. New York Times, November 15, p. A1, 1992.
- [15] A. M. Lee and E. B. Lee, *The fine art of propaganda: A study of father Coughlin’s speeches*. New York: Hardcourt, Brace and Company, 1939.
- [16] S. Steinberg, *Introduction to communication course book 1: The basics*. South Africa: Juta & Co. Ltd, 1994.
- [17] A. N. Eagleman, “Investigating agenda-setting and framing in sport magazines: An analysis of the coverage of major league baseball players from 2000 through 2007,” Ph.D. dissertation. (UMI No: 3319879), 2008.

- [18] M. D. Matsaganis and J. G. Payne, "Agenda setting in a culture of fear: The lasting effects of September 11 on American politics and Journalism," *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 49(3), pp. 379-392. DOI: 10.1177/0002764205282049, 2005.
- [19] J. W. Dearing and E. M. Rogers, "Communication concepts 6: Agenda-setting," *Journalism Studies*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996.
- [20] R. Cobb and T. Elde, "The politics of agenda-building: An alternative perspective for modern democratic theory," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 33, pp. 892-915, 1983.
- [21] M. E. McCombs, "The evolution of agenda-setting research: Twenty-five years in the marketplace of ideas," *Journal of Communication*, vol. 43(2), pp. 58-67, 1993.
- [22] T. L. Temoney, "Agenda-setting and the media: A look at child welfare legislation in Virginia, 1995-2005," Ph.D dissertation. (UMI No: 3349298), 2008.
- [23] M. E. McCombs and D. Shaw, "The agenda-setting function of the mass media," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 69, pp. 813-824, 1972.
- [24] H.F. Hsieh and S. E. Shannon, "Three approaches to qualitative content analysis," *Qualitative Health Research*, vol. 15(9), pp. 1277-1288, November, 2005.
- [25] K. Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002.
- [26] D. Riffe and A. Freitag, "A. A content analysis of content analyses: twenty-five years of Journalism Quarterly," *Journalism and Mass communication Quarterly*, vol. 74, pp. 873-882, 1997.
- [27] L. Yale and M. Gilly, "Trends in advertising research: a look at the content of marketing-orientated journals from 1976 to 1985," *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 17(1), pp. 12-22, 1988.
- [28] H. Lasswell, *Propaganda techniques in the world war*. New York: Knopf, 1927.
- [29] J. Macnamara, "Media content analysis: Its uses; benefits and best practice methodology," *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*, vol. 6(1), pp. 1-34. University of Technology Sydney, Australia, 2005.
- [30] D. L. Altheide and C. J. Schneider, *Qualitative Media Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2013.
- [31] N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, *Handbook of qualitative research*. Eds.

- Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1994.
- [32] P. Alkinson, *Understand ethnographic texts*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992.
- [33] B. Glaser and A. Strauss, *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldane, 1967.
- [34] H. Schwartz and J. Jacobs, *Qualitative sociology*. New York, NY: Free Press, 1979.
- [35] E. G. Guba and Y. S. Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research," in *Handbook of qualitative research*, N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1994, pp. 105-117.
- [36] M.B. Miles and M.A. Huberman, *Qualitative Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.
- [37] K. Kiouisis, R. Dalton, P. Beck, R. Huckfeldt, and W. Koetzle, "A test of the media-centred agenda-setting: Newspaper content and public interests in a presidential election," *Political Communication*, vol. 15, pp. 463-481, 1998.
- [38] C. George, *Contentious journalism and the internet: towards democratic discourse in Malaysia and Singapore*. Singapore University Press, NUS Publishing. Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore, 2006.
- [39] B. A. Butler, "Information subsidies, journalism routines and the Australian media. Market liberalization versus marketplace of ideas," *Prometheus*, vol. 16(1), pp. 27-45, 1998.

