

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**MASS MEDIA AND NATURAL
DISASTER:
FLOOD IN MALAYSIA**

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In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.

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ABSTRACT

Mass media serve as a source of information for the public and could influence people's attitudes, health, and, most importantly, way of thinking. It covers a wide range of topics including the current news in Malaysia, flood disaster. Flood disaster is a normal occurrence in a few states of Malaysia that results from natural phenomena. However, December 2021 marked the start of sudden floods in certain areas such as Selangor which is not prone to such disaster. It is believed that there are a lot of factors for the occurrence. Furthermore, the climate change crisis is also on the rising today as a lot of climate scientists start to take direct action to increase people's awareness of the apparent impact. Therefore, this research was conducted to explore the mass media's discussion and perception on floods in Malaysia and indirectly look into the discussion of climate change. This research used qualitative content analysis to achieve the objectives. The news articles by Malaysiakini with 'banjir' as the keyword within the period of 16th December 2021 until 22nd April 2022 were analysed to come up with the categories of topics discussed by the media. The result established that the media report factual information about the current situations with topics ranging from the occurrences of flood to politics. Climate change is also reported along in terms of the awareness, actions, occurrence of climate change, causes of climate change and its relationship with a flood.

Keywords: *Mass media, floods, content analysis, climate change, perception.*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Mass media is an essential source of news and information. According to the Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM, 2015) in the Integrated Flood Management Tool Series on the role of the media in flood management, mass media can be defined as a channel through which individuals send and receive information, where the term 'mass' refers to the size of the audience. Hence, "mass media" refers to modes of communication that are intended to reach a large number of people. This implies that mass media has become a lifeline for many people regarding current issues. However, mass media coverage does more than just provide information; it can also influence people's attitudes, health, and, most importantly, way of thinking (Gorvett, 2020). With the rapid development of technology, mass media is accessible to all individuals and comes in various forms to suit people's personal interests, such as magazines, newspapers, the internet, television, news, radio, and, of course, social media sites, and serves a purpose accordingly to the desire of the consumers.

Information or news disseminated by the media covers a wide range of topics, including political concerns, social issues, entertainment, and natural disasters such as wildfires, hurricanes, and the most recent and devastating event to affect Malaysia, the flood. As stated in the Government of Malaysia Official Portal (2021), floods are one of the most common natural disasters in Malaysia that occur almost every year, particularly on Peninsular Malaysia's coasts, which are more vulnerable to flooding that often runs from October to March.