

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**MALAYSIAN MEDIA COVERAGE ON
CLIMATE CHANGE: A QUALITATIVE
ANALYSIS OF MALAYSIAN ONLINE
NEWS BETWEEN 2016 AND 2020**

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Project submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

**Bachelor in Environmental Health and Safety
(Hons.)**

Faculty of Health Sciences

January 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

Assalamualaikum and alhamdulillah, all praise to Allah S.W.T The Supreme Lord of the Universe. Peace and blessing to Nabi Muhammad S.A.W., all prophets and their families. I praise Allah S.W.T. for the strength and His blessings in completing my study.

Thousands of thanks and love to my father, Mr. Norhanafee Bin Md Nor for his unconditional support and to my dearest grandmother, for her encouragement through the thick and thin of my study. My heartfelt sincerity to all the stray cats that I have encountered throughout my study journey, for providing their unconditional support, constructive criticisms and love during this difficult phase. My deepest gratitude and appreciation to my dearest supervisor, Dr. Alia Bt Azmi who spent her time and efforts in guiding and advising from the beginning till the end of my research journey. Not to forget, I would like to thank all the lecturers in the Department of Environmental Health and Safety, Faculty of Health Sciences who always share their thoughts, knowledge and advice throughout my study in UiTM Puncak Alam. Only God can reward all of you with abundance of goodness.

My sincere thanks and appreciation go to all of my friends from HS243 who always give me support and motivation while completing my study. May our friendship last forever. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who was involved directly and indirectly in this study. Thank you.

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ABSTRACT

Climate change is a change in weather patterns caused primarily by greenhouse gas emissions. The topic of climate change and its effects has been discussed frequently in a variety of media because it is a global issue that has been debated for decades but is frequently given a back seat. The public's perception of and behaviour related to climate change is significantly influenced by the news media. However, only a few studies were conducted on media portrayal of climate change in Malaysia. Thus, a content analysis was conducted to investigate the media's perception of climate change in Malaysia over five years, analysing the difference in climate change coverage in various online newspaper sources and identifying the focus of media coverage on climate change in Malaysia. The data for this study involves news articles published from January 2016 to December 2020 using online newspaper archives. In addition to the high proportion of environment-related articles across all the news sources, the findings show that climate change coverage has increased gradually over the past five years. However, the results also focused on climate change coverage in Malaysia and its differences between the newspaper outlets. Therefore, this study can help to improve media representations of climate change and can heighten the relationships between and within the fields of science, policy, media, and civil society to mitigate the impact of climate change in Malaysia.

Keywords: Climate change, content analysis, greenhouse gas emissions, framing, Malaysian media, newspaper.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Climate change is a global issue that has been discussed for decades but has only been actively debated in recent years. However, as the consequences of decades of inaction are about to be felt, the attention given to climate change politics has grown over time. Climate change here can be described as a change in weather patterns caused primarily by greenhouse gas emissions (Yue and Gao, 2018). Another study by United Nations (n.d.) stated that climate change is a long-term change in temperature and weather patterns and these shifts could be due to natural causes, such as variations in the solar cycle.

Consequently, climate change has many implications. Climate change can wreak havoc on the environment, endangering life in the water, land, and air by destroying nature and altering city climates (Celik, 2020). This research also is supported by (Balarabe, 2020) and (Bathiany et al 2018) in their studies. Climate change also has far-reaching societal implications, such as shrinking habitable spaces, economic stress, and health threats (Dryzek and Norgaard, 2011). These impacts are more evident in the less industrialized countries in Africa and Asia as indicated in the research by (Althor et al., 2016 and Bathiany et al., 2018).

The topic of climate change and its consequences often has been circulated in a variety of media. According to the research by Bolsen and Shapiro (2018), the news media is a primary source of information for most people about climate change. Media frames convey information shaping how people understand climate change and the actions they are willing to support to address the issue (Bolsen and Shapiro 2018).