

— CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS —

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GLOBAL ISSUES, TRENDS AND DIRECTIONS ACROSS DISCIPLINES

ICGD 2023

Theme: New normal opportunities
and challenges in 2023

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ON GLOBAL ISSUES, TRENDS
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and challenges in 2023

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On behalf of the international conference on global issues, trends, and directions across disciplines, I welcome you to the 2023 ICGD.

This year, the theme of 2023 ICDG is '*New Normal Opportunities & Challenges in 2023*'. The conference is co-hosted by Hoa Sen University in Vietnam and UNIMAS in Malaysia.

As an international academic platform, ICGD 2023 presents a unique opportunity for professionals, academicians, researchers, students, and enthusiasts to share ideas and understanding in a global setting.

This is the fifth year that we are holding one of our major annual events. The ICGD 2023 has made great progress in the last few years. The quality of papers this year is outstanding.

The conference attracts a number of presenters and participants, domestic and global, which focuses the latest advances in economics, finance, education, and social science theory and practice. It aims to facilitate research collaborations and to encourage the exchange of ideas among different disciplines.

I look forward to meeting you all and working with you over the next few days.

**President, Hoa Sen University
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vo Thi Ngoc Thuy**

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MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTERS' TAGLINES AND RACIAL HARMONY MESSAGES

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Abstract

The study examined the themes associated with the taglines of two Malaysian prime ministers in online newspaper articles. The taglines of Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob and Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim are "Malaysian Family" and "Malaysia Madani" respectively. The descriptive study involved the analysis of six articles published between August 2021 and March 2023 in three online newspapers with a large readership, namely, The Star, Berita Harian, and Malay Mail (two articles each). The results of the inductive thematic analysis showed that diversity and inclusion, and intercultural understanding and social cohesion were common themes highlighted by the three newspapers for both prime ministers. However, achievements tended to be reported in articles on the "Malaysian Family" while ethics, governance and accountability, and social justice and equity were associated with "Malaysia Madani". The six articles all emphasised the activities organised to inculcate the spirit of the "Malaysian Family" when reporting on Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob's tagline. The meaning of Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim's tagline, "Malaysia Madani", was explained in all the articles analysed, but Malay Mail did not emphasise the intercultural understanding in the two articles analysed. The study showed that, whichever the tagline, a common thread is the intercultural cohesion of the multi-ethnic Malaysian population.

Keywords: *tagline, racial harmony, Malaysian Family, Malaysia Madani*

1. INTRODUCTION

Political taglines have been widely used by Malaysian prime ministers as a tool to convey their ideologies, visions, and aspirations to the public. According to Koc and Ilgun (2010), a tagline is a brief, memorable, and striking phrase that encapsulates a recurring statement, notion, or goal, and is critical for defining an agenda for any leadership. Political taglines help to create a unique identity for a political leader. In Malaysia, political taglines have been used to

differentiate one prime minister from another. From Tunku Abdul Rahman's "Happy Malaysia" to Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim's "Malaysia Madani", political taglines have been effectively used as legacy markers by prime ministers in Malaysia (Santhiram, 2021).

Political taglines serve as a double-edged sword used to disseminate political ideals and impose authority over their adherents (Ridaoui, 2019). Positive taglines are important because they can reinforce or stimulate positive attitudes (Sharkansky, 2002), and help to recruit supporters to encourage coalition formation and opponent persuasion. A well-crafted political tagline can capture the attention of the public and help to gain their support. Anywanu and Ikenna (2022) reported that Nigerian political leaders create taglines that address spiritual balance, social regeneration, economic stability, and political resurgence. Ridaoui (2019) has shown that political taglines endorsed by American leaders are often imbued with ideological purposes aimed at promoting the ideas and thoughts of those in power.

Political leaders use taglines to instill their thoughts and ideas in the minds of the public to promote their beliefs, and also to increase political engagement and encourage more positive political attitudes and behaviors. As noted by Denton (1980), the tagline is a reflection of the prime minister's vision, mission, and future ambitions, and builds expectations in the minds of the audience. This was evident in the case of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's tagline, "Malaysia Boleh" (meaning Malaysia can do it), which was widely used during his tenure and helped to boost his popularity among Malaysians. Different prime ministers have different taglines to reflect the goals and objectives they have for the nation during their tenure. For example, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's tagline "Malaysia Boleh" was used to inspire Malaysians to strive for excellence, while Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak's tagline "1Malaysia" was used to promote national unity and harmony. According to Mohd Sani (2009), the taglines of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak depict Malay values based on Islam. Despite the anchoring in Malay values and Islam, Malaysia's diversity of multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-cultural groups necessitates the consistent emphasis on unity and harmony in the taglines of its prime ministers to promote national integration and cohesion.

The taglines of political leaders are announced to the public through various media, including newspapers. Reah (2002) notes that newspapers are effective in influencing public opinion, which makes them an ideal platform for promoting racial harmony messages. Repetition of taglines in the mass media can have broader implications for political communication and

public discourse by creating a shared sense of identity and purpose while promoting diversity and inclusivity. It is important to examine the investigate how newspapers frame taglines to foster harmonious and inclusive societies. By exploring the themes in the Malaysian prime minister exploring the harmony and racial messages, this study will contribute to our understanding of how political messaging can be used to promote harmony and unity in society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tagline notions have had a big influence on society (Mohd Sani et al., 2009) because a tagline with a meaningful meaning appears to be simpler for people to relate to and remember. In Malaysia, the researchers revealed that most of the Prime Minister's taglines were pro-Malay and Islam. For example, Mohd Sani et al. (2009) examined the debates between scholars in explaining the ideas and philosophies behind the three concepts introduced by three Malaysian prime ministers. Tun Mahathir Mohamad introduced Asian values through the concept of "Look East" which demonstrates global democratisation, a booming economy, and political stability. The main elements of the "Look East" policy were strong authority, prioritising the community and strong family-based society, human rights, universalism, and cultural relativism. His successor, Tun Abdullah Badawi, introduced the "Islam Hadhari" (Civilisational Islam) during his rule. Tun Abdullah Badawi attempted to blend Islam with traditional Malay values, but to the non-Muslims, "Islam Hadhari" appeared to promote the Malay-Islam agenda and to maintain the UMNO's agenda of neo-feudalism to ensure power and to protect Malay rights. It looks as if Tun Abdullah Badawi's agenda was to protect the Malays and Islam, but in fact seeks to achieve an integrated and balanced development that creates knowledgeable and pious people who hold fast to noble values, honesty, and trustworthiness, and were prepared to take on a global challenge. However, scholars criticise the "Islam Hadhari" concept. According to the critics, it was improper to use the word "Islam" as a label because the word could create misunderstandings among people. Mohd Sani et al. (2009) also said that the "Islam Hadhari" tagline was useless because people do not understand the contents of the concept, and it was not new because it follows Tun Mahathir Mohamad's agenda.

Next, findings on political taglines used in other countries are reviewed. "It's morning again in America" (1984) was a political tagline used by Ronald Reagan, and it was significant for the Republican Party in the United States of America (USA). The "morning" stands for the new beginning of perspectives that will set in motion development and the progress of the United

States. The tagline was patterned to promise a continuation of progressive prosperity to the Americans after Ronald Reagan's first term as president. A more recent president of the USA, Barack Obama had "Yes We Can" as his tagline when he became the president of USA in 2008. The tagline demonstrates his leadership call of saving the United States from a downfall. The term "Yes" expressed the affirmation and acceptance of experiencing the bad heritage of the past and the word "We Can" was to overcome the critical crisis in the present and future. Barack Obama's tagline was also significant in showing the ability of the Democrats to take over the presidency from the Republicans. After Barack Obama came Donald Trump in 2016. His tagline was "Make America great again" by Donald Trump, who made reference to glorious America in the past under the rule of the Republican presidents, and to restore the damages of the nation by the previous government, particularly Barack Obama. Donald Trump used "Make America great again" to suggest the revival of America's prosperity and to push forward America to regain its leadership of the world. In Canada, Clifford Sifton used the "The Last Best West" tagline in 1896 to instil pride by sending the message that there was no best west better than Canada. Therefore, the review of literature on taglines used in the USA and Canada studies shows that taglines contain structures and hidden ideologies that were related to sociocultural dimensions.

Closer to home, a review of studies on political taglines in the southern hemisphere showed a different focus in the presidential campaigns. Research conducted in Nigeria demonstrated the ability of an efficient political slogan to further the policies and leadership of the government. During the general election in 1985, the Northern People's Congress used the slogan "Salama", which stood for freedom, while the Northern Elements Progressive Union used the slogan "Sabawa", which called for peace and continuity. Anyanwu and Ikenna (2022) reported that Nigerians favoured "Sabawa", the Northern Elements Progressive Union used the slogan because they desire to be free of colonialism and local persecution in 1985. In 1989, Nigerians were also fed a slogan, "One nation, one destiny", headed by Alhaji Shehu Shagani, which emphasised the variety of Nigeria, but the administration primarily stressed federal government chances. In 1993, the Social Democratic Party coined the political slogan "Hope'93", which was well received by Nigerians since it highlighted the people's economic well-being. As a result, the taglines were considered a viable weapon for political parties to mobilise forces to accomplish a defined and desired political change.

In India, political taglines have been used to move the economy. Ashima et al. (2022) studied the view of people living in the villages of Chehru and Meheru towards Lal Bahadur Shastri's

tagline, “Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan” (1965) (long live soldiers, long live farmers). Lal Bahadur Shastri is the India Prime Minister in 1965. Using the “Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan” (1965) tagline, Lal Bahadur Shastri encouraged farmers to produce more food grains and lessen their dependency on imports, while simultaneously encouraging troops to protect the country. This tagline was successful in gaining public support since the majority of the rural population were in the military and agriculture. In 2020, the Bihar government used the catchphrase, “Jal, Jivan, Hariyali” (Water, Life, Greenery) to call for environmental awareness. Ashima et al. (2022) stated that “Jal, Jivan, Hariyali” was successful in eradicating environmental issues and elevating groundwater labelling to 20 feet and appears to have the approval of the people.

This literature review demonstrates how important political taglines may be in moving the citizens in the direction set by the leader. According to Sharkansky (2002), prime ministers usually promise more than they deliver and their rhetoric may be more appealing than the policies they represent. This is because taglines have a significant influence on perception as well as the creation of a strong organisation (Cheema et al., 2016). When it comes to political taglines, the politicians do not only carefully design the taglines from a point of view but also contemplate what future scenarios to promise. Overall, political taglines are an appropriate instrument for government communication, and are unique to political leaders.

3. BACKGROUND ON MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTERS

In this section, background information is provided on the taglines of the two most recent prime ministers in Malaysia, namely, Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob and Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The ninth Prime Minister, Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob (2021-2022) introduced the “Malaysian Family” notion during his leadership. The “Malaysian Family” notion emphasised that Malaysians are all a part of a family despite their diversity in religion and ethnicity, and all of the different groups complement and need one another (Singh, 2021). The core values in “Malaysian Family” consist of prosperity, strengthening national unity, and integration. Moreover, the Malaysian Family’s vision is to revive the country and achieve the status of a developed and high-income country (Bernama, 2021). The “Malaysian Family” notion seeks to get Malaysians to accept similarities and differences, foster a Malaysian culture, and ensure a harmonious atmosphere. The idea of the family taps into the practice of family members to help those in need. The “Malaysian Family” notion shows the government’s commitment to unity and solidarity which are crucial for the stability of Malaysia.

The tenth Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim introduced the "Malaysia Madani" concept during his reign beginning in 2022. The goal, according to Nik Anis et al. (2023), was to boost the economy while also ensuring that the essential concepts of ethics and morals were embraced and spread by all religions. This notion would shield individuals from racism and would put a stop to any attempt to divide people via political identification. Moreover, the economy was restructured to eliminate waste and surplus riches, stop leakages and corruption, and achieve equal wealth distribution (The Star, 2023). This idea was also defined as a humane concept that rejected controversies, issues, or conflicts over race and religion as well as those involving the residents of Borneo Block. The term "Madani", which stands for six basic values, includes "keMampanan" (sustainability), "Kesejahteraan" (prosperity), "Daya Cipta" (innovation), "Hormat" (respect), "Keyakinan" (trust), and "Ihsan" (Compassion).

4. METHOD OF STUDY

The descriptive study on political taglines served to reveal what the newspapers propagate the emphasis of two Malaysian prime ministers as indicated by their taglines. As Nassaji (2015) points out, descriptive research describes and explains a given situation without controlling variables. A descriptive research design focuses on the "what" of the study topic rather than the "why" of the research subject (Manjunatha, 2019).

The study involved the analysis of six articles from three online newspapers, namely, *The Star*, *Berita Harian*, and *Malay Mail* (two articles each). Chai et al. (2010) found that analyzing a small sample size of six articles revealed consistent themes of leadership, vision, and change in prime ministers' taglines in political taglines, indicating that even a limited data can provide meaningful insights with political messaging, including hidden patterns and correlations. However, we acknowledge that the small number of news articles and the focus on the taglines of only two prime ministers can limit the generalisability of the findings. The articles were collected between August 2021 and March 2023, which coincides with the period when Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub (21 August 2021-18 November 2022) and Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim (22 November 2022-present) were the Prime Ministers of Malaysia. The six articles were:

- ✓ PM Sabri calls on nation on face-to-face challenges as Keluarga Malaysia. 4 June 2022. *Malay Mail*. <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2022/06/04/pm-ismail-sabri-calls-on-nation-to-face-challenges-as-keluarga-malaysia/10617>
- ✓ PM Anwar: Malaysia Madani blueprint spells new chapter for nation where success is shared equally. *Malay Mail*. <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2023/01/19/pm-anwar-malaysia-madani-blueprint-spells-new-chapter-for-nation-where-success-is-shared-equally/51066>

- ✓ Keluarga Malaysia must remain united to protect national harmony, says PM. 8 August 2022. *The Star*. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2022/08/31/keluarga-malaysia-must-remain-united-to-protect-national-harmony-says-pm>
- ✓ Thaipusam excitement a reflection of Malaysia Madani, says Ahmad Zaidi. 5 February 2023. *The Star*. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2023/02/05/thaipusam-excitement-a-reflection-of-malaysia-madani-says-ahmad-zahid>
- ✓ Konsep Keluarga Malaysia aspirasi penyatuan semua rakyat. *Berita Harian*. 17 November 2023. <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2022/11/1027115/konsep-keluarga-malaysia-aspirasi-penyatuan-semua-rakyat>
- ✓ Malaysia Madani, lonjak kesejahteraan rakyat dengan suntikan rohani. 19 January 2023. *Berita Harian*. <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2023/01/1053816/malaysia-madani-lonjak-kesejahteraan-rakyat-dengan-suntikan-rohani>

These three newspapers were chosen because of their large readership. *The Star* is the most popular media portal in Malaysia and leading as the English daily newspaper (Hassan et al., 2021). *Berita Harian* is the Malay daily newspaper that Malaysians most often choose due to its comprehensive information and user-friendly and appealing online website (Omar & Hashim, 2014) while *Malay Mail* performed the best among other English news sites in 2020 (Chin, 2020).

To collect the data for the study, the search terms “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” were put into the web portals of the three newspapers. The newspaper articles were selected if the newspaper item were on the tagline. The articles were downloaded, printed, and analysed.

This study employed inductive thematic analysis to identify themes present in the Prime Minister’s tagline as portrayed in newspapers. Based on Braun, Clarke, and Hayfield (2015), the thematic analysis involves moving from the particular to the general information when making empirical observations about some phenomena of forming concepts. Inductive theme analysis provides the researcher with a non-theoretical framework analytic tool for making sense of facts. According to Braun and Clarke (2012), inductive thematic analysis is a “bottom-up” approach and is driven by what is in the data. The themes are derived from the actual content of the data, and the relationship between the themes and sub-themes was mapped during the analysis. The news articles were read and the words showing different topics were circled. For example, harmony and moderation were related, and later grouped under social justice. Another example is race and ethnicity which were grouped under diversity and inclusion. For this, later religion was added as an additional sub-theme because in Malaysia, race and religious matters are often conflated. Inductive theme analysis is a flexible technique because it is experiential in its orientation and essentialist in its theoretical framework,

presuming a knowable universe and “giving voice” to data-reported experiences and meaning. After the thematic analysis was completed, frequency counts were made. By taking the top ranking, the patterns of word usage show how words are repeatedly used to frame themes with a particular orientation. By comparing and contrasting themes, the researchers were able to identify relationships between themes, and look for patterns that emerge across different sources of data.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Malay Mail articles on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani”

Table 1 shows the themes and sub-themes in *Malay Mail* related to the “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” taglines. In the *Malay Mail* article, the activities theme was the most frequent (6 times) for “Malaysian Family” but it did not appear at all for “Malaysia Madani”. “Activities” here refer to reporting of activities organised by agencies, government, and the theme of the event. This is because various government agencies had organised various programmes such as Malaysian Family Aspirations under the 12th Malaysia Plan to promote greater well-being and prosperity for all in terms of society and economy. The events carried themes related to the Malaysian Family tagline, namely, “Keluarga Malaysia Keluarga Berilmu” (Malaysian family, knowledge family).

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” in *Malay Mail* articles

Theme	Subtheme	Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub (N=14)		Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim (N=12)	
		Frequency	Total	Frequency	Total
Activities	Organised by agency	4	6	0	0
	Organised by the government	1		0	
	Theme	1		0	
Tagline	Goal	1	2	2	4
	Meaning	1		1	
	Components	0		1	
	Race	1	3	1	2

Diversity and inclusion	Ethnicity	1		0	
	Religion	1		1	
Intercultural understanding and social cohesion	Unity	1	3	0	0
	Togetherness	1		0	
	Inclusion	1		0	
Ethics, governance and accountability	Honest	0	0	1	3
	Ethic	0		0	
	Integrity	0		1	
	Good governance	0		1	
Social justice and equity	Fair	0	0	1	3
	Care	0		2	
	Harmony	0		0	
	Respect	0		0	
	Well-being	0		0	
	Moderation	0		0	
Total		14		12	

Next, the *Malay Mail* article had less mention of Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub’s tagline (2 times) than Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s tagline (4 times). This is probably because the word “Madani” is new. The goal of Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim in using the “Malaysia Madani” tagline in the article dated, 19 January 2023, is to “foster a new way of thinking among Malaysians” to “have good values and prioritize good governance and ethics”. The values stressed were “...sustainability, well-being, creativity, respect, confidence and kindness” (19 January 2023, *Malay Mail*).

“Diversity and inclusion” theme was highlighted by both prime ministers (3 times for “Malaysian Family”; 2 times for “Malaysia Madani”). The emphasis on diversity and inclusion is reflected by the frequent use of words, “race”, “ethnicity” and “religion” to foster social connections, build trust, and promote a sense of belonging among Malaysians. Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub called for Malaysians to “put aside all differences and together mobilize their energy in facing challenges as a family” (8 August 2023, *Malay Mail*) so that Malaysians will be united in “achieving economic, prosperity and political stability”. The “intercultural

understanding and social cohesion” theme is closely connected to the “diversity and inclusion” theme as shown by “Malaysian Family” having three instances of this theme and none for “Malaysian Madani”. The sub-themes of unity, togetherness, and inclusion also seek to encourage Malaysians to be united.

From the analysis of *Malay Mail* articles on “Malaysia Madani”, it is clear that Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim has a different goal to achieve through his tagline. Table 1 shows three mentions of the ethics, governance and accountability theme, and another three mentions of the social justice and equity theme – but none for “Malaysian Family”. The ethnic governance and accountability sub-themes were honesty, integrity and good governance. This is because Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim pledged that his government will be a reliable government that operates in an equal manner and does not show discrimination based on race and religion. The social justice and equity theme sends a similar message. Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim mentioned that he would never ignore the people’s well-being, “I want to assure you, this unity government will never neglect you...” (19 January 2023, *Malay mail*). and “...so, everyone can have a fair chance” (19 January 2023, *Malay mail*).

5.2. The Star articles on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani”

Table 2. Themes and sub-themes on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” in *The Star* articles

Theme	Subtheme	Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub (N=8)		Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim (N=7)	
		Frequency	Total	Frequency	Total
Activities	Organised by agency	2	4	0	1
	Usual event	2		1	
Tagline	Meaning	0	1	1	2
	Goal	1		1	
Intercultural understanding and social cohesion	Unity	2	2	1	1

Social justice and equity	Fair	0	1	3	6
	Harmony	1		1	
	Respect	0		1	
	Moderation	0		1	
Total		8		10	

Table 2 shows the themes and subthemes on the taglines of Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub and Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim (“Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” respectively). In regards to the “Malaysian Family” tagline, the two *The Star* activities highlighted activities (4 instances) but only one mention of activities was found for “Malaysia Madani”. This is not surprising because the *Malay Mail* articles also had more coverage on activities, compared to the other themes. Dato’ Sri Ismail Yaakub actively organised the activities to spread his ideologies in the administration, likely, “Inspirasi Setahun Keluarga Malaysia Teguh Bersama” (Whole year inspiration, Malaysian Family is strong together) but the usual event that was covered was “National Day”. However, Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim used Thaipusam (activities theme) to highlight the need to preserve unity among the different ethnic groups (unity is explained later with the intercultural understanding and social cohesion theme).

Next, *The Star* articles gave more attention to explaining the meaning of “Malaysia Madani” (2 instances) compared to one time for “Malaysian Family”. This is because the meaning of the latter is self-explanatory. The meaning of “Malaysia Madani” is elusive in comparison. *The Star* quoted Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim explaining his tagline as follows, “... Malaysia Madani society which is open and has respect for one another” (5 February 2023, *The Star*) in order for Malaysia to have prosperity and well-being.

The next theme found was intercultural understanding and social cohesion, and *The Star* focussed only on the unity message: two times in articles on “Malaysian Family” and one time in articles on “Malaysia Madani”. The article in *The Star* dated 8 August 2022, quoted Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub as saying “we must remain united”. He encouraged Malaysians to celebrate differences and improve ties among other ethnicities: “... continue to strengthen multi-racial ties”. A similar call was made by Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim in *The Star* article dated 5 February 2023, “... Dato’ Anwar Ibrahim hoped that the people would continue to preserve unity ...”.

Finally, the social justice and equity theme is clearly associated with Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s “Malaysia Madani” (three instances compared to one instance on Harmony for “Malaysian Family”). Dato’ Anwar Ibrahim said that it is important to have social justice in order “...to protect national harmony...” (5 February 2023, *The Star*). However, Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim had a different emphasis, as reported in *The Star* articles. He highlighted respect and moderation, in the article titled “Thaipusam excitement a reflection of Malaysia, says Ahmad Zaidi” on celebration of Thaipusam among the Hindus in Malaysia: “celebrate the occasion in harmony and moderation” and “...the people would continue to preserve harmony and instil mutual respect ...” (5 February 2023, *The Star*) and “... celebrate the occasion in harmony and moderation” (5 February 2023, *The Star*).

5.3. Berita Harian articles on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani”

Table 3 shows the themes and sub-themes on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” in *Berita Harian* articles. It is clear that compared to *Malay Mail* and *The Star*, *Berita Harian* had themes but less elaboration into sub-themes. For example, the articles published by *Berita Harian* on the “Malaysian Family” mention activities organised by the administration of Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub three times. No activities were associated with “Malaysia Madani” in the *Berita Harian* articles.

Table 3. Themes and sub-themes on “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” in *Berita Harian* article

Theme	Subtheme	Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub (N=8)		Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim (N=6)	
		Frequency	Total	Frequency	Total
Intercultural understanding and social cohesion	Unity	3	4	0	4
	Harmony	1		0	
	Well-being	0		2	
	Dignity	0		1	
	Moderation	0		1	
Activities	Organised by agency	3	3	0	0
Tagline	Meaning	0	0	1	2

	Goal	0		1	
Achievement	Statement of success	1	1	0	0
Total		8		6	

Next, for the intercultural understanding and social cohesion theme (3), social justice and equity theme (1), and achievement theme (1). In the activities theme, the activities organised by the agency dominated the theme. This shows the government is very proactive in holding the programme to improve the ties among Malaysians. The activities listed in the article dated 17 November 2022, consisted of “Program Semarak Uniti Keluarga Malaysia” (Semarak Uniti Keluarga Malaysia Programme) and “Rumah Kami” (Our House).

In the intercultural understanding and social cohesion theme, the main message of “Malaysian Family” was unity (3 instances). No such themes were associated with “Malaysia Madani” in the *Berita Harian* articles.

Nevertheless, *Berita Harian* highlighted the social justice and equity message in the two articles on “Malaysia Madani”. In the article dated 19 January 2023, Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim was quoted as saying “... Malaysia Madani menggariskan bantuan untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan rakyat ...” (the Malaysia Madani outlined assistance to improve the well-being of the people) and “... niat kita adalah untuk mengangkat martabat negara ...” (our intention is to raise the dignity of the country).

Berita Harian celebrated the achievement of Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub’s tagline “Malaysian Family” by highlighting the fruits of the endeavour. Using the “Program Semarak Uniti Keluarga Malaysia”, *Berita Harian* showcased success stories, “... Program Semarak Uniti Keluarga Malaysia adalah manifestasi kejayaan Keluarga Malaysia ...”(19 January 2023, *Berita Harian*) (the Semarak Uniti Keluarga Malaysia Programme is a manifestation of the success of Malaysian Family).

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study showed that newspaper articles on the taglines of Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub and Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim (“Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” respectively) had the following themes: diversity and inclusion, intercultural understanding and social cohesion, ethics, governance and accountability, social justice and equity, and achievement.

The “Malaysian Family” tagline introduced by the ninth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakub, emphasises social stability, encouraging Malaysians of all races and religions to come together as a family to rebuild the nation. This can be seen in the frequent activities reported in the three newspapers (e.g., “Program Semarak Uniti Keluarga Malaysia” and “Inspirasi Setahun Keluarga Malaysia Teguh Bersama”). The other themes were intercultural understanding and social cohesion, diversity and inclusive, tagline meaning, social justice and equity, and achievement. The importance of promoting a culture of togetherness and responsibility within families has been highlighted by Lin (1994) as having positive effects on family harmony and well-being. Moreover, cultural events that celebrate diversity have been found to promote cross-cultural understanding and unity among different communities, as highlighted by Lahdesmaki (2012). This idea is further supported by Ridouani (2019), who stated that when people cooperate with each other, there is a greater likelihood that their country will achieve stability. As a result, the slogan “Malaysian Family” is not just a call to action for Malaysians to join as a family to rebuild the nation, but also a campaign to promote multicultural understanding, social cohesion, and inclusion. This strategy is consistent with the present emphasis on fostering social justice and fairness, as well as attaining national goals via collaboration and cooperation.

Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s “Malaysia Madani” tagline emphasises his goal of restoring Malaysia’s worldwide prestige through social development, with a focus on accountability and transparency in administration for all Malaysians, regardless of race. Social justice and equity theme are the critical themes that should be prioritised to create a harmonious environment that respects diversity and inclusion. According to Jaya and Munirah (2021), prioritising social justice and equity has been identified as key priorities for the government. By creating an equal and non-discriminatory environment, the government is sending a clear message that everyone is valued and respected, regardless of their background, race, ethnicity, and religion. This approach can lead to increased trust, cooperation, and cohesion among Malaysians which can in turn create a positive country and a stronger sense of social well-being (Khaliq, 2001) The other themes in articles on “Malaysia Madani” in the three newspapers were tagline meaning, ethics, governance and accountability, diversity and inclusion, activities, and intercultural understanding and social cohesion theme. As opposed to Dato’ Sri Ismail Sabri, who organised various events to bring the populace together, Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim chose to often stress the respect and openness of Malaysians while promoting the policies and ideals in his tagline.

Promoting unity and harmony is the goal for multiethnic Malaysia, and is seen in the taglines of the two prime ministers despite the administrations having different goals in their pursuit of national development. According to Grosfoguel (2013) promoting unity and harmony among different ethnic groups is essential for achieving long-term stability and development in a multi-ethnic society. This is because a lack of social cohesion and understanding between different ethnic groups can lead to tension and conflict, which can undermine the progress and prosperity of the country. In Malaysia, political messaging plays a crucial role in promoting harmony and unity in the multiethnic society. Despite different administrations having varying goals in their pursuit of national development, promoting unity and harmony is seen as a common goal. The taglines “Malaysian Family” and “Malaysia Madani” emphasise an inclusive society where every Malaysian is treated equally regardless of race or ethnicity, aligning with the goal of fostering social cohesion and understanding among different ethnic groups. Both prime ministers place a strong emphasis on celebrating the country’s diversity to achieve the goals set forth by its tagline. By encouraging Malaysians to look past their differences, whether they be religious, racial or ethnic, and work together to tackle challenges as a unified family, these taglines promote a sense of togetherness and inclusivity that are vital to fostering a harmonious and cohesive society. Hewstone et al. (2002) indicated that interaction between individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds can help mitigate prejudice and foster positive intergroup relations. Similarly, Kim et al. (2015) found that living in a multicultural society is crucial for cultivating understanding and tolerance of other cultures, thus facilitating social integration. Ultimately, by embracing diversity and promoting a shared sense of identity and purpose, Malaysia’s political tagline can help to create a more harmonious country for all its citizens. The Malaysian government’s initiatives to promote these values have been successful in increasing levels of trust and cooperation among different ethnic groups, contributing to a more stable and harmonious society (Taylor & Kent, 2006). Hence, political messages that promote unity and harmony, embrace diversity, and foster inclusivity can contribute to a more harmonious and cohesive society in Malaysia.

In this section, the implications of the findings are discussed. Political messaging aimed at promoting unity and inclusivity among different ethnic groups in a multiethnic society like Malaysia can have ethical implications. One potential ethical concern is the use of political messages to manipulate public opinion or promote a particular agenda, which could lead to suppression of alternative views and opinions. Additionally, if the messages are not based on genuine intentions and actions toward fostering unity and inclusivity, it could be seen as a form

of deception and undermine public trust in the government. The political messages can perpetuate harmful stereotypes or reinforce power imbalances between different ethnic groups. For example, if a prime minister emphasises assimilation into a dominant culture or ignores the unique cultural practices and values of certain groups, it could lead to marginalisation and discrimination. The present study has uncovered the potentially great influence of the newspapers to propagate the political leaders' taglines, and their agenda.

However, the present study is limited to the news portrayal of two prime ministers' taglines with only six articles may limit the generalisability of the findings beyond the specific contexts examined. To increase the representativeness of the sample and enhance the external validity of the study, future research could consider including a larger and more diverse set of articles and prime ministers from Malaysia. Besides, the limitation of the current analysis is that it only focuses on the taglines of the two prime ministers, and we did not examine how these messages are received and interpreted by the general population in Malaysia using a societal-wide survey. As the present study did not investigate the uptake of messages by newspaper readers, we are unable to draw conclusions pertaining to the impact of political messages on demographic groups such as age group, gender and occupational groups. Therefore, future studies should focus on Malaysian citizens' views on the uptake of the prime minister's taglines to offer a more nuanced understanding of the impact of political taglines on the citizens. According to Ariel and Norton (2008), taglines can be particularly successful in influencing the public's perception of political figures or parties.

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