THE FRAMING OF 'MUSLIM WOMEN HIJAB' ISSUE IN MALAYSIA:

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF MALAYSIAN MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS

TAN CHING TING

19AAB01913

SUPERVISOR: MOHAMAD IQBAAL BIN MOHD WAZIR

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APPROVAL SHEET

This research paper attached hereto, entitled "The Framing of 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in Malaysia: A Content Analysis of Malaysian Mainstream Newspapers" prepared and submitted by Tan Ching Ting in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English Language is hereby accepted.

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Supervisor   Date

Supervisor's name:

ABSTRACT

Hijab-wearing is a common phenomenon in Malaysia, yet the rule of banning *hijab* still exists. This paper is an investigation of the portrayal of 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in Malaysian news media including *The Star, New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* using Goffman's (1974) Framing approach. Specifically, this study aims (1) to examine how Malaysian mainstream newspapers frame 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in news reporting and (2) to determine the frames used in the representation of Muslim *hijabbing* issue in the Malaysian news reports. A qualitative content analysis has been applied to 40 news items published from November 2017 until September 2020. The analysis identifies the news frames following the scale of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), including responsibility, conflict, human interest, morality, liberation, and discrimination frames. The findings reported that newspapers cover the *hijab* issue with varying degrees of intensity and prominence. It was found that although the responsibility frame was the most prevalent frame across the Muslim *hijab* news stories, the aspects highlighted varied. The liberation frame gained the least attention. The findings are also beneficial for government policymakers and political leaders in Malaysia for future policy formulation towards the *hijab*-wearing. Journalists are able to enhance their way to cover the *hijab* issue coverage and the public get the knowledge on how the Malaysian news media frame the Muslim *hijab* issue.

Keywords: *Muslims, Islam, Muslim women, Hijab, headscarves, Religious discrimination, Malaysian media, newspapers, framing, content analysis*
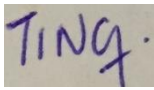
DECLARATION

I declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

Name: TAN CHING TING

Student ID: 19AAB01913

Signed: *TING.*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Islam becomes one of the world's major religions, including in Malaysia which has a predominantly Muslim population. According to Statista Research Department (2022), Islam is the religion that has the highest number of adherents in the country, that is, 63.5% of Malaysian population in 2020. The *Hijab*, also referred to as a veil, headscarf or scarf, is a form of Islamic dress and it also became an obvious indicator of Islamic identity. In Malaysia, veiling is more commonly known as the *hijab* or *tudung* in the local language. In simple words, it is a head covering worn by Muslim girls and women of the Muslim faith and is often associated as an ethnic identifier for the Malays of the country. To clarify, *hijab* is different from veil where *hijab* only covers the head whereas veil is a complete covering of the face. Today, *hijab*-wearing among Muslim women has become a common phenomenon in Malaysia, but after the 9/11 bombing of the New York World Trade Centre, the debate over the *hijab* surpassed its religious significance. Therefore, Muslim women in the West always experiences prejudice and discrimination causing many of them decide to remove the *hijab* (Ali, Yamada & Mahmood, 2015). In western media's portrayals of Muslim women, including both electronic and printed media, Haddad (2007), Byng (2010) and Paz and Kook (2021) mentioned that *hijab* is frequently portrayed as extreme, oppressive, strange, and threatening.

Additionally, it is compulsory for female Muslims wearing the headscarves in Saudi Arabia and Iran, while female Muslims in countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Algeria, and Bosnia have the freedom choosing to wear the *hijab* at the workplace (Mohamed, 2017). Similar, to the latter, in Malaysia, Muslim girls are given rights to decide whether they want to wear or not to wear the *hijab* when they go to work. Despite the fact that Islam has been designated as the

country's official religion, Malay women always wear the *'tudung'* as it is commonly known, but whether to wear the *hijab* is totally depends on their desires. However, female Muslim staff and students are required to wear the *"tudung"* in higher-educational institutions and Muslim organisations based in Malaysia, while some other industries like Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and some high-end hotels in Malaysia disallow their staff to wear the headscarves. Therefore, the rule of banning *hijab*-wearing in certain workplace in Malaysia had caused discrimination towards Muslim women. For instance, *hijab*-wearing issue that happened among Muslim women employees have been addressed in many of the Malaysian mainstream newspapers. Similar case also happened in the West in which many researchers recently had been focused on the religious issues, particularly concentrating on the issues relating to Islam and Muslims (Bowe et al., 2015; Sutkutė, 2019).

On 28 January 2018, the Human Resource Ministry revealed that 13 of the 88 hotels in Peninsular Malaysia prohibited their Muslim frontline staff from donning a headscarf while on duty (Rosli, 2018). Meanwhile, Mohamed (2017) asserted that discrimination towards the religious dressing, including the *hijab* ban issue in Malaysia is in violation of Article 3 of the Federal Constitution. Nonetheless, Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz, who is the Malaysia's former Tourism and Culture Minister stated that *hijab* ban in hotel workplace is being considered as 'irresponsible' and 'anti-Islam' since it was against country's constitutional rights to practice one's religion, and thereby supports the right of female Muslims to wear the headscarf at the hotel workplace ("Nazri: Hijab ban on hotel frontline workers is 'anti-Islam'", 2017). The banning of *hijab* wearing policy had causing some of the Muslim women unemployed as in the hotel industry, in the meantime, the issue also brought the intention for female Muslims choose to unveil. Most of them, they opt not to wear *hijab* perhaps they feel that it is insecure as they do not feel comfortable due to

discrimination, and difficulties in getting a job. According to Izharuddin (2018), there are various reasons for a Muslim woman to decide to take off the *hijab*, including personal matter, health, education, and marital integrity. Fan (2021) also asserted that female Muslims who have decided to take off their *hijab* faced greater pressures because this act may elicit both legal and individual objections. Nevertheless, some of them wear the *hijab* because they respect Malay culture and heritage.

Some people may argue that female Muslims who decide to remove their *hijab* are recognised as non-conforming to their religious beliefs. This is due to the fact that *hijab* has significantly become a religious identity marker for all Malaysian Muslim women (Izharuddin, 2018). Although wearing headscarf is still remains a choice for Muslim women, however, in Terengganu, a state that requires Muslim women to wear the *tudung* where they would have to abide by the majority's rules (Sunesti, 2016). Another rural state, Kelantan, is located in the northeastern corner of Peninsular Malaysia still implement a state-level *hijab*-wearing policies among Muslim women. The policy has limits people to have a traditional mindset in which they think that Muslim women are expected to be always wearing the *hijab*, and the act of taking off of *hijab* can result in abuse, bullying, and public condemnation. In fact, this action is referring to the act of de-*hijab*. According to Lee (2019, as cited in Noor & Hamid, 2021), the term 'de-*hijabbing'* can refer to both removal of the headscarves voluntarily and a form of forcing to take off the *hijab* through the *hijab* ban policies.

To examine further how Malaysian mainstream newspapers portray the Muslim women *hijab* issue, this present study intends to employ a content analysis approach to examine the framing of female Muslim hijabbing issue in the press- Malaysian mainstream newspapers. Meanwhile, the impetus for conducting this study came from the interest in the ruling of the *hijab*

ban lifted by certain industries in Malaysia. As mentioned by Lacasse and Forster (2012), societies nowadays depend on news media for information. In Malaysia, there are many people interested in reading online news because of its fast update (Hamzah, 2009). Hence, this overdependence on online newspapers can have a significant effect in helping to spread ideas to the public which can then shape public opinion regarding the related issue. In addition to that, this topic is a current heated debate issue among Muslims and non-Muslims, the issue is now increasingly debated internationally, including in Malaysia. Every country has its views on Muslim women depending on the environment, belief, culture, and many other aspects.

1.2 Statement of Problem

In today's world's thinking, equality, human rights, and freedom are valuable, including the thoughts of Islamic people. There have recently been reports of female Muslims in Malaysia facing discrimination in the hiring process such as being forced not wearing the *hijab* in the workplace. The case happened in the Malaysian hotel industry in which they are not allowing their female staff wearing a *hijab* while working in hotels especially at the front lines due to international Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Besides, a few notable *hijabi* discrimination cases happened in Malaysia, as reported in Malay Mail, Azuddin (2018) mentioned that one of the incidents was happened in 2013 involved KLCC's retail stores unwilling to hire Muslim woman who wear the *hijab* and also the imposed of *hijab* ban policy by hotel industry that happened in 2017. A similar case also happened to Malaysia Airlines (MAS) who does not allow their flight attendants to wear the *hijab*. These cases show discrimination is happening towards *hijab*-wearing among Muslim women as they were looked down by the society and being unemployed. Thus, some Muslim women express their dissatisfaction and dissidence against the law forbidding Muslim women from wearing '*tudung*' at the workplace which had been reported in Malaysian

mainstream media. Some of them who seek for *hijab* freedom also form an activist community and are united in deciding to respond to the 'De-*hijabbing*' act in Malaysia. This act demonstrates women's pursuit of dressing or *hijab* freedom in order to get employed and accepted by the public since '*hijab* is a symbol of freedom'. Therefore, it is timely to investigate the framing of 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in Malaysian mainstream newspapers.

Many research and studies have been done on Muslim/ Islam (Rahman & Emadi, 2018; Hassan, Azmi & Abdullahi, 2020), *hijab* (Bilge, 2010; Bakht, 2022; Hassim, 2014; Macdonald, 2006; Noor & Hamid, 2021; Babacan, 2022; Velthuis, Verkuyten, Noll & Smeekes, 2022), the compulsory *hijab* in Iran (Terman, 2010), the attitudes of western media towards Muslims (Alsulami, 2019), portrayal of Muslim women in online news (Hasanah, 2021), representation of Muslim women in Western media (Khan & Zahra, 2015; Satiti, 2017; Kasirye, 2021), and the representations of Muslims in Time Magazine (Rhinehart, 2022). However, almost all these Islamic studies have been conducted from the religious or media standpoints, with a particular emphasis only on the Western countries. Moreover, these studies were mostly conducted using a corpus linguistic based research, critical discourse analysis was mostly used to analyse the data. Muslim or Islam, in Western newspapers, has been examined by using critical discourse analysis and been examined in terms of its collocation. There is research had been done on examining the representational patterns centered on the word *Muslim* in a British press (Baker, Gabrielatos & McEnery, 2012). There are also several studies had been done on framing Muslim or Islam through content analysis, nevertheless, most of the data are sourced from western news media (Manaf & Sedu, 2015; Rahman & Qamar, 2017; Hassan, Azmi, & Abubakar, 2017; Kasirye, 2021). Another research, Byng's (2010) critical discourse analysis examined the western news reporting including the New York Times and Washington Post.

Despite a proliferation of research had been done on Muslims, Islam, *hijab*, and the representation of Muslim women in the western news media, very few available scholarly have been done or published up to this moment regarding the issue of *hijab* ban policy in the Malaysian news reports. Also, relatively limited research exists that document workforce discrimination against *hijabis* in Malaysia context. Hence, efforts to find framing media about 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in Malaysia are still considered as under-researched.

Taking the very limited of studies into account, the current study is an attempt to fill in the gap by analysing the framing of Muslim women *hijabbing* issue in Malaysian media based on the news reports in order to shed more light on some biases Muslim women choose to unveil or de-*hijab* and the hiring discrimination faced by these *hijabis.*

1.3 Research Questions

To guide the present study, two research questions were formulated at examining the framing of Muslim women *hijab* issue in Malaysian mainstream newspapers. Three online Malaysian English newspapers were used as the data source for this study. As such, the research questions for the study are:

1. How Malaysian mainstream newspapers frame 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in news reporting?

2. What were the frames used in the representation of Muslim hijabbing issue in the Malaysian news reports?

1.4 Research Objectives

There are also two objectives being formulated:

1. To examine how Malaysian mainstream newspapers frame 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in news reporting

2. To determine the frames used in the representation of Muslim hijabbing issue in the Malaysian news reports

1.5 Significance of Study

It is very obvious to see a significant lack of study being conducted to illustrate how Malaysian online news portals portray the *hijabbing* issues among Muslim girls/women in the media coverage. In practical domains, this study will shed more light on the limitations of such a heated *hijabbing* issue in Malaysia. In the meantime, the results of this study are wished to get a deeper understanding of the situation in Malaysia regarding the Muslim women *hijab* issue and contribute to a greater knowledge in the theoretical literature under the Goffman's (1974) Framing theory. In addition to this, the result of this study also provides more knowledge for the activists, academics, and the public against the existing gender inequalities especially in the Muslim women context.

Furthermore, several researchers acknowledged that news media and journalists become a crucial role in framing daily conversations, and public debates around Muslims, Islam, and Muslim women in general (Mohanty, 1984; Greenberg & Miazhevich, 2012). Thus, this study's findings will also help to lead publics on how the Malaysian mainstream media framed 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in their media coverage. Accordingly, the study also helped to scale the discussions regarding the recent hot topic on imposing the rule of the *hijab* ban issue that happened in Malaysia.

As many of the existing literature investigating the portrayal of Muslim women in the online Western news media, the results from this study have narrow down the scope to only examined on the Malaysian online news portals will help publics to understand how the Malaysian newspapers framed about Muslim women in terms of wearing the *hijab*. Additionally, the results of this study will also be useful for news media, especially for the journalists to improve their way

in reporting the *hijabbing* issues in the news stories. In the meantime, the present study can also benefit the policy makers in Malaysia for future policy formulation. The findings may also benefit political leaders in Malaysia in order to raise awareness on the desires of the public. This is because the results of the study can assist them in changing their policies regarding *hijab*-wearers among Malaysian Muslim women.

As the aforementioned of the significance of this study, thus, there is a need to conduct the present study. The study is an attempt to add to the existing literature on *hijab* which also includes of Muslim women in Malaysia who being unemployed due to wearing the *hijab* in the workplace and those *hijabis* being discriminated as they stop to wear *hijab*. The existing literature always describes *hijab* as oppressive, however, it cannot conclude that all female Muslims in Malaysia live in a predominantly *hijab*-wearing society.

Thus, this paper seeks to discover more, and fill the gap on how Malaysian mainstream newspapers framed 'Muslim Women *Hijab*' issue through the *New Straits Times* and *The Star* from the Malaysia online news portals. Last but not least, the findings of the study also anticipated to create awareness among publics on the important issues concerning Muslim women in terms of *hijab*-wearing in the workplace within Malaysia.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Islamophobia

'Islamophobia' has always been a controverted concept, it is a topic that leads to Islam and Muslims in western countries (Bleich, 2012). Unfortunately, following the events of September 11, 2011, Muslims are facing discrimination because of the Islamic faith (Reeves, McKinney & Azam, 2012; Awad, 2010). Islamophobia mostly occurs in multicultural societies where various

cultures, religions, and beliefs are in a place such as European countries. Negative stereotyping of Muslims has led to discriminatory behaviours especially in the work force. Muslim women who are wearing the *hijab*, so called the *hijabis,* become an easy target for Islamophics compared to Muslim men. They are victimised and unfairly treated as the way they dress portray themselves as practising Muslims.

There is a study claimed that female Muslims who were wearing the *hijab* frequently experience negative interactions in the workplace due to portrayals of Muslim in United States (US) media in their references the war against terrorism, invoking fear amongst non-Muslims (Reeves, McKinney & Azam, 2012). Another study, Hassan and Azmi's (2021) content analysis, analysed non-western online newspapers, including Nigeria's Punch and Vanguard, as well as Malaysia's New Straits Times and The Star regarding the reproduction of Islamophobia through Goffman's (1974) framing theory. The result of this research found that both of the newspapers had a tendency to reproduce Islamophobia by using a negative tone and terms through conflict frames in portraying Islam, and this shows that Islam was framed as a negative image even in the news media from non-Western country.

Ahmed and Matthes (2017) examine the role of news media in construction of Islamic identity from 2000 to 2015 and their study found that news media negatively framed Muslims/ Islam. Meanwhile, studies also claimed that negative perceptions toward Muslim and Islam always shaped by the media to the public. Hence, there is much evidence showing that Islamophobia is being propagated through media framing (Powell, 2018; Yusof et al., 2013; Dahinden et al., 2011). According to Thompson (2013), the language used in reporting Islam in the mainstream press seems to have a notable impact on the spread of Islamophobia. Suryandari and Arifin (2021) carried out a study in Malaysia that focusing on the illustration of Islam and Muslims in an

international media through framing. Their study also found that international media negatively framed Islamophobia.

2.2 Portrayal of Female Muslims in the West Media (Online and Printed Media)

Almost many research has examined the Islamic or Muslim representation in the western news media has drawn a conclusion that media in the West found evidence for negative bias especially towards the Islamic dress code. As stated by Fournier (2013), the most frequently discussed form of religious dress is the *hijab* within western countries. Nevertheless, "veiling" always symbolises negative presuppositions and referring to the subordination of Muslim women toward men in western community. A study done by Kasirye (2021) who employed qualitative content analysis, examined the Muslim Women in Western news media, including The Guardian and New York Times by determining the frames of two news organisations. The study found that because of their dress code, female Muslims in both Western media are portrayed as terrorists and the dominant theme regarding the way they frame the stories include uneducated, financially oppressed, and uneducated and sexual objects for men. Another research, Hassan's (2017) content analysis, examined the western newspapers, Wall Street Journal (WSJ) and The Telegraph (TT) perceived the Islam and Muslim, the findings concluded that the western media still do not favour Islam and Muslims around the world. Negative connotations still exist in the news reporting, and western media often frame Islam as oppressive, with symbols like the *hijab*. Calvo-Barbero and Carrasco-Campos (2020) also employed a content analysis approach to analyse five printed media in Spain through a framing framework following the news frames identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). The findings of this research paper revealed that the media's portrayal of Muslim women always centered on the frames of "threat" and "victim", with the "victim" frame dominating in most of the cases.

The printed media, in western news magazine, has also been examined in terms of the treatment towards the Muslim women. Khan and Zahra (2015), for instance, analysed the data published in the news magazines 'Time' and 'Newsweek' concerning Muslim women through a content analysis approach by examining its frames, tone, categories, and themes. This particular research revealed that both of the news magazines used a negative tone in portraying Muslim women and they are frequently depicted negatively in both of the news magazines. The study is also in line with the analysis done in non-Western online news context through content analysis in which the findings showed that nearly half of all Islam-related news articles reported in Malaysia's online mainstream newspapers: The Star and New Straits Times conveyed a negative tone toward Islam and the used of the language in the articles are improper and sensational (Hassan, Azmi & Abdullahi, 2020).

Another study regarding veil of the Muslim women conducted by MacDonald (2006) analysed the impact of Muslim women's veiling and unveiling in Western culture, as well as the positions of the veiled Muslim women from three aspects, including social, economic, and political positions. The results of this research reported that religiously secular states like Turkey and France still exist today banning the *hijab*-wearing policy among Muslim women. This means that Muslim women's right to wear the headscarves were severely undermined by legislation prohibiting the wearing of the *hijab* in front of the public, yet western media continued to portray them in a stereotyped way. Although Muslim women cover their faces for a variety of reasons, including cultural and political reasons, the way Muslim women are portrayed in Western media is unchanging (Perry, 2014).

Attempts have been made to publish stories with a more positive tone notwithstanding the unfavourable attention Muslim women have received in the western media. A positive result

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shown in the study done by Mishra (2007) who used a textual analysis method to examine the depictions of both Muslims men and women in American print media, New York Times. Based on its findings, the study found that Muslim-related news articles reported in New York Times portrayed Muslim women as cultural practices, religious targets, and socio-political, whereas Muslim men were linked to terrorism. It can be concluded that this study was portrayed Muslim women in the west in a positive tone in terms of liberation and modernity.

2.3 *Hijab*-Wearing in Malaysian Context

Wearing a *hijab* is not compulsory for Muslim women and it is becoming more common among Malaysian Muslim women. In Malaysia, Islam holds the majority power, creating a social image of the veil as an act of submission to God. Normally, the Malaysian Muslim women wear the *"tudung"* with their traditional dress *"baju kurung"*. According to Hochel (2013), Malaysian female Muslims wear the *hijab* willingly and they have not been ignored in public places. By conducting a preliminary survey to examine the attitudes and behaviours of Malaysian female Muslim respondents towards the modern *hijab* in the Malaysian media, the findings in the study of Hassim, Nayan and Ishak (2015) found that majority of Malaysian female Muslims felt that the *hijab* is worn as a way to observe the Muslim faith, seeking empowerment and respect, whilst also wanting a change of lifestyle also played an important part in wanting to dress modestly within the multicultural society of Malaysia. Similarly, the interview conducted in this paper revealed that most of the respondents agreed that *hijab* is a fashion trend whilst only a few respondents felt that it represents religion. In contrast, the findings in the study of Grine & Saeed (2017) showed that most Muslim women viewed wearing the *hijab* is obliged to religious practice rather than wearing it as a fashion statement. It can be proof that female Muslim women in Malaysia viewed the *tudung* as a religious obligation, regardless of whether it is attractive or not.

Malaysia remains a moderately Muslim country and women enjoy more freedom than their Middle Eastern counterparts since Malaysia being a multicultural society. Therefore, some Malaysian Muslim women choose to wear the *hijab*, while other choose not to because it has not right or wrong whether to wear the *hijab.* In recent years, as society moves toward modernisation, wearing the *hijab* reflects not merely religious belief but aslo fashion choices. This statement can be proof through Hassim's (2014) study who claimed that as time passes by and the growth of the Muslim fashion industry, Malaysian Muslim women are constantly being bombarded with the *hijab* fashion, created a culture of not only wearing the *hijab* is a religious requirement, but it is also a fashion statement. As the *hijab* is in vogue, most Muslim women wear the *hijab* simply because it is pretty and stylish, and this phenomenon has also considered as *hijab* fashion. Eventually, Muslim women's perception towards the *hijab* had been changed gradually due to these fashion trends in the current society including in Malaysia.

2.4 *Hijab*-wearers being Discriminate in the Workplace

Muslim women often experiencing discrimination in employment. A study conducted by Ghumman and Ryan (2013) mentioned that hijabis had been much less possibly to receive call backs when applying for jobs in shops and restaurants. A similar study done by Pasha-Zaidi, Masson and Pennington (2014) also posited that *hijab*-wearers made applicants less likely to receive a job offer. The findings of this study also come out with a similar conclusion claiming that women who wear the *hijab* may be perceived as less employable than non-*hijabis* in western countries. Using an exploratory meta-analysis, Ahmed and Gorey (2021) made a comparison between *hijab*-wearing Muslim women and women who did not seek employment in the West, and the study found that *hijab*-wearing Muslim women were more disadvantaged than non-*hijab*-wearing Muslim women in the hiring process. The hypothesis of the study is well supported.

In addition, a study conducted in Pakistan also highlighted the real experiences of Pakistani women workers wearing *hijabs* in private sector organisations encounter multiple challenges and discrimination, in which the working women perceived experiences of isolation when wearing *hijab*/scarf in the workplace (Saher, Awan, Aziz, Matloob & Malik, 2021).

Not only the hiring discrimination happened in the west and South Asia, but a similar case also happened in Malaysia. There is a study conducted in Malaysia found that Muslims women who wear the *hijab* encounter discrimination when working in Malaysian hotels (Rashid-Radha, Razak, Ahmad, Shariff & Yusof, 2019). The study included that many of the high-end hotels in Malaysia do not allow their front-liners to wear the *hijab* and some hotels have asked female Muslims to take off their *hijab* while at work. This act actually violates the employees' right to practise their religion. Another similar study, Rahman, Mehat and Hamzah (2019) employed a qualitative method through semi-structural interview to female workers who worked in the hotel about the dress code discrimination. The study revealed that women face discrimination against wearing the *hijab* and the interviewer in the study also claimed that it should not be the main criterion to look from the *hijab*-wearing appearance when hiring staff in the hospitality industry. This is due to the fact that the wearing the *hijab* actually has nothing to do with the employee's performance, and they will still have the ability to perform their job competently with wearing the *hijab*.

2.5 The Act of De-*hijabbing* and Hijabophobia

Wearing the *hijab* among Muslim women is a form of religious expression, however, hijabophobia forms a part of Islamophobia. Hijabophobia refers to discrimination against women wearing Islamic veils. To put it simply, it is the hostility against to the female Muslims who are wearing the *hijab*. The act of hijabophobia is actually a sense of prejudice towards Muslim women.

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A study done by Zain, Hassan and Finieli (2018) within Malaysia analysed the presence of hijabophobia in the context of Muslim-friendly hospitality services through qualitative interview and the researchers found that the exist of hijabophobia in the customer service and the hiring process in the hotel industry has been caused by the hotels' policies as the hoteliers believe that employees wearing *hijabs* are unattractive to potential customers. Through the interview, this study also revealed that most female Muslims who were wearing the headscarves are unwilling to present themselves at the hotels that practise hijabophobia policy and they felt that staying there is not safe and it is insecure.

On the other hand, female Muslims public figures have always been placed in the spotlight when they decide to remove their *hijab*. Noor and Hamid (2021) applied a critical discourse analysis approach and the Ideological Square Model that was attributed to van Dijk (1999; 2006) to critically analyse the online reactions to Emma Maembong, a Malaysian celebrity who made a decision to de-*hijab*. The research asserted that Emma was being criticised by commentators since the overall comments towards Emma's decision were negative comments and Emma has been subjected to insults, pressures, attacks, and abuse for her act of taking off the *hijab.*

Another descriptive qualitative research done by Saphire, Istighfarin and Nurkhasanah (2021) through Feminist Standpoint Theory aims to understand the view of Maryam Lee towards the *hijab* and how Malaysians react to her ideas as she believes female Muslims should have the freedom to decide whether to wear or remove the *hijab*. There are two results drawn from this study, the first group viewing Maryam's de-*hijab* ideas as a form of alienation from Muslim identity, whilst the second group regards Maryam's actions as a kind of opposition to the patriarchal system.

2.6 Theoretical Approach

There are many academicians have utilised framing theory to examine newspaper articles about Muslim and Islam-related issues through content analysis (Manaf & Sedu, 2015; Rahman & Qamar, 2017; Hassan, Azmi, & Abubakar, 2017; Kasirye, 2021). Using the "framing" theoretical framework, Hassim (2014) investigated the act of wearing a *hijab* in Malaysian Muslimah magazines through a content analysis method to analyse the articles of Nur and Hijabista. As such, the framing theory which is attributed to Erving Goffman (1974) also adopted in the present study. According to Goffman (1974), the framing theory explains how the media chose which events to focus on to the audiences and then placed them under a meaningful context Furthermore, the framing theory is concerned with how journalists structure their news coverage to concentrate on certain issue and constructing the news frames by only selecting the specific information. Usually, readers form and build their understanding of a particular topic or issue based on the news item presented in the news articles upon reading the news media messages (Holody, 2006). Therefore, guided by this theory, the current study is to determine what kind of news about the hijabbing issues in Malaysia context that were selected and projected in three Malaysian mainstream media, and what kind of perceived reality do these media outlets try to promote and raise public awareness. It also investigates how the media chose what information to present to the audience and the viewers would consume it as well as how that information was represented. Therefore, this study utilities the content analysis by framing related news articles through language and context.

Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) had identified five generic frames used in the news reporting in their study including *conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality,* and *responsibility*. In the present study, we adopted four frames by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) to examine how Muslim women hijabbing issue is reported in the Malaysian mainstream newspapers.

To further explain, conflict frame emphasises disagreements between different parties, it can be groups or individuals; responsibility frame refers to an issue being presented in a way that individuals or groups bear the responsibility for the cause or solution, for example, the story may appear to suggest that government is to blame for the issue or some authorities should be responsible for the problem; morality frame positions the issue in relation to moral messages or religious beliefs; and human interest frame refers to an event or issue is presented from an emotional point of view and sensationalised the news so that it able to keep the attention of audiences, normally, the story may employs some personal vignettes or adjectives to elicit the emotions of the audience. However, the study further modifies these frames by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) by including two newly developing frames which is the liberation and discrimination frames that employed in the reportage of the Muslim women *hijabbing* issue in Malaysia.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The current study employed a content analysis approach to study further because it is a method that provides specific media content and also centered on the characteristics of media messages which is able to be examined in generating accurate results and providing useful data. Using news frames, the context and circumstance of media coverage on the issue of female Muslims wearing the *hijab* in Malaysia were investigated. The headlines and the entire texts of the news articles were analysed in terms of its word choice. In order to collect the data related to the hijabbing issue in Malaysia specifically the *hijab* ban issue, this study used a purposive sampling method. *The Star, New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* are the samples for the present study. The

unit of the analysis is the article, which relating to the Muslim women *hijabbing* issue in Malaysia including straight news, opinions, letters, and lifestyle were selected for data gathering. This research paper drew on data from news articles and feature articles published in three major mainstream online daily newspapers. These newspapers are authoritative and widely read local English language online news portals namely, "The Star", "Malay Mail" and "New Straits Times" that are based in Malaysia. Three of the newspapers were chosen due to their high circulation and readership in this day and age of social media. According to a survey conducted by Vase, which is a market research company found that *The Star* is the most widely read local English newspaper, at 69%, while *The Star Online* is among the most frequently read online news portal at 76%, followed by *New Straits Times* at 59% (Chu, 2019). This indicated that all of the three newspapers were the mediums that Malaysians read the most and were regarded as important sources of information for many Malaysians in the country.

3.2 Data Collection

A total of 40 news articles pertaining to the issue of Muslim women face discrimination in the workplace when they are wearing the *hijab* and the lifted of *hijab* ban issue in Malaysia published from November 2017 until September 2020 were chosen and gathered as the source of data for this study. By entering the keywords such as "*hijab, hijabs, hijab* ban, headscarf, and *tudung*" into the search engines built into the news website of the media, lead paragraphs and headlines will be found. The above-mentioned time frame was chosen for examination and analysis for two reasons. Firstly, Sisters In Islam (SIS) revealed that Malaysian Muslim women are traditional and conservative in their beliefs, with 90% of Muslim women believing that it is a must for women to *tudung* themselves in order to project and maintain their image as Muslims. However, Sisters in Islam (SIS) on Malaysian Muslim women's realities in 2019 also showed that
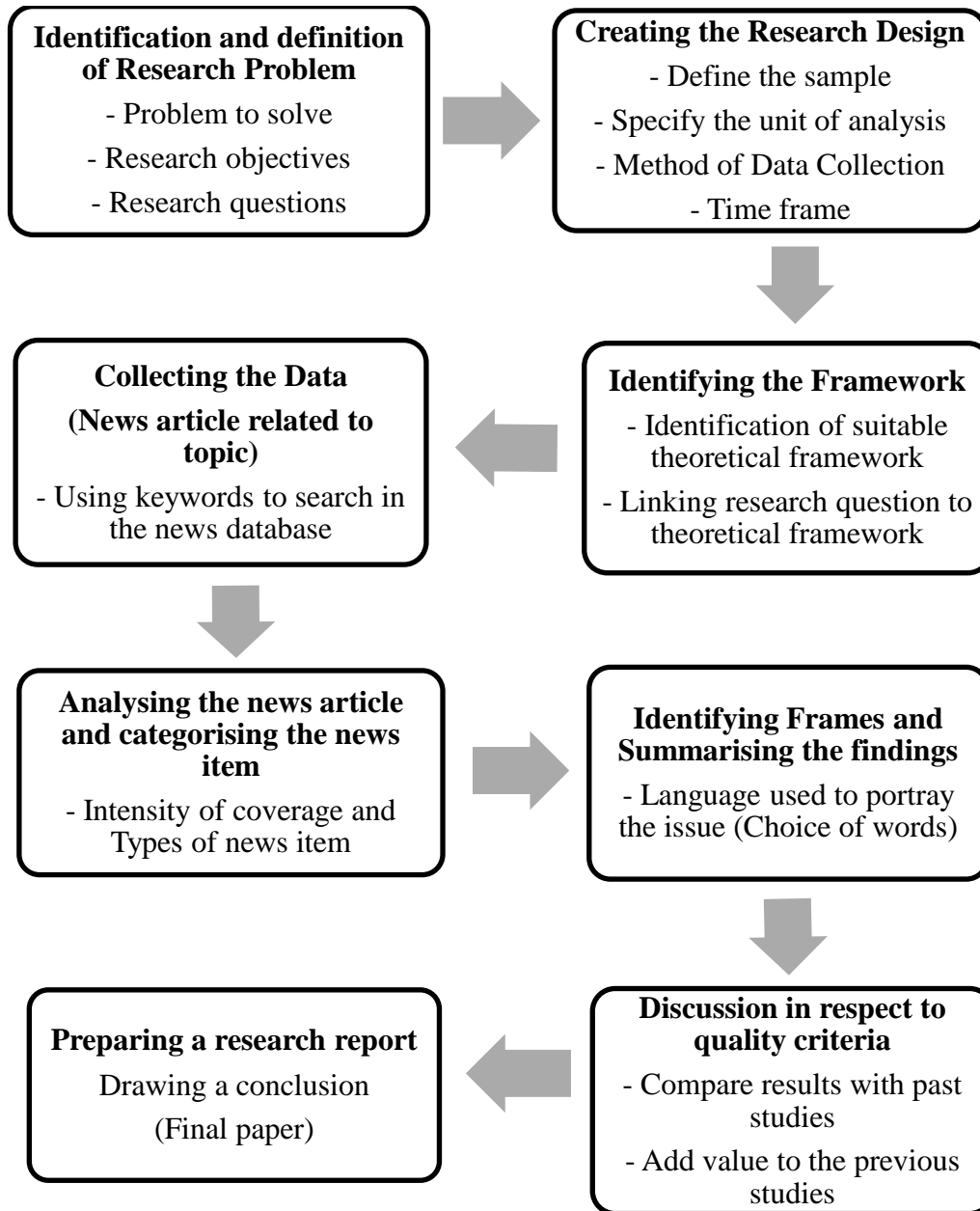
83% of Muslim women believed they had the liberties and rights in deciding whether they choose to wear or not to wear a *hijab* and 62% of the respondents believed that a Muslim woman who not wear the *hijab* is acceptable in the society. As a result, the time frame selected for the data collection was significant as it covered various issues related Muslim women against to wear *hijab* such as discrimination against *hijab*, headscarf ban in hotel sector, as well as the act of 'De-*hijabbing'*.

3.3 Data Analysis

The 40 news articles collected from "The Star", "News Straits Times" and "Malay Mail" were analysed using content analysis through Goffman's (1974) Framing framework. Firstly, the intensity of coverage was investigated from two angles, including the number of news items, and type of news items were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentage. Secondly, as stated in the previous chapter, this study adopted and modified Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) most commonly used news frames, so that all articles were analysed based on the identified frames and being categorised into conflict, responsibility, human interest, morality, liberation or discrimination frame. In order to identify the frame used, this study tends to provide a detailed and comprehensive analysis. When analysing the articles, one has to look from the choice of words starting from the headline to the entire text and the descriptors used to the characters that the news stories focus on. Language used in the news articles determined the way journalists framed the news stories such as the word choices and the term used to describe an issue. To measure the extent to which frames appear in the news articles, there were questions such as "Does the news stories show disagreement between parties? *(conflict),* "Does the story present in a way that individuals or groups is responsible for the issue/ problem?" *(responsibility),* "Does the article delivered any moral value or religious belief?" *(morality),* "Does the story employed

adjectives to elicit the emotion of audiences such as generate the feeling of empathy? or Does the story emphasises how individual affected by the issue?" *(human interest),* "Does the article treat the issue as a form of discrimination?" *(discrimination),* and "Does the story depicted the action of limit the freedom of an individual/ group?" *(liberation).* These questions designed were meant to measure one of the six news frames. Thirdly, the percentage of each frame were calculated to see which frame is the most being used to cover the Muslim women *hijabbing* issue in the Malaysian mainstream newspapers. Consequently, it is critical to mention that the results of this study are only limited to the newspapers chosen for this study, which only included "The Star", "News Straits Times" and "Malay Mail" and cannot be applied to other Malaysian newspapers.

3.4 Steps in Conducting the Research

Identification and definition of Research Problem

- Problem to solve
- Research objectives
- Research questions

Creating the Research Design

- Define the sample
- Specify the unit of analysis
- Method of Data Collection
- Time frame

Collecting the Data

(News article related to topic)

- Using keywords to search in the news database

Identifying the Framework

- Identification of suitable theoretical framework
- Linking research question to theoretical framework

Analysing the news article and categorising the news item

- Intensity of coverage and Types of news item

Identifying Frames and Summarising the findings

- Language used to portray the issue (Choice of words)

Preparing a research report

Drawing a conclusion

(Final paper)

Discussion in respect to quality criteria

- Compare results with past studies
- Add value to the previous studies

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Findings

During the data collection period, three of the selected newspapers published varying numbers of news articles. As earlier hinted, the overall of 40 *hijab*-related articles among Muslim women in Malaysia context published in the years 2017 to 2020 were analysed. The following are some basic statistics on the frequency and percentage of the variables, including the number and type of news items. Regarding the frames identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), six frames of the *hijab* were detected in the data used for this study as shown in *Table 2*. They are: 1) responsibility, 2) conflict, 3) morality, 4) human interest, and the two newly added frames, including the 5) liberation, and 6) discrimination frames. Identifying these frames was dependent on the different contents and discourse of each news article chosen for this research.

4.1.1 Intensity of Coverage

The total number of news items and type of news items found in *The Star, New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* have been shown in *Table 1* as below.

Table 1. Numbers of News Items and Type of News Items

Types of News Items	The Star (n=8) %	New Straits Times (n=14) %	Malay Mail (n=18) %
Straight News	62.50	85.71	88.89
Letters	12.50	14.29	0.00
Opinions	12.50	0.00	11.11
Lifestyle	12.50	0.00	0.00

As shown in *Table 1,* the total number of news items discovered in *The Star* is 8 articles, while the number of articles produced by *New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* are almost twice the

amount of articles which are 14 articles and 18 articles respectively. On a similar note, the number of articles produced by *New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* within the chosen time frame are quite close only with a difference of 4 articles. Three of the selected newspapers published their coverage of the *hijab* issue primarily as straight news, followed by letters and opinions. As *Table 1* demonstrates, out of 40 analysed news stories, *The Star* had a total of 5 (62.5%), *New Straits Times* had 12 (85.71%), *Malay Mail* had 16 articles (88.89%) from the category of straight news, being the most frequent sections. Nevertheless, only *Malay Mail* did not report any coverage related to the *hijab* issue in the form of "Letters" other than *The Star* (12.5%) and *News Straits Times* (14.29%). In the meantime, *Malay Mail* also gives less coverage in the form of 'Opinions' that only accounted (11.11%) compared to *The Star* (12.5%) while *New Straits Times* gives no coverage to it. Intriguingly, the interesting discovery was that only *The Star* devoted some space to 'Lifestyle'. In this regard, *hijab* coverages were found to a lesser extent in the category of 'Lifestyle.' *(Table 1)*

4.1.2 News Frames used in the 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue in Malaysia News Reports

As stated in section 2.6, this study adopted four out of six frames identified by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) and the two new added frames in order to examine how media describes the imposing of *hijab* ban issue among Muslims or the act of discrimination towards the *hijab*-wearers that are reported in the Malaysian mainstream newspapers. Frame analysis thereby describes how journalists portray the *hijab* issue in a way to attract the attention and how the readers conceive it. There is a need to know the meaning and the interpretation of words used by journalists before identifying the frame used in each news article. The fact that readers always rely on the frame to comprehend and discuss an issue. Regarding the frames of Semetko & Valkenburg (2000), the

following table *(Table 2)* depicted the use of frames in three of the selected news articles reporting on the *hijab* issue in Malaysian mainstream media.

Table 2. Four frames by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) and the two added frames

News Frames	The Star (n)=8 %	New Straits Times (n)=14 %	Malay Mail (n)=18 %	TOTAL (n)=40 %
Conflict	37.50 (3)	7.14 (1)	22.22 (4)	20.00 (8)
Responsibility	25.00 (2)	64.29 (9)	27.78 (5)	40.00 (16)
Human Interest	25.00 (2)	7.14 (1)	11.11 (2)	12.50 (5)
Morality	0.00 (0)	7.14 (1)	11.11 (2)	7.50 (3)
Liberation	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)	11.11 (2)	5.00 (2)
Discrimination	12.50 (1)	14.29 (2)	16.67 (3)	15.00 (6)
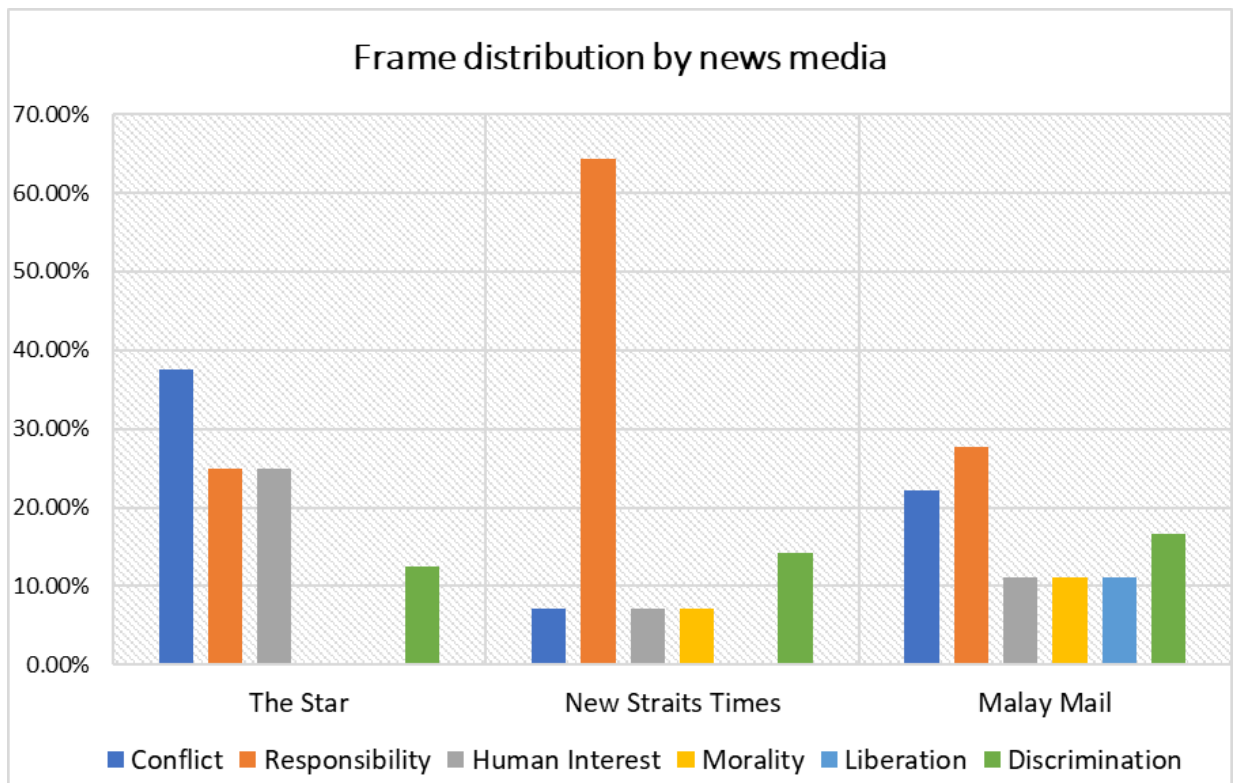
Figure 1. Frame distribution showing the proportions for each news media

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As shown in *Table 2,* the overall findings of this study found that the most salient frame in reporting the *hijab* issue in Malaysia is the frame of responsibility (40%), followed by the frame of conflict (20%). The other frames: frame of discrimination (15%), frame of human interest (12.5%), frame of morality (7.5%) and frame of liberation (5%).

As for *The Star,* the most prominent frame is conflict frame (37.5%), followed by responsibility and human interest frames that accounted for the same amount (25%). *The Star* put the least coverage under discrimination frame (12.5%) while there was no coverage framed under morality and liberation frames. *New Straits Times,* on the other side, has the highest coverage under responsibility frame among the three selected newspapers which occupied 64.29%. The frames of conflict, human interest and morality have contributed the same amount, which is 7.14% to the *hijab* issue coverages in Malaysia. There is no news story being framed under the liberation frame. Additionally, *Malay Mail* is the only news media that contributed *hijab* coverages to all the identified frames in this study, as can be seen in the third column *(Figure 1)*. Similar to the *New Straits Times,* the frame of responsibility is among the highest counts which is 27.78% followed by the frame of conflict that accounted for 22.22% and the frame of discrimination that occupied 16.67%. There are three frames: human interest, morality, and liberation frames found in the *Malay Mail* having the same amount, which is 11.11%. *(Table 1 and Figure 1)*

Nevertheless, the findings show some differences by comparing the results between three selected newspapers. The frame of responsibility is more common in *New Straits Times* than *The Star* and *Malay Mail.* On the other hand, the frame of conflict and the frame of human interest are more prominent in *The Star,* than *New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail.* Furthermore, the frame of morality in *Malay Mail* is more frequent than in *New Straits Times* but there is none in *The Star.* Results also show that the frame of liberation has only been detected in *Malay Mail,* none is found

in both *The Star* and *New Straits Times*. The discrimination frame found in *Malay Mail* is more numerous than *The Star* and *New Straits Times*.

4.1.3 Analysis of the News Frames Used in News Media
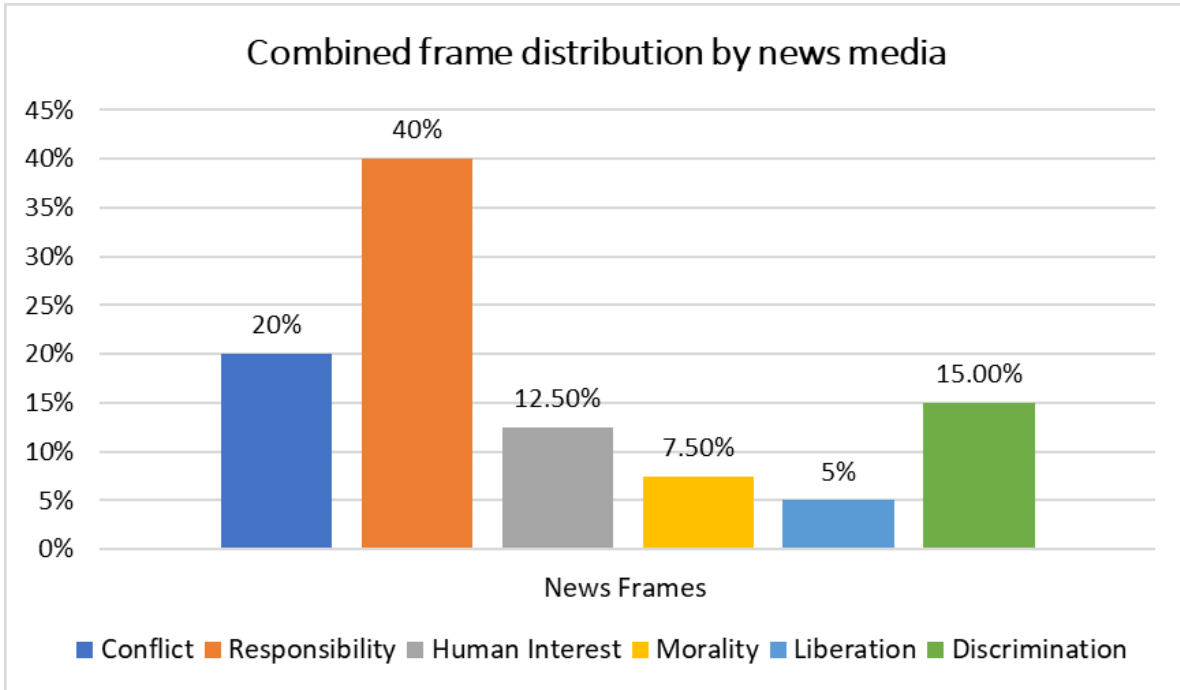
Figure 2. Combined frame distribution showing the proportions for each news media

A) Responsibility

As *Figure 1* and *2* demonstrates, totally for all the analysed articles, the findings reveal that the most prominent frame employed by the news media to report the *hijab*-related articles in three of the Malaysian newspapers is the frame of *responsibility*. Responsibility frame accounts for 40% of the entire news stories analysed for the study. Instances for this frame that draw on some levels of authority are responsible for the issue are found in *New Straits Times*. For instance, "A law **should be** formulated to ensure the rights of women wearing hijabs are preserved..." (Nasa, 2017, para. 1) and "The Tourism and Culture Ministry and Women Development, Family and Community Ministry **must** take immediate action and change policies…" (Hamid & Roslan, 2017, para. 5). The journalist uses modal verbs, such as 'should be' and 'must' to form imperative

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sentences in the news stories. The usage of modal verbs is to express a duty or responsibility to the industry, as the use of 'must' is to express a strong necessity and inflicts a direct command, making it a strong request for the authorities to take the responsibility. Adding these verbs to form an imperative sentence in the article instantly makes its tone more serious so that hotels will take the issue strictly and solve the problem. In the meantime, most journalists frame the *hijab*-related news stories under a responsibility frame due to the fact that the *hijab* issue happening in Malaysia requires an urgent action since Islam has the highest number of adherents among the Malaysian population than Buddhism and Hinduism.

Another use of this frame pattern is suggesting the solution to the issue that is also used in the story reported in *New Straits Times*: "Yazid added that there was also **a need for** the government to conduct a continuous effort to raise awareness on employees' rights." (Muhamading, 2017, para. 7). In this case, Yazid is acknowledging that the government has a responsibility to address the issue as the story blames Malaysia Association of Hotels (MAH) for the imposing of *hijab* banning policy in Malaysia towards Muslim women. It suggests that the local government failed to deal with the *hijab* issue that caused employment opportunities among female Muslims. Therefore, NGOs were urging the government to take responsibility to create anti-discrimination law in order to create a harmonious work environment. Using "a need for" in this manner can help to emphasise the importance of action and motivate people to implement solutions. Similarly in the headline of this story: "NGOs **want** gov't to create anti-discrimination law" (Muhamading, 2017), the verb 'want' primarily expresses a desire for the government to take action and to safeguard employees' rights in the workplace, so that contributing to the frame of responsibility.

Another example of responsibility frame is the consequences of against the rules set by the government as "... the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) and state religious departments to **take back** such hotels' halal certificates…" (Fiona, 2018, para. 11). This article presents the issue in a way that assigns blame to the hotel industry as if they did not follow the policy. In this case, the use of the phrase "to take back the certificate" emphasises that the authorities have an obligation to issue a certificate only for companies that meet the guidelines. One of the headlines reported in *Malay Mail,* "Ministry tells local authorities to **delicense** hotels who ban the headscarf", this story suggests that the local authorities were being asked to take legal action towards the hotels who practised the *hijab* banning policy. The use of the prefix *De-* added to a verb is to perform a negative action to the hotel industry for bearing the responsibility of prohibiting Muslim women from wearing headscarves. Similarly, a quote found in *New Straits Times:* "The license of these hotels must be **revoked** unless they change their administration…" (Nasa, 2017, para. 8) also emphasising that hotels must take the responsibility to change the policy. This is due to the hotel industry needing a licence to continue operating. The vocabularies including 'delicense', 'revoked' and the phrase 'to take back' not only reinforcing the hotel industry to hold the responsibility and demanding an action to be performed. All the mainstream media employed the responsibility frame more frequently, which is an indication that the government and hotel industry must take responsibility respectively in order to create a harmonious workplace, and that solutions are required.

Within the responsibility frame, the study found both the positive and negative coverages in reporting the *hijabbing* issue in Malaysia. *The Star* reports more cases of positive frame in responsibility, regularly reporting some levels of authorities are responsible to solve the issue. *New Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* played more roles in reporting the consequences for not following

the rules, and that failure to do so business would be suspended such as revoking the licence to continue operating. This may have accentuated fears for the hotel industry to quickly not to ban frontline staff from donning the headscarves and may potentially lead to stress disorders. Therefore, this part can also be considered as the *human interest* frame in which the terms/ phrases used may trigger someone's emotions directly and indirectly.

B) Conflict

As stated, the *conflict* frame is another salient frame after the responsibility frame that had been used to report the coverage about the *hijab* issue in Malaysian mainstream newspapers. There was a point of interest in which most of the conflict frames in three of the selected newspapers were found in straight news rather than opinion pieces like lifestyles and letters. Only a few opinion pieces fall under the conflict frame among three newspapers. The imposing of *hijab* ban policy in Malaysia is already treated as a hotly debated issue in the country. This is because Malaysia being a multiracial country with a majority of Muslim adherents, yet some hotels refuse to hire *hijab-* wearers as the frontliners. In the conventional sense, the banning of *hijab* has sparked social and political conflicts between victims, and some authorities within the country. Examples of this frame can be found in three of the selected newspapers. As reported in *The Star* and *Malay Mail,* there were disagreements between the Minister of Tourism and Culture and Malaysia Association of Hotels (MAH) where the Minister pointed out Malaysia is compromising with the majority of Muslim population which consists of 60 percent of Malaysians are Muslims, so that the international hotel chains must comply with Malaysian laws and culture allowing frontliners to wear the *tudung* and considers the imposing of *hijab* banning policy as irresponsible and is insensitive to religious belief (Tan, 2017). However, Malaysia Association of Hotels (MAH) argued that the international hotel chains have been practising the uniform policy for a long time.

They then stand at the point of themselves to justify that Muslim employees still have other employment opportunities such as working in the backroom or choosing to work with other hotels that incorporate the headscarf/ *tudung* in its uniform rather than sit at the frontline to have interaction with guests (Palansamy, 2017). In the same news article by Palansamy in *Malay Mail,* for instance, the Minister of Tourism and Culture, Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz said: "...whoever who wants to **defend** (non-'tudung' practice in hotels), that this is an SOP, I feel they are **imbecilic**,..." (Palansamy, 2017, para. 4). He used the conflict term **'defend'** to imply that there is a conflict between different parties over the issue of non-'tudung' practice in hotels, and that some people are taking a stand to defend their position. To explain, the word 'defend' itself is not inherently conflictual, but in the context of this sentence, it refers to a situation in which there is disagreement over the *hijab* ban issue between parties. Meanwhile, the use of the word **'imbecilic'** also implies a very strong negative judgement of those who defend the non-'tudung' practise in hotels. The sentence suggests that Nazri is extremely passionate about the issue and is taking a confrontational stance towards those who disagree with them.

Still on the conflict frame, the journalist uses rhetorical questions in the headline, this can be seen in the news story reported in the *New Straits Times,* "Why deny one's freedom of religious practice? - Abim on headscarf ban policy" (Radhi, 2017). The question functions rhetorically as a means of signalling that their views are misguided. In this story, the deputy president of Women's Affairs, Azura claimed the *hijab* ban policy violated Article 5 of the Federal Constitution and emphasised that many female leaders and professionals from various fields continue to wear the *hijab* at work. Nonetheless, Cheah Swee Han, who is the president of MAH defended the hotel's action by claiming that it was part of an international chain hotel policy. This story shows disagreements occurred between both parties. Moreover, the journalist also uses another conflict

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term as in "Do not let this **polemic** affect the country's reputation…" (Radhi, 2017, para. 11). The term **'polemic'** used in the story is to describe a controversy about the ban on the use of headscarves, contributing the story under the conflict frame. In this context, the word "polemic" highlights the potential for disagreement and conflict to have negative impacts on the country's reputation because the *hijab* ban is a heated and controversial debate. To a certain extent, the term "polemic" does not necessarily imply physical conflict, but it does indicate that strong and opposing opinions towards the issue are being expressed. Hence, the use of the word "polemic" suggests that there is a controversy that must be resolved in order to avoid negative consequences for the country's reputation and economy.

The Star's news coverage also reports about the opposition towards the policy. For example, in one of its opinion pieces, *The Star* writes that: "...women's groups to oppose the plan initiated by Mujahid when they have claimed to be champions of women's rights, but yet invalidate the rights of women who choose to dress in a way that these groups…" (Amin, 2018, para. 16). The women's group was opposed to Datuk Mujahid Yusof Rawa's plan to develop guidelines for Shariah-compliant clothing at work in the private sector, but the airlines and hotel industries have refused to allow them to wear *hijab* in accordance with religious requirements.

In whatever way it is considered, the rule of banning *hijab* policy implemented in Malaysia is not just a discriminatory practice among hoteliers, but also a religious issue that has heightened the conflict both societal and political within the whole country and indeed the media especially news media who needs to keep updating the breaking news.

C) Discrimination

The *discrimination* frame almost detected the same number of analysed articles in three of the newspapers. In this analysis, the frame of discrimination mostly discussed in terms of religious

beliefs in the workplace, including the prohibition of female Muslim employees wearing religious clothing, such as the *hijab*, and the frame has been employed both directly and indirectly in the selected data. For instance, in Malaysian context, discrimination frame of the *hijab* is built through direct linguistic representations. The terms "discrimination" or "discriminatory" have been used as a direct trigger. One of its opinion pieces from *The Star* titled "Dealing with **discrimination**" (Johan, 2017), the journalist's tendency to use the term "discrimination" clearly indicates that this story is talking about discriminatory issues since the newspaper headline is the short summary of the news report. Hence, readers can directly know about what the news story is trying to deliver through the headline itself. In the same story, the journalist uses linguistic repetition of the term 'discrimination' throughout the entire article because it can help to emphasise the rule of barring Muslim women from wearing the *hijab* is a discriminatory practice and makes the story easier to follow. Not only does it function to emphasise the issue, the repetition of a term/ word also adds to the powers of persuasion to its story (Rabab'ah & Abuseileek, 2012). For example, in the same newspaper, "Many have **criticised** the "hijab ban", stating that the practice is **discriminatory**" (Johan, 2017, para. 3). Besides, the use of the verb 'criticised' clearly shows that the article is framed under discrimination since this is a negative verb referring to negative aspects, in the meantime, the term is always connected to the discrimination where it is used to judge a religion in this context.

The discrimination frame found in the *hijab* issue is nourished by the assertion on gender equality that the imposing of headscarf ban will provide to *hijab*-wearing Muslim women who work as hotel front liners. The journalist has not extended the discriminative aspect of the *hijab* which was replaced by the gender discrimination or religious discrimination offered by the *hijab* banning policy. In Chong's (2017) article, he mentioned that when applying for internships, some

students are advised to remove their headscarves, and hotel employees faced a similar situation as well. This showcases both gender and religious discrimination happening towards Islam in which many Muslim women wear the *hijab* as an expression of their Islamic faith, but wearing headscarves has now become a hindrance for them to seek employment.

Accordingly, religious and gender discrimination frames of the *hijab* can be seen from the article written by Azuddin (2018) in *Malay Mail,* stating that despite having similar or better qualifications, Chinese graduates receive more callbacks than Malay graduates. In contrast to the above-mentioned, racial and gender discrimination is directly referred to, but without the word "discrimination" in the assertion above. Thus, this example showed that discrimination frame of the *hijab* has also been employed indirectly. In all analysed articles, *The Star, New Straits Times,* and *Malay Mail* did not consider the *hijab* to be a discriminatory practice, instead, the discrimination frame is more focusing on banning the wearing of the *hijab* which provides inequality among the sexes.

D) Human Interest

The *human interest* frame was moderately employed in the coverage of the *hijab* banning issue in Malaysian newspapers. In the course of reporting the issue happening in Malaysia, the media may employ personal vignettes that generate feelings of empathy, and outrage. Instances of this frame present an "emotional" angle to the problem. In *The Star* (Azizan, 2018)*,* the article entitled "Malaysian women's **complex, emotional** relationship with the tudung", the terms 'complex' and 'emotional' generally appeal to reader's emotions that used to describe how Muslim women's frustration towards the *hijabbing* issue. Emotionally charged can be an effective tool for picking people's interest and fostering a deeper understanding of critical social and political issues. Apart from that, the use of storytelling style in the beginning of the news article is usually crucial

to capturing people's attention and hooks readers to keep them reading until the end. For example, the story written by Azizan (2018) begins with a narration of a tale rather than straight to the point in which the journalist has the desire to tell that people always judge on Muslim women how they should wear, but how can women's voices be heard. *Tudung* has become an internal struggle for them whether to wear or not to wear. The story uses personal vignettes to elicit feelings of empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion, as in "I've lived in Japan…I was afraid of how they'll treat me because I'm 'different' …having a visible Muslim identity makes her feel like she is part of a wider world…", (Azizan, 2018, para. 17-19), the girl not to worry about what other people think and ended up wearing the *hijab*. The use of personal experience in the news article may arouse the curiosity of the audiences. When journalists use personal experiences, it also makes the story more relatable and engaging for audiences, as it provides emotionally compelling. Another relevant story also comes from *The Star,* using the personal vignettes in the first paragraph of the article to generate public's interest: "A 20-year-old of Malaysian and Indonesian heritage wearing a "tudung" or hijab has broken records by being a Top 20 finalist in Miss Universe New Zealand 2018" ("Woman with Malaysian roots wearing hijab is Miss Universe New Zealand finalist", 2018). This story episodically relates the beauty pageant to the present debated *hijab* banning issue in Malaysia. By using personal vignettes, journalists can help to create a connection between the audience to the story by demonstrating how the issue affects people.

Another related report by the *News Straits Times* also employed a human interest frame. In the story, the Minister of Tourism and Culture poses a few rhetorical questions in his speech such as "What's the problem (with wearing hijab)? Is being naked better than covering one's head?" to generate a feeling of outrage and want his audiences to pay attention to the *hijab* issue ("Prohibiting hotel frontliners from wearing the hijab is 'kurang ajar', Nazri", 2017). In fact, the question asked

includes some level of sarcasm, anger, frustration, and disappointment which can be considered under the human interest frame. The tone of the article is written in an aggressive tone where the Minister is dissatisfied and disappointed towards the implementation of the *hijab* ban issue in the country. As a result, the rhetorical question is used to express a strong emotion and to grab the reader's or listener's interest by emphasising the speaker's point of view and attitude. Not only that, but the minister is also able to create a sense of immediacy that draws the reader or listener into the story and allows them to connect directly to the *hijab* issue if it is happening to them.

E) Morality

The second rarest frame is the *morality* frame in which the story puts the issue in the context of moral prescriptions or trying to deliver a moral message. For example, in *Malay Mail,* the article presents that every woman and girl have the freedom to choose what they want to dress as in the article "**Let** a woman think freely and choose whether they want to wear the hijab or not" (Ibrahim, 2019, para. 3). The right to religious freedom entails the freedom of all people to choose what and what not to wear. The use of "Let" implies that it is morally right and necessary for the group to take action to protect their rights. Within the same news media outlet, Lim (2018) reported that *hijab*-wearing Malaysian, Nurul Zuriantie Shamsul won the fifth place at the Miss Universe New Zealand 2018, who has become Miss Universe's first *hijabi* to compete on the international stage. The story is intended to convey a moral message to the public in order to get rid of stereotypes about *hijab*-wearers and never felt that the *hijab* was considered a "disadvantage." Even a *hijab*-wearer can become the Miss Universe. This news story challenges discrimination and stereotypes based on religious or cultural differences and highlights the idea of fairness regardless of one's religion or cultural background. The morality frame suggests that everyone should have equal opportunity to pursue their passions, without facing discrimination or prejudice.

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Apart from that, the use of modal auxiliary verbs can contribute to a news story being framed under the morality frame. Another instance from *New Straits Times,* a news report by Chong (2018) about the use of modal auxiliary verbs to express necessity. The story makes reference to religious tenets such as "**We need to** understand that the hijab ban issue is a blatant form of religious discrimination and is suggestive of Islamophobia" (Chong, 2018, para. 13). The phrase "We need to" is a call to action for everyone so that not to judge *hijab*-wearing Muslim women as a victim of circumstance, deprived of personal choice and freedoms. Indeed, Muslim women also have the right to choose how to dress themselves and the story tends to deliver a moral message saying that dress code equality should be provided to everyone. The story also advised others to show respect to Muslims, as the use of the modal verb often implies that there is a correct and incorrect approach to the issue and give the signal to the reader that the issue actually has moral implications.

F) Liberation

This study could only find two examples that fall under *liberation* frame in the *hijabbing* news reports reported in Malaysia, which makes it the rarest among the analysed articles. In the *Malay Mail*, the report quotes Maryam Lee as saying that she had been told to wear the headscarf all of her life is mandatory, and it is sinful if not wearing it ("Unveiling: Malaysian activist fights for hijab freedom (VIDEO)", 2020). However, she ended up deciding to take off the *hijab* as she felt that she was conforming to a social norm rather than religious dedication. Another Malaysian actress, Emma Maembong also made the same decision to not wear the *hijab* because they feel it is liberating. The same goes to the local celebrity, Uqasha Senrose (Chong, 2019). The attempt to remove the traditions of Islamic society is that they believe the *hijab* oppresses Muslim women and they somehow need their liberation. Besides, some of them consider it a means of asserting

their autonomy and personal freedom. Therefore, the act of *dehijabbing* can indeed be framed under the liberation frame, as it can be seen as a personal decision to break free from a religion.

Within the liberation frame, instead of arguing that *hijab* liberates them from a modern culture, the analysed articles claim that removing the *hijab* is a kind of liberation and seeking for personal freedom. This can be said due to the fact that prior to women's liberation, the *hijab* was always viewed as a hindrance and oppression.

4.2 Summary of the Results

Summarising all of the results for the current study shows that most articles are either discussing some level of authority is in charge of the issue/ solutions to the problem due to the implementation of the *hijab* ban issue or the disagreements between parties, including the government and the Malaysia Association of Hotels (MAH) who impose the *hijab* ban policy- an outcome of both frame analyses *(responsibility and conflict frames).* The most sources from the selected newspaper are from straight news. As Malaysia is a multiracial country that consists of three main different races where Muslims are the majority of population, the issue has aroused the attention of the government and news media. Thus, the *discrimination* frame has also been widely employed among three newspapers to report the religion issue.

On the other hand, the major differences between the studied newspapers are that only *The Star* is writing using personal vignettes and experiences such as storytelling which is very interesting and able to capture attention from the readers as well as make it more engaging for readers whereas there are none that can be found in *News Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* under the *human interest* frame. Rhetorical questions are more frequent in *News Straits Times.*

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Malaysian Online Newspapers Characteristics

The current study demonstrates how the Malaysian mainstream news media frames Islam in terms of dress code. The disparities in the size and number of articles published by *The Star*, *News Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* indicated that they were given unequal attention for the 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue based in Malaysia within the data collection period. As it can be seen in the findings of this study, indicates that *The Star* put the least attention to the Islam-related coverage especially in terms of the *hijab* within the chosen data collection period amongst the three newspapers. One possible explanation for the less Islamic coverage may be that the time interval is too short for collecting the data. Nonetheless, an alternative explanation may be that there might be several other Islam or Muslim-related articles that are indirectly related to the *hijab*/ headscarves among Muslim women within Malaysia context that were not selected as the data, only those directly specifically related to the *hijab* issue in Malaysia were selected for this study. This accounted for the reason why this research adopted a purposive sampling method to collect the data.

In addition to that, the present study also revealed that *The Star, News Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* report more breaking news that is relevant to the *hijab* issue rather than letters and opinions pieces. Breaking news also referred to as straight news that is usually short and is written in a straightforward form to report breaking news, letters are typically short and written in a formal tone and opinion is corresponded to the author genre where the articles include the author's point of view to a certain issue or topic. Therefore, the result can be ascertained through the study that found that when it came to reporting the Islamic State issue, the most common type of story writing

used by Malaysian online news was news story writing (Saifuddin & Sualman, 2017). According to Hassan and Latiff's (2021) research, the majority of Islam-related articles published in Malaysian online mainstream media were straight news, with only a few being feature stories. In this regard, the *human interest* frame was adopted less frequently by the local journalists in the analysis of the present study compared to responsibility, conflict and discrimination frames.

5.1.2 Types of Frames Used to Cover on Hijabbing issue

The findings reflected that three of the examined newspapers mostly employed responsibility and conflict framing practices to report on the *hijab* issue for their readers, or even to shape their attitudes and opinions toward the *hijab* debate. There are researchers asserting that journalists always choose powerful words that can influence how readers interpret and evaluate an issue depending on the word choice (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). This assertion has supported the current study as the findings found that reporters structure their story around the frame and the news frames guide journalists in deciding which words need to be used to describe an issue. Generally, journalists used a variety of words depending on the frame they employed in the particular story. As delineated above, identifying the frames used in news reporting was dependent on the different contents and discourse of the articles.

Comparing the findings in this study shows both similarities and differences with previous research. As aforementioned, the *responsibility* and *conflict* frames were the most salient frames adopted by journalists to report the *hijab* coverage in Malaysia. In fact, this is in line with a previous study done in Spain news media conducted by Calvo-Barbero and Carrasco-Campos (2020), their results also show that the frames of responsibility and conflict were the two generic news frames that appeared more frequently in Spanish press coverage of the ban on *burkini* and *burqa* wear by Muslim women. The responsibility frame predominates, implying that government

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agencies are expected to solve the social problems, while the presence of the conflict frame also implies that in order to capture readers' interest and attention, the media emphasises conflict between individuals or different parties (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Apart from that, although the responsibility frame was the most salient frame that can be found in three newspapers in the study, they each highlighted a different aspect of responsibility. *News Straits Times* relied significantly more heavily on responsibility framing compared to *The Star* and *Malay Mail.* The present study conducted within Malaysia context explained that the social issue is the responsibility of some level of authority that was covered by *The Star*, *Malay Mail,* and *News Straits Times,* but *News Straits Times* had more stories suggesting the need for a governmental change in banning *hijab* policy, solution to the issue and bearing the consequences for not following the policy set by the government. Interestingly, both studies found a very similar common ground in Spanish and Malaysian press. The dominance of the responsibility frame was expected because this *hijab* issue requires immediate action especially happening in a country with a majority of Islam adherents. Another research, Saifuddin and Sualman (2017) reported that conflict frames are also highly used in Malaysia online newspapers, particularly in the headline, lead, and attachment to portray the Islamic State issue. They further explain how the news media interprets the issue or disagreement between parties in order to gain the audience's attention, and they claim that the conflict frame is always concerned with the political and social conflict. This is in keeping with the current study where the imposing of *hijab* ban issue has sparked social and political conflicts. Meanwhile, the findings of this study concur with Hassan and Latiff's (2021) study who found that *The Star* and *News Straits Times* report more frequently conflict-related Islamic events that is likely to generate tension. The findings of the current study also found that *The Star* made significantly more room for the conflict frame in its coverage among the three

selected newspapers. This result is consistent with the findings found by Sofian and Hussein (2013) in *The Star*'s media coverage about the religious problems particularly on Muslims that had encountered in Malaysia.

While the current results found that responsibility and conflict frames are the utmost frames employed by the local journalists to frame news stories regarding to Islam reporting, this is contrary to the findings by Hassan and Azmi (2021) who found that the conflict and human interest frames were adopted more frequently in their research, and the majority of the news stories were neutral toward Islam. Intriguingly, there is an interesting finding from a previous study that reported similar results in terms of the frame used rather than the frequency. According to Hassan, Azmi and Abubakar (2017), Malaysian newspapers published more Islam-related articles under the frame of responsibility, human interest, and morality. The results support this study in which the findings show that journalists in Malaysian newspapers also employed similar frames to report the Islamic headscarves issue, just at a different frequency.

As discussed earlier in this study, *hijabis* have experienced workplace discrimination in Malaysia; for example, having been denied the right to work as hotel front liners causing employment discrimination against Muslim women. The findings of current research revealed that three selected newspapers almost adopted the discrimination frame equally. According to Unkelbach et al. (2010), they discovered a selection bias in Germany in which women who wore a *hijab* were rejected more quickly than women who did not wear a *hijab* in the hiring context. Ghumman and Ryan's (2013) study also reported that *hijab*-wearing women were perceived to be less interested in obtaining permission to fill out a job application and job offer expectations. Considering there are many studies reporting that *hijab*-wearing women were discriminated against in the employment process, even in the western countries. Thus, the findings of this study

suggest that barring *hijab*-wearing women from jobs is considered as a discriminatory practice which makes the journalists to frame the news stories under the discrimination frame. As the findings of this study discussed, the *hijab* has been employed both directly and indirectly in the selected data, and gender discrimination or religious discrimination offered by the *hijab* banning policy have been found. In fact, the result can be ascertained through the study conducted by Khirallah (2017) opined that the term "discrimination" has no direct linguistic association with the *hijab* but is still being framed as discrimination in British and Spanish press through the banning of *hijab* in French.

In terms of the morality frame, only a few stories from *News Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* focused on delivering moral values to the readers towards the Muslim *hijab* issue. As reported by Hassan, Azmi and Abubakar (2017), their research revealed similar findings to the current study in which the frame of morality is the second rarest frame among the others in reporting Islam in news reporting. This makes sense since moral value is rarely being delivered through straight news. While the current study's findings indicated that straight news is among the most common news items found in the *hijab* issue in Malaysia, this could explain why the morality frame is less frequently adopted. This is because the fact that straight news is straight to the point and journalists focus more on delivering the most important information and facts in a concise manner rather than teaching readers moral values. Even though Malaysian newspapers applied the "moral" frame in certain issues, there is not much. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that wearing the *hijab* is often tied to personal values, religion practice and cultural norms, making it be framed under morality. As claimed by Halim, Razif and Paad (2022), the *hijab* controversy being perceived differently by the media, and the focus of media is raised on the *hijab* debates, questions such as whether wearing the *hijab* is morally right or wrong, what values should be upheld, and how different cultural and

religious practices should be accommodated within broader societal norms. This has caused the news outlets to choose to report on *hijab* stories under morality because they believe that they are morally significant or that they have moral implications towards society.

The liberation frames were even sparser. As the current study has narrowed down the scope of research to only examine the *hijab* issue specifically in Malaysia, including the act of *dehijabbing* as presented by the Malaysian mainstream newspapers, thus, no past studies or research articles can be found related to the framing of the *dehijabbing* issue in Malaysia. Only a very limited study had been done in the West available to this moment towards the *hijab*-wearing women. As reported in the findings, news articles pertaining to the *dehijabbing* issue are among the least produced by local news media, causing the news article framed under liberation frame becomes the rarest in the present study.

5.2 Conclusion

Wearing a *hijab,* especially while living and working in a country where Islam is the official religion, should not be a barrier to progress in one's career. Despite Malaysia being a multiracial country, Muslim women facing discrimination due to wearing the *hijab* at the workplace were being sparked in the Malaysian online English newspapers. The majority of people believe that Muslimas wear headscarves to express their cultural identity or for religious reasons. However, they were being discriminated against at the workplace for wearing the headscarves and this has been strongly highlighted in the newspapers so as to catch the attention of the authorities. Research on Islam and Muslim-related issues in the media has been a never-ending debate that has always been updated on a regular basis, no matter if it is in Malaysia or Western countries. It has caught the attention of academics, scholars, preachers, or researchers to discuss the issue. The

dissimilar amount of news coverage on the similar issue by the newspapers indicated journalist's diverse point of views depending on how much they focus and put attention on the issue.

On a final note, the content analysis using Goffman's (1974) Framing framework employed in this study was extremely helpful in examining the frame on the Muslim women *hijabbing* issue in Malaysia. The six frame types were identified in this study on three Malaysian online newspapers reportage on *hijab* issue. The findings revealed that the three selected newspapers reported the *hijab* issue with varying degrees of prominence and intensity in each of the frames. With the escalation of numbers of discrimination towards *hijab*-wearing women, the *hijabbing* issue happening in the workplace has become a major concern towards the government. Since the unfair treatment exists, the government must take initiative to implement appropriate policies to protect individuals' rights to practise their religion. In this case, it is worth noting that almost half of all selected news articles portraying Islam under the frame of responsibility to construct *hijabbing* stories followed by the conflict frame, whereas the frame of liberation is the least adopted in the news coverages. Through this study, the results present a more nuanced understanding of the frames adopted by journalists in shaping publics' perceptions of the Muslim *hijab* and thus making a novel contribution to the existing literature review on the attitudes towards Muslim women in Malaysia.

The framing of *News Straits Times* and *Malay Mail* news revealed more interest in covering some level of authority being asked to solve the issue and to take immediate action to stop the discrimination act, indicating that responsibility frame was the most prominent frame used by the local news media outlets. However, the coverage found in *The Star* was more extensive and comprehensive in covering disagreements between certain parties that contributed to the frame of conflict. Meanwhile, this study also discovered the utilisation of the other frames: discrimination,

human interest, morality, and liberation. The research objectives posed at the start of the study were thus answered through the analysis of the various frames generated from the data.

5.2.1 Implications

This study contributes to filling a research gap in the existing literature by conducting research on the frame of news stories in 'Muslim Women Hijab' issue is scant especially in the Malaysian context. Furthermore, the findings shed light on the interaction between online mainstream newspapers and the context in which framing takes place in producing *hijab*-related news issues. This is crucial for academics and researchers but also for government policymakers and political leaders in Malaysia for future policy formulation. Given the growing strength of alternative voices in online mainstream news media, policymakers must respond to the hotly debated issue of protecting women's rights in dress code in future policy making. In the meantime, the study educates the public about the existing gender inequalities happening to *hijab*-wearing women in Malaysia. The results are also helpful for journalists in terms of improving their writing style in reporting the relevant news reportage.

5.2.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Despite the fact that the findings of this study provide valuable insight to news exposure, academics, researchers, journalists, policymakers, and publics, as with any other research, this study is not without limitations. It is critical to recognise the limitations of this research which may give directions and recommendations for future studies. One limitation of this research is that the study looked into issues concerning Muslim women facing discrimination due to the *hijab* wearing only in Malaysia, thus, this study's findings may not be applicable to the other countries on the same issue. Secondly, drawing data from three mainstream news media to examine the framing in news coverage only from one language which is English represents another limitation. With regard

to the influence of *The Star, News Straits Times* and *Malay Mail,* there are other news outlets that also have deep interests in Islamic news since the headscarves have been controversial even in a majority of Muslim countries. Therefore, future attempts may consider studying a larger sample of local news portals and include other languages especially in the coverage of an issue that has been affecting religious practice. Also, it could expand the research to study a large number of articles over more years that may include the *hijab* modernity and *hijab* fashion, but still in Malaysian context in order to get more comprehensive results. Divergence on the issue should be studied over a longer period and compared to similar studies from other countries in future research. Nevertheless, it is also recommended to look into whether the identified frame for wearing a *hijab* matters in this study is similar for other news portals. The fact that the results in different countries may differ depends on how the journalist reports the issue. A follow-up study may be conducted in a few years to see if the results are still valid. Thirdly, analysis of online news content is another limitation. Future studies should also look at visuals such as photos and videos attached to news articles in addition to text to better assess and understand framing. Finally, this study concentrated on only one aspect of framing. It would be interesting, however, to investigate more aspects of frames by looking into news slant, news topics, and valence of the news articles. Future research would be interesting other than looking into how journalists frame the *hijab* issue in the news and to study along with public perceptions towards the "Muslim Hijab" in Malaysia.

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Appendix

Data Set (40 News Articles)

Frame Types	News Articles (URL)	Explanation (Examples)
Responsibility	**The Star**	
	1. https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/13/ngo-lift-hijab-ban-on-hotel-frontliners	-NGO urged the Tourism and Culture, Women, Family and Community Development ministries to ***take action and change the discrimination policy***
	2. https://www.thestar.com.my/metro/metro-news/2017/12/02/four-hotels-advised-against-imposing-headscarf-ban-at-front-desk/	-Headline: Four hotels ***advised*** against imposing headscarf ban (The verb "advised" is to tell someone to take the responsible to the issue)
	News Straits Times	
	1. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/302531/right-wear-headscarf-work-protected-federal-constitution-says-human	**-**The Tourism and Culture Ministry and Women Development, Family and Community Ministry is responsible to ***take immediate action*** and change *hijab* ban policies
	2. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2018/01/328689/union-ngos-want-hotel-association-show-proof-no-tudung-sop	**-**Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) and state religious departments ***take back hotels' halal certificates*** to stop the discrimination against Muslim women
	3. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2018/02/333440/hotel-associations-agree-scrap-no-tudung-policy	**-**Three major associations in the hotel industry have ***signed a pledge*** with the Human Resources Ministry to not implement the banning *hijab* policy

	4. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/ 2017/11/304614/set-special-committee-study-workplace-discrimination-malaysia-lam-thye	-special committee *is tasked to* review the discriminatory practices and making recommendations to the government
	5. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/ 2017/11/306517/tourism-ministry-mulls-introducing-act-against-discrimination	-"The government can only take action if there is a provision on discrimination in any of its Acts" (Government becomes the one to responsible for the issue) -Nazri also suggests that hoteliers can standardize their uniforms according to one's race and religion
	6. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/ 2017/11/303990/ministry-keeping-watch-hijab-ban-issue-rohani	-"We should let Datuk Seri Nazri (Aziz) address this since he is the Tourism and Culture Minister" (Aziz was being asked to take the responsibility to solve the issue)
	7. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/ 2017/11/305400/protect-womens-rights-wear-hijab-work-bung-moktar	-The story *employed modal verbs* - 'should', 'must', 'had to' to indicate government is taking the responsible to solve the issue
	8. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/ 2017/11/303571/hijab-ban-hotels-govt-pressure-could-do-away-discriminatory-practices	-Headline: "Gov't pressure could do away with discriminatory practices" clearly stated that government is responsible to eliminate the discrimination towards *hijab*-wearing Muslim women

	9. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/304352/ngos-want-govt-create-anti-discrimination-law	**-**NGOs were urging the government to take responsibility to create anti-discrimination law -The use of vocabulary 'want' show desire to government to take action to protect the rights of employee
	Malay Mail	
	1. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/02/08/three-hotel-associations-sign-undertaking-not-to-impose-headscarf-ban-polic/1573045	**-**Headline: ***'Sign Undertaking'*** with the Ministry of Human Resources showing that hotel associations were responsible for not to impose the *hijab* ban issue
	2. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/01/13/headscarf-ban-on-hotel-workers-employment-act-to-be-amended-to-prevent-disc/1553183	**-**The Human Resources Ministry had been taking the responsible to ***amend the employment act*** to respect the rights of individuals
	3. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/11/15/minister-tells-local-authorities-to-delicense-hotels-with-headscarf-ban/1510957	**-**Headline: "Ministry tells local authorities to ***delicense hotels*** who ban the headscarf" (Some levels of authorities are responsible to solve the issue)
	4. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/08/09/enact-anti-discrimination-laws-to-protect-women-not-dress-codes-womens-grou/1660826	**-**Headline: "***Enact*** anti-discrimination laws" (The verb 'enact' follow by a noun 'anti-discrimination' show Women's Aid Organisation (WAO) is suggesting the solution to come out with a new anti-discrimination law to deal with discrimination)

		5. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/11/14/dap-mp-says-tudung-ban-discriminatory-offers-legal-help-for-court-challenge/1510081	-DAP MP Gobind Singh Deo today *offered legal aid* for those who want to file lawsuits to challenge a "discriminatory" ban -The phrase 'offered legal aid' shows that the article aimed to tell the solution for the issue
Conflict	**The Star**		
	1. https://www.thestar.com.my/opinion/letters/2018/08/11/free-to-wear-what-they-want-freedom-to-dress-as-they-choose	-Women's groups oppose the plan initiated by Mujahid who claimed to be champions of women's rights, but yet invalidate the rights of women to dress	
	2. https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/20/teach-hotels-a-lesson-says-bung-on-tudung-ban/	-The story reflect disagreement between Malaysia Hotels Association (MAH), Barisan Nasional lawmaker and Tourism and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Nazri Abdul Aziz	
	3. https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/14/nazri-slams-noheadscarf-policy-of-hotels	-Disagreement between the Minister of Tourism and Culture and Malaysia Hotels Association (MAH)	
	News Straits Times		
	1. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/302658/why-deny-ones-freedom-religious-practice-abim-headscarf-ban-policy	-Rhetorical question being used in the headline to signal their views are misguided -Disagreements occurred between the MAH president and the Women's Affairs (Helwa) deputy president, Azura	

Malay Mail	
1. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/11/16/tudung-ban-on-hotel-workers-a-violation-of-womens-rights-says-minister/1511855	-The Malaysian Association of Hotels (MSH) chairman Samuel Cheah Swee Hee said the policy was practiced by the international hotel chains while Rohani claimed that *tudung* ban is a violation of women's rights (Disagreements between MSH and Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim)
2. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/11/13/citing-islamophobia-pas-leader-laments-muted-response-to-hotels-headscarf-b/1509097	-Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) said that the rule of banning headscarf is in accordance with international standards of operation, but Hishammuddin Abdul Karim claimed that allow women to wear hijab is a form of respect and may boost business (Disagreements between MAH and Hishammuddin Abdul Karim)
3. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/11/13/justify-headscarf-ban-tourism-ministry-tells-hotels/1508945	-MAH justified the *hijab* ban as being in accordance with the international standards of operation while the Ministry of Tourism and Culture argued that the *hijab* ban policy is unfair to the Muslim women who want to work in the hotel sector.
4. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2017/11/14/nazri-tudung-ban-	-MAH responded that the *hijab* ban policy is

Discrimination	The Star	
	for-hotel-workers-discriminatory/1510173	practiced in international hotel chains, but the Minister of Tourism and Culture, Nazri said such policy is discrimination as Malaysia has most of the Muslim population.
	The Star	
	1. https://www.thestar.com.my/opinion/columnists/a-humble-submission/2017/11/30/dealing-with-discrimination-our-constitution-prohibits-discrimination-against-citizens-but-it-applie/	-The headline includes the vocabulary "Discrimination" to indicate that this article is talking about discriminatory issue (direct linguistic representations)
	News Straits Times	
	1. https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2017/11/309002/firms-should-respect-right-wear-hijab	-barring Muslim women wearing hijab from working at the front line (Gender discrimination and Workplace discrimination)
	2. https://www.nst.com.my/news/politics/2017/11/302806/mah-statement-headscarves-ban-discriminatory-irresponsible-mic	- The term "discriminatory" appears in the headline - "..Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) is akin to telling Muslim women to work elsewhere if they refuse to adhere to the no headscarf policy" (religious discrimination)
	Malay Mail	
	1. https://www.malaymail.com/news/what-you-think/2018/08/07/on-discrimination-against-the-hijab-aziff-azuddin/1660177	-The story mentions few sectors disallow to wear *hijab* in the workplace -Gender discrimination and Religion discrimination (Chinese receives more callbacks than Malay graduates despite they have

		similar qualifications)
	2. https://www.malaymail.com/news/what-you-think/2017/11/10/headscarf-ban-unfair-and-discriminatory-to-muslim-women-hazlin-chong/1507331	-Headscarf bans in hotel -Students being advised to remove their headscarves to apply for internships (Religion discrimination)
	3. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/01/28/ministry-says-found-13-hotels-banning-staff-from-wearing-tudung/1564093	**-**13 out of 88 hotels in Peninsular Malaysia prohibiting *hijab*-wearing women workers (Gender discrimination and Religion discrimination)
Human Interest	**The Star**	
	1. https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/family/2018/02/28/muslim-women-tudung-hijab-headscarf	**-**"People judge on what to wear and what not to wear, but how can women's voices be heard?- women should be respected" -Include personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage and empathy towards Muslim women -Headline: Malaysian women's ***complex, emotional*** relationship with the tudung (The terms 'complex' and 'emotional' is linked to a human-interest story to generate a sense of emotion)
	2. https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2018/06/03/woman-with-malaysian-roots-wearing-hijab-is-miss-universe-new-zealand-finalist/	**-**The story begins with a paragraph of storytelling (Not a form of breaking news)
	News Straits Times	
	1. https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/11/303180/prohibiting-hotel-	-"What's the problem (with wearing hijab)? Is being naked better than covering one's head?"

		frontliners-wearing-hijab-kurang-ajar-nazri	-Rhetorical questions posed to generate a feeling of anger and sarcasm
	Malay Mail		
	1.	https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2019/10/15/wearing-tudung-a-must-for-muslim-women-but-going-without-is-fine-too-survey/1800403	-The headline itself is contradictory may generate curiosity from the reader to read the following
	2.	https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2019/04/17/dehijabing-forum-panelists-accuse-jais-of-harassing-intimidating-female-act/1743964	-The article ends with no conclusion -Use of words such as **"harass" "intimidate"** and phrase **"Let's do our part…"**
Morality	**News Straits Times**		
	1.	https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2017/11/302502/hijab-ban-hotels-discriminatory	- … and is suggestive of **Islamophobia** (Last two paragraphs: Refer to religious tenets)
	Malay Mail		
	1.	https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2018/08/06/hijab-wearing-malaysian-born-nurul-placed-fifth-in-miss-universe-nz/1659499	**-** Deliver moral message saying that *Hijabis* also can win in the beauty pageant
	2.	https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2019/04/17/let-women-decide-whether-to-wear-hijab-says-latheefa/1744221	**-**Headline had implied the moral value (Let Women Decide) to tell that women have the rights to choose how they want to dress
Liberation	**Malay Mail**		
	1.	https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/09/21/unveiling-malaysian-activist-fights-for-hijab-freedom/1905132	**-**A Muslim girl (Maryam Lee) want to seek for a *hijab* freedom

	2. https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2019/04/15/mujahid-jais-to-act-on-book-launch-forum-about-dehijabing/1743585	-The act of *dehijabbing:* seek to *hijab* freedom is a form of liberation