Visibility of PM Najib’s 100 Days in Office: A Framing Approach of his Political Branding Identity

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Abstract

This study will look up the four main newspapers focuses on the framing of news throughout the reign of Malaysian 6th Prime Minister (PM), Dato Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak during his 100 days in office. The political brand is gaining its popularity as it is competitive in terms of voters’ market. With the involvement of consumer or voters’ choices, the branding principles have been practically functional with the branding principles (Keller, 2002 in Smith & French, 2009). This paper, too has examined four main newspapers identifying the visibility of political branding attributes of Malaysian 6th Prime Minister (PM), Dato Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak during his 100 days in office. This study investigated framing and branding attributes of PM’s political strategies, visibility and images in the media. Five framing attributes adopted and modified from Semetko & Valkenburg, (2000); responsibility, economic consequences, morality, conflict and human interest were used. While branding attributes consists of reassurance, value-based, credible, aspirational, simple and unique. Cramer’s V, Phi value and analysis of variance (anova) statistical analysis were used to confirm the hypotheses.

Keywords: Political Branding, Framing, Political messages, Political Communication, News

Introduction

Media plays an important role to make the leaders of a country to make their name heard and their image is seen. The image of a political figure can be set by the media and also able to make them more salient than others. Therefore, the media has great influence on how people perceive political figures. The connection of political entities with the public begins with the management of visibility and how they able to influence the public opinion as well as to maintain the electoral seat and at the same time the public will also used the media to give their feedback on certain issues or policies to their leader. Framing is known as a tool characterized in news report which have an influence on how it is understood by the public.

The political brand is gaining its popularity as it is competitive in terms of voters’ market. Not only during the election, but throughout the reign of any leaders in any country, political branding will be able to gain trust of the public and also to those who not vote for them during the previous election. With the involvement of consumer or voters’ choices, the
branding principles have been practically functional with the branding principles (Keller, 2002 in Smith& French, 2009) such similarities of product brandings attributes such as physical goods, services, people, organizations, places or ideas could be related with the political parties known as an organizations where politicians (people) look for exchanging the ideas and promises for electoral support.

**Background of Study**

Malaysia is blessed with six Prime Ministers who are the main actors of political communicators for every elections held. These Prime Ministers (PM) have different strategies in creating a media agenda as their tools to create an attention and able to persuade the voters to vote for them as a Prime Minister (Zahid Hamidi, 2008). Malaysian 6th Prime Minister, YAB Dato’ Sri Mohd Najib Tun Hj Abdul Razak, son of the second Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Tun Abdul Razak, walked into office on April 3rd, 2009 after sworn in before Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin at Istana Negara. Najib takes over from Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who stepped down after leading Malaysia since October 31, 2003. On March 26 2009, Najib won the UMNO presidency unopposed. On his inaugural presidency speech, he urged the people to judge him by his actions and not to prejudge him based on perceptions and lies (The Star, 29 March, 2009).

The media is widely used in order to persuade the public and gain their support for the leadership of Najib. The media is believed to assist political communication between the public and policymakers. Louw 2010 described the importance of media as a cultural resource during twentieth century, simply because it is known as the central site for managing an impression and exploring social position and status (‘publicity has become a resource politicians must win over). Louw also believed that the media can also act as an agent for positioning people especially through speech, communication etc.

The Prime Minister Dato Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak (Najib) and his media officers often made an effort to ensure the media coverage more positively visible to win the heart of reporters, shaping the flow of news from the executive branch to underline good coverage and organizing work agenda to get more chances for favorable media exposure.
A national political brand consists of the perceptions of a country’s political actions and ideals, and is most often communicated and enacted by the leaders of the country. Brands focus can improve understanding of political decisions making, and, in particular, repeat purchasing at election. Successful parties develop brand attributes in their leaders to maintain relationship with supporters beyond the initial transaction, although in doing so, they create problems for leadership succession. As for intangible characteristics of brand in political, the leader’s brand will be focusing on image and also reputation (Needham, C, 2006).

**Political Branding and Framing**

Political brand is a blend of a political communication and political marketing which is a notion of theories, methods, techniques and social practices inspired by commercial marketing and assigned to promote images among individuals, groups, institutions projects and political ideas, towards on election process and the increase of social influence and politics, in general (Barbero,2006). While (Smith, 2005) believed that the political brand is referred as an associative system of interconnected political information and attitudes, and the consumer will keep it in their memory and emerge when the memory of a voter or consumer exist.

As for political brand, the priority is taken by description, explanation and instrumental innovation of political communication to screen, host and transmit, in this instance, the identity of political brand. This elements of portraying image and reputation will influences how publics make sense of politics (framing), how publics decide what is important in politics (agenda setting), and how citizens evaluate the policies and authorities that politics places before them (priming), Kinder, 2006. Candidate personality is also playing a major role in voter behaviour. In politics, an image is created through the use of visual impressions that are communicated by the leaders’ physical presence, media appearances, and experiences and record as a political leader as that information incorporated in the minds of the public. Basically, Najib has been portrayed as a brand extension based from his father who is Malaysian’s second prime minister. With his walkabout less than 24 hours after walked into office, he has captured the heart of the public and with his walkabout’s activities; he seems to trying very hard to gain the trust from the voters after BN lost five states in Election 2008.
Shama (1973), Newman and Sheth (1985) and O’Cass (2002), have suggested that the principles of well-known consumer-behaviour theory can be applied to voter behaviour and vice-versa. Brand research conducted by Keller (1993, 1998) and Aaker (1982, 1991), stated that branding strategies can be applied to all products and services without exception. One of the main reasons that political parties would use branding as part of their strategy would be in positioning of their brand against competitors.

The core of any brand is that the brand has a sustainable competitive, advantage or unique selling proposition that gives consumers a compelling reason for buying that particular brand (Keller 1993, Aaker 1982, Ries and Trout 1979). These differences can be communicated clearly by making direct comparisons with competitors or may be highlighted without stating a competitive point of reference (Keller 1993), which makes the application of this strategy ideal in the political market place. A brand can also be positioned as being exemplar in its category, and can use its specific attributes and benefits, such as name, with consumers or the voters or the public to position itself as the leading choice of consumers.

The frame package suggests a definition, an explanation, a problematization, and an evaluation of the event and ultimately results in a number of logical conclusions, for example, with regard to who is responsible for the perceived problems (Van Gorp, 2006). Entman, 1993, said that the importance of framing has greater implications towards political communication.

The media images could also bring forward the values of the political communicators. As Najib is the prominence value of the news, with the help of media images it can embrace the summary manners, such as credibility or trustworthy, responsibility, confidence etc, Fredin et al (1996). Fredin et al also noted that media images identify a set of schemata that refers to the news media and the coverage of political news. These media images are significantly associated with the political news which can act as mediation between the media use and outcomes of the news such as attitude change, evaluations, and knowledge of issues (McLeod et al.1986; Graber, 1988; in Fredin et al 1996).

Framing Attributes

The Prime Ministers has a power to generate media reporting through certain strategies such as, news releases, briefings, and news conferences with various kind of media channel such
as newspapers, television or radio, backgrounds, or even giving speech through television broadcasting. Therefore, the journalistic frames are influenced him, as political elites, “and that the news stories become a discussion for framing challenges in which these actors compete in disseminating their political issues” (Luther, C.A, Miller, M.M, 2005). These frames aspects in media content will be seen through framing tools such as word choice, metaphors, exemplars, descriptions, arguments, and visual images (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Pan & Kosicki, 1993 in Baldwin Van Gorp, 2007).

Druckman,2001, Scheufele,1999, explained that frame can be articulated in two ways, a frame in communication or media frame refers to the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker or politician (Najib) uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience. After his presidency speech, the media has widely exposed or framed Najib as a leader with power to persuade and influence the people through his political message, pictures of him visited places like Petaling Street and Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman and taking the public transportation by surprised. And the newspapers also posted very good comments and opinion from the public about Najib who has being brand as people friendly and down to earth (The Star, NST, UM&BH,2009).

The perception of framing presumes that no remark or appearance of observation via text can be value-free. Tuchman, 1978; Gitlin,1980; Gamson,1998 verified that the news media content has a social reality which is actively constructed and can be reflected in analyses of the role that mass media frames play in shaping political discourse and in reproducing the dominant political culture.

Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000 indicated that frames have five values which frequently used such as:

- **Conflict frames** – the conflict frames emerge when there’s a conflict exist among the individuals, groups and institutions. This frame is usually used during election campaign. By framing this news, problems of social complex and political problems could be decreased to soft conflicts. Previous research done by Neuman et al., in 1992 has proved that US media has reported a variety of issues and conflict which have been as a news frame. Patterson (1993) in Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, found out that the conflict frame also covers discussion in the news between political elites often reduces complex substantive political debate to overly simplistic conflict. Within one
year in office, Najib has faced a few bi-elections and news has reported so many kinds of issues and solutions were given by newspapers in order to win the votes of the people in each constituency.

- **Human Interest Frame** – focusing on the personal, emotional side of an event, issues or problem. And since this paper is about framing of Najib, obviously it has this category whereby all of the four newspapers especially during the first week of his appointment as PM, have reported about Najib personal information, his life history, his passion towards the nation, pictures of him during and after the sworn in, he went down to see his citizen and sat with him and drinking tea with the customers in the restaurant during his walkabouts etc. The personalizing of an issue adds the storyline character of news. By using this value it can create closer of the person to the readers, more personalize; creating more dramatize and emotionalize news. This human interest frame will definitely able to capture and hold the public’s attention. With much personalize and emotional frames of Najib, this way will enable the readers to brand him as good or bad leader.

- **Economic Consequences Frame** – with this frames, news will expose the economic consequences an event, problem or issue will be reported for an individual, group, institution, region or country. All of four newspapers have made huge report on New Economic Model, Economic Transformational Plan, Budget 2010 and Budget 2011 in order to ease the burden of the people as Najib always said, People First Performance Now. This frame is often used to make potential economic impact and consequences clearly towards the public. The economic impact of an event has an important news value and it is often suggested that news producers used this frame to make on issue relevant to the public.

- **The Morality Frame** – this news frames is more on matters for religious or moral charge to event, problems or even subject. Because the professional journalistic norm advocates objectivity, journalists often refer indirectly to this morality frame. Journalists have someone ask question, but, through the use of a quote the story which can contain a moral message or specific code of behavior. As reported by The Star on 8th September 2009, whereby the headline said Respect other religions and races,
Muslim urged’ as Najib said Islam was brought to the world as a universal religion and to him it was important for Muslims to closely look into the teachings as these observed the religious requirements during Ramadan.

- **The Responsibility Frame** – presents an issue or a problem in such a way that the responsibility for causing or even to solve a problem lies with the government, individual or a group. If we look at individual level, Najib has expressed his first policy for the nation, hours after sworn in, which is 1M, as a continuation of the country’s nation building, despite of racial and cultural differences, the people should share a passion for a better future by aiming for an opportunity, respect and extended friendship. Najib using 1M has pledged the Malaysians to join him in his journey to break racial barriers in the country in order to build the nation (Paridah Samad 2009). As for government responsibility, news frame could be found as new policy has been made under the leadership of Najib. And UMNO who is also under the power of Najib, as a group would have contributed its corporate social responsibility to those in needs especially during the flood has been widely reported by all of four newspapers. For example Program UMNO Juara Rakyat on January 2010.

Any political parties will use various types of communication strategies in order to maintain their political entities, not only during political campaign, but throughout their leadership with the public and voters. McGhee-Hil and Bowles (2006), taken from (Pfau & Burgoon, 1989) claimed that the messages derived from political campaigns are encouraging, attack or negation. The encouraging messages focused on the positive characteristics of a candidate’s or a leader’s character or issue, while attack messages focused on attacking an opponent, and negation messages answer an opponent’s attack. McGhee-Hil and Bowles (2006), also indicated that form Sabato, 1981 and Garramone, 1985 attack messages can be effective which resulted the voter criticism. Pfau & Burgoon in McGhee-Hil and Bowles (2006) stated that during the early stages of a campaign, character messages may be influential; however, during the later stages issue messages may have more of an impact.

Newman & Perloff (2004) believed that, framing approaches have stimulating possibilities for political marketing, with subtle influences that frames can apply on attitudes. With framing, it also can increase a notification paid to the role affects plays in micro marketing effects, especially, how it can interconnected with cognition, and strategies.
Political Branding Attributes

Since the intangible aspects of brands in politics are image and reputation, and the three influential factors of voters or public decision making of chosen their leader are personal identity, personal ethics, and personal benefit, framing will have to cover the informational representation of Najib according to the value image, which consist of the decision maker’s belief, values, ethics, and morals. Frames of news of Najib will also need to cover the trajectory image of Najib, which will ease the public or future voters to make decision through his behaviour. With framing also will enable to create strategic image, also known as plan, which the public intend to attain the desired goals.

The researchers adopted and modified Needham (2005) of branding attributes which could render Najib’s branding characters. There are basically many advantages of brands in politics. Firstly, it will ease the consumers or voters or people to choose the leaders and party policies, it will help to build up voter trust, brands are aspirational, holding out the promises of personal enhancement and successful brand of parties and leaders, must adopt their external presentational strategies to a set of core values, and able to create differences and seeking popularity and at the same time to flourish the relationship with the voters or public. And for this case Najib is known as brand extension as he is the son of Malaysian second Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak. In political marketplace, the big purchased every four to five years at general elections, internal stakeholders of UMNO which is party election, the second order of purchases which is by-elections for examples election at Bukit Gantang, Perak and regular choices about which party’s version of events or policy options should be accepted and endorsed.

This study operationanised the concept of branding attributes as follows:

- **Reassurance**: Brand leader promising standardisation and replicability, generating trust between political entities with the voters/public.
- The branding attributes of responsibility or value based can also be found when he is actually did what he preached. The keywords used here are reiterated, would continue to measure the Value based attribute.
• **Credible**: Ability to win the heart of the voters/public despite of what have been offered by the opponents. The issues created and taken by the opposition and the ability to overcome these conflicts.

• **Aspirational**: inducing a particular vision of the good life or holding out the promise of personal enhancement. This is more of his personality and external images which captured his voters and public through his actions, his words or wisdom, promises for good life, his own history etc. And being a brand extension, Najib was a son of Malaysia’s second Prime Minister, has given him an extra credit of his leadership.

• **Simple/ unique**: policies/ style of leadership/ motto which make the brand leader different from previous leaders. The concept of “One Malaysia: People First Performance Now” was announced hours after he was sworn in as Prime Minister which he urged the renewal of Malaysia to rise to the challenge of building One Malaysia.

• **None of above**: when the news story does not fit into any of the five categories above.

**Methodology**

Four mainstream newspapers were content analysed using the framing and political branding attributes. The medium of study are selected newspapers namely Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia, The Star and News Strait Times. And type of information categories (Framing, sources and substantive characteristics of the news paper articles and also its political branding attributes), which are also divided into sub-categories and sub-sub-categories serve as a focus of the study. Therefore, content analysis is the most appropriate method to employ.

Media monitoring of Malaysian print news have been conducted from 3\textsuperscript{rd} April 2009 until 11\textsuperscript{th} July 2009. The framing of Najib news was monitored through Bahasa Malaysia print daily namely Utusan Malaysia and also Berita Harian, and two English-language newspapers, known as The Star and New Straits Times. The researchers used Semetko and Valkenburg on their research about European politics in order to measure the framing characteristics of Najib news. While the measurement for content analysis of political branding attributes were taken and modified from Needham (2005).
ANOVA is used in order to compare the branding attributes and five types of news framing towards single factor analysis of variance which is the newspaper since newspaper is the independent variable with nominal levels. Cross-Tabulation and Phi (or Cramer’s V) were used in order to provide a test of statistical significance and also provide information about the strength of the association between political branding attributes with news framing.

Research questions and hypotheses

**RQ** How does news framing contribute towards political branding?

**Hypothesis 1: News Framing Characteristics**

- **H₁**: Responsibility Frames could be found throughout all newspapers
- **H₂**: Economic Consequences Frames could be found throughout all newspapers
- **H₃**: Human Interest Frames could be found throughout all newspapers
- **H₄**: Conflict Frames could be found throughout all newspapers
- **H₅**: Morality Frames could be found throughout all newspapers

**Hypothesis 2: Political Branding Attributes**

- **H₁**: Reassurance attributes of branding can be found throughout five types of news framing
- **H₂**: Value-based attributes of branding can be found throughout five types of news framing
- **H₃**: Credible attributes of branding can be found throughout five types of news framing
- **H₄**: Simple/Unique attributes of branding can be found throughout five types of news framing
- **H₅**: Aspirational attributes of branding can be found throughout five types of news framing

The hypothesis 1 assumed the significant differences of five news frames were found throughout four daily newspapers. While the later hypothesis has assumed that there is association between political branding attributes within the news framing.
As for finding the news framing elements, the researcher adopted on the five generic frames by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), and also modified it on certain of its attributes in order to relate it with the scenario of Malaysian political communication context, which originally, they have used it through their study on European politics.

In order to measure on what level of the framing characteristics in Najib as a political actor, the researcher would adopt and modified on certain series of 20 questions based from the five generic frames values. Each explanation was equivalent to measure one of five generic frames, namely, human interest, conflict, morality, attribution or responsibility, and economic consequences. For example, the explanations of the framing attributes would question whether “the story has suggested that Najib or his government would be able to alleviate the problem or issues arises (Responsibility), “the story able to emphasize on how individual or group affected by the issue or problems (Human Interest), “the story mirrored the disagreement between parties/ individual/ groups/countries” (Conflict), “the story contain moral message” (Morality), or even “the story explain the reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action” (Economic).

As for finding the political branding attributes, the researcher adopted on the Needham (2005), which originally based from her research on Tony Blair and Bill Clinton’s the communication activities of his government and after they walked to office as a Prime Minister and President respectively, and the researcher is also modified it on certain of its attributes in order to relate it with the scenario of Malaysian political communication context.

Measurement of Media Frames
The measurement of coding system for the media frames, the researcher as said earlier, has adopted and modified the technique used by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) on finding the framing values on their EU political news.

Measurement for Political Branding Attributes
As mentioned above, the measurement would adopt the research done by Needham regarding the Brands Loyalty in 2005. The researcher would reemphasize again that the six attributes of Needham is used and modified. The six attributes are Reassurance, Value-based, Aspirational, Credible, Simple/Unique and None of above, should the news contains no elements of five attributes mentioned before.
**Result**

The result has confirmed the significance of association between news framing with political branding attributes. The high visibility of PM Najib’s branding attributes were found from news reported in four mainstream newspapers and the news framing elements managed to enhance the visibility of his images, personality, policies and also as a party leader.

**Research Question**

How does news framing contribute towards political branding? Is there a significant difference between the two?

H1 There is no significant difference between news framing (responsibility, human interest frame, conflict, morality and economics) in all newspapers

H2 There is no significant difference between news framing (responsibility, human interest frame, conflict, morality and economics) with political branding (reassurance, value-based, credible, simple/unique and aspirational).

**Table 1 Total News of Prime Minister Najib within 100 Days**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Berita Harian</th>
<th>NSTP</th>
<th>The Star</th>
<th>Utusan Malaysia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31 (3.9%)</td>
<td>81 (10.1%)</td>
<td>33 (4.1%)</td>
<td>105 (13.1%)</td>
<td>250 (31.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td></td>
<td>19 (2.4%)</td>
<td>21 (2.6%)</td>
<td>19 (2.4%)</td>
<td>30 (3.7%)</td>
<td>89 (11.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td></td>
<td>79 (9.9%)</td>
<td>48 (6.0%)</td>
<td>55 (6.9%)</td>
<td>98 (12.2%)</td>
<td>280 (34.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td></td>
<td>27 (3.4%)</td>
<td>47 (5.9%)</td>
<td>47 (5.9%)</td>
<td>62 (7.7%)</td>
<td>183 (22.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>156 (19.5%)</td>
<td>197 (24.6%)</td>
<td>154 (19.2%)</td>
<td>295 (36.8%)</td>
<td>802 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above portrayed the total news about Prime Minister Najib found within 100 days from all newspapers. 802 counts of news were identified which spread across 4 different newspapers, that are, in descending order, Utusan Malaysia (295), New Straits Times Press (NSTP) (197), Berita Harian (156) and The Star (154). Majority of the news were in June (280), followed by April (250), July (183) and May (89).
Table 2  Visibility of Framing Values of Najib’s in Different Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framing Values</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Berita Harian</td>
<td>NSTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Interest</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morality</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Cross-Tabulation between Framing Values and Different Newspapers

Based on the above table, a cross tabulation analysis was conducted between framing values and different newspapers. Considering only the most frequent appearance in newspapers, the analysis found that Utusan Malaysia holds the most apparent counts of framing values, namely responsibility (102), human interest (79), conflict (48), morality (28) and economics (38). Only NSTP holds the similar majority number of responsibility with Utusan Malaysia at 102 counts.

Table 3  Strength of Association between Framing Values and Different Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approx. Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal by Nominal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phi</td>
<td>.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramer’s V</td>
<td>.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cross tabulation conducted proved that there is a significant relationship between framing values and different newspapers ($p = .000$). The strength of association recorded has an effect size of low to medium (Cohen, 1988) where the value of Cramer’s V (21) = .122, $p < .001$.

Table 4  Association between Framing Values and Framing Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framing Values</th>
<th>Framing Items</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

[13]
Responsibility
- Najib / Government to alleviate the problem: 158 (48.6%)
- Government responsible for the issue: 70 (21.5%)
- Story suggest solution: 12 (3.7%)
- Individual / group / people responsibility for the problem: 75 (23.1%)
- News to require urgent action: 10 (3.1%)

Total: 325 (100%)

Human Interest Frame
- Human example / face on issue: 61 (30%)
- Story generates feelings of outrage: 34 (16.7%)
- How individual / groups affected: 56 (27.6%)
- Private / personal lives: 47 (23.2%)
- Contain visual info: 5 (2.5%)

Total: 203 (100%)

Conflict
- Disagreement between parties / group / countries / individual: 70 (72.2%)
- Reproach another: 5 (5.2%)
- 2 or more than 2 sides with issues: 16 (16.5%)
- Winners / losers: 6 (6.2%)

Total: 97 (100%)

Morality
- Moral Message: 23 (36.5%)
- Morality / God / religious tenets: 19 (30.2%)
- Social prescription to behave: 21 (33.3%)

Total: 63 (100%)

Economics
- Losses / gains new / future: 12 (10.5%)
- Cost / degree of expense: 33 (28.9%)
- Economic consequence to proceed or not action: 69 (60.5%)

Total: 114 (100%)

Note: The Visibility of News Framing Attributes of PM Najib and its statement (adopted and modified from Semetko and Valkenburg (2000))

Table 4 showed the frequency of framing items for each of the framing values. From the table, it is clear that under the responsibility value, item of ‘Najib / Government to alleviate the problem’ has the most frequent occurrences (158). For the human interest frame, ‘human example / face on issue’ (61) has the majority number while for conflict, ‘disagreement between parties / group / countries / individual’ (70) occurred the most. Meanwhile, for morality, ‘moral message’ (23) appeared as majority and lastly, for economics, ‘economic consequence to proceed or not action’ (69) has the most amount.

Table 5  Visibility of Najib’s Branding Attributes in Different Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Berita Harian</th>
<th>NSTP</th>
<th>The Star</th>
<th>Utusan Malaysia</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

[14]
Table 5 above showed a cross tabulation conducted between branding and different newspapers. Based on the analysis, it was found that in majority, branding attributes were apparent in Utusan Malaysia with reassurance (37), value-based (64), credible (18), aspirational (42) and simple / unique (35). Berita Harian shared the similar number of credible with Utusan Malaysia at 18 counts.

Table 6  **Strength of Association between Branding Attributes and Different Newspapers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branding Attribute</th>
<th>Reassurance</th>
<th>Value-Based</th>
<th>Credible</th>
<th>Aspirational</th>
<th>Simple / Unique</th>
<th>None of the Above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Cross-Tabulation between Najib’s Branding Attributes Different Newspapers

A significant positive association between branding and different newspapers was indicated \((p = .000)\) thus rejecting the null hypothesis. Also, the strength of the association has an effect size of low to medium (Cohen, 1988) where the value of Cramer’s \(V\) \((28) = .159, p < .001\).

Table 7  **Association between Branding and News Framing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framing Values</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Human Interest</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Morality</th>
<th>Economics</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branding Attribute</td>
<td>Reassurance</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value-Based</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[15]
A cross tabulation analysis between branding and news framing as the above table revealed that most of the branding attributes were found in the framing values of responsibility – reassurance (55), value-based (110), and simple / unique (39). Whereas, the branding attribute of credible were mostly found in conflict (44) while aspirational in human interest frame (80).

Table 8  Symmetric Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominal by Nominal</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approx. Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phi</td>
<td>.798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cramer's V</td>
<td>.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td></td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To investigate the relationship between branding and news framing attributes, Cramer’s V was used. A significant positive association between branding and news framing was indicated (p = .000) thus rejecting the null hypothesis. Also, the strength of the association has an effect size of medium to large (Cohen, 1988) where the value of Cramer’s V (80) = .399, p < .001.

Table 9a  Differences between Newspapers with Branding and News Framing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framing Values</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berita Harian</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSTP</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Star</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utusan Malaysia</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Branding Attribute   | Berita Harian | 156 | 3.49 | 1.59 |

Note: Cross-Tabulation between Najib’s Branding Attributes and News Framing
Table 9b  One-Way ANOVA for Branding and News Framing in relation to Different Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branding Attribute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>31.501</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.500</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>2560.570</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>3.209</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2592.071</td>
<td>801</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing Values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>34.711</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.570</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1591.778</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>1.997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1626.489</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to find out whether there is any significant difference between newspapers with branding and news framing. From the analysis, it was indicated that both branding and news framing have a significant difference with newspapers, with the former at F (3, 798) = 3.27 and the latter with F (3, 797) = 5.79. For news branding, the means obtained for different newspapers were, in descending manner: Utusan Malaysia (3.92), NSTP (3.53), Berita Harian (3.49) and The Star (3.49). Whereas for news framing, the mean values were Berita Harian (2.62), Utusan Malaysia (2.39), The Star (2.10) and NSTP (2.07).

Discussion and Conclusion

There are three elements of political brand which helps to brand Najib a PM and the key criteria are, a combination of three factors such as the party as a brand, UMNO and BN, whereby, Najib as the President of UMNO and Chairman of BN has said that he wanted to rebrand the party in order to win the heart of the Malays and other Malaysians people. The politician as its tangible characteristic and is widely exposed and reported in the four mainstreams of newspapers. Other than that, Schneider, 2004 believed as a leader is considered to have the strongest, clearest and most impactful associative meaning, as his image, personality is more knowledgeable and communicated through verbal and visual imagery. And all these elements of political messages of Najib are communicated to the readers or consumers through newspapers or television. Finally, the policy exposed by Najib, such as 1M, New Economic Model and others has helped to put Najib as a brand of his
The explanation of significant association of news framing and political branding can be demonstrated through the model below:

Table 10: the association of political branding for political leader could be found through News Framing.

The leader of any country can help to create a significant of country branding which no business or brand can ever compete. With the help of news media, the existence of these leaders is noticeable through what the leaders says or perform. And the news media frame will enhance the visibility of credible and responsible leader. Their actions affect people and countries around the world in many ways, where export brands and tourism normally would be less influence. This is because, the media is widely known could form public opinion through framing as events and issues in such a way through communicating the source and explaining an issue towards the public. Semetko et al (1991) believed that newspapers may have more flexibility influence in other election coverage, especially through the analyses and also editorial material and the repetition news enable to enhance the visibility of PM Najib as a new Prime Minister.

Based from the result, it has proven that with major repetitions of PM Najib in the news, it has able to shape the public opinion towards him, not only as a Prime Minister but also his policies and leadership. Utusan Malaysia has the most number of framing values which made him as a Responsibility leader. As for the visibility of his political branding attributes, Utusan Malaysia also holds the most numbers of amounts of him. Within that 100 days of his reign, the repetitions of news framing about Najib and his political messages, it has proven that the newspapers have
helped to promote his personal brands through an aspirational of his good self, portraying the elements of morality and simple or unique policies which make him different from the previous prime ministers and his opponents.

However the fact that the four mainstream newspapers used in this study, constitutes that the ruling party as their major shareholder would in a way influence the framing mechanisms used by the journalists. Thus, the usage of political branding can be considered as the basis for long term relationship whereby PM Najib and his political entities can keep their winning coalitions together in order to maintain repeat sales or win the election.

References


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