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**International Conference on Emerging Media & Communication****COVID-19 NEWS PATTERN IN MALAYSIAKINI DURING MCO**  
**1.0 & MCO 2.0**

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**Abstract**

News patterns on health information have an effect on social cognition and public attitudes as the pandemic progresses. Online news agencies have used a range of tools to engage with social media users in order to compete with others. The main and essential point of this study is analysing the frequency and form of online news coverage about the pandemic by the online news agencies in Malaysia. Quantitative content analysis was used in this study to analyse the news patterns such as news slants, dimensions of news, and news values on the coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Facebook fan page of *MalaysiaKini* during Movement Control Order 1.0 and 2.0. The research result shown that, there has been a major drop in the frequency of COVID-19 related news stories between MCO 1.0 and 2.0, with 73.5% versus 26.5%, respectively. Covid-19 news in news slants during MCO 1.0 was more neutral in nature, whereas in MCO 2.0, these are more alarming in nature. News with a social problem dimension had the highest volume in MCO 1.0. However, a majority of the news in MCO 2.0 has a health risk dimension. This research also shows that news with a political dimension receives more engagement than others in the MalaysiaKini Facebook pages, from the social media users, where the engagement can be seen in the form of comments and shares. MalaysiaKini frames the news with various news patterns in general, but news audiences are more interested in serious and political news.

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*Keywords:* News Pattern, COVID-19, Online News, MCO, News Framing



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## 1. Introduction

Information can be easily transmitted throughout a network thanks to the advent of the internet, and social media has become the main medium of transmitting information for all smartphone users. Social networking is used for more than just interacting with friends, relatives, and acquaintances. It is also a place where information is gathered and disseminated, as well as a source of news. As a result, the decrease in news consumption does not imply that people no longer consume news. They are unlikely to get their news from traditional news sources such as newspapers, television news channels, online news outlets, or even news apps. On the contrary, since it is easy to access and more focused on the most recent facts, news agencies on social media have become their primary source of information. People have started to pay more attention to social media and online news (Tewksbury, 2003), resulting in the development of a modern media ecology, with conventional media joining in. People can find out about any occurrence that occurs around the world with a single click of the mouse on the internet, and newsfeeds can be easily distributed to all (Antunovic et al., 2016; Nain, 2018). Traditional media's network reach and notification sending speed are inferior. According to Rajaratnam (2009), the conventional newspaper industry is too structured and rigid in contrast to new media. In this digital age, they are no longer connected to people's everyday lives.

For news organisations, social media has also become a source of news (Newman, 2011; Schmitz, 2013). Digital news nowadays applies not only to native online news organizations, but also to existing news organizations that have moved away from offline outlets (Cooke, 2003). The structure of the media industry, along with technological advances in news production and delivery, has changed how people of all different ages consume news. According to Newman (2011), Twitter has rapidly become the new darling of the newsroom due to its ease, efficacy, and timeliness over the last few years. The news cycle is sped up as content is filtered, shattered, and shared via social media. The traditional media's method of collecting and disseminating news has been altered by social media (Alejandro, 2010). Social media editors are in high demand in the news industry due to the widespread use of social media (Newman, 2011). According to Pavlik (2001), the news industry's structure will experience profound changes as a result of digital media's impact on the relationship between news organizations, journalists, and the general public. The internet provides journalists with a number of resources, such as the ability to communicate more with their audience, consider consumer desires, and monitor users. The data now allows the news consultants to keep their superiors up to date on the types of news that the viewers want or need. As a result, professional journalists would need to be more tech-savvy, as the news industry as a whole becomes more digital and technologically advanced.

In Malaysia, while the transition from conventional or offline outlets to online news by the media was not considered satisfactory at first, online news has steadily gained popularity. This is due to the fact that political action has acted as a catalyst. Following the 1998 Reformation movement, intermittent support or focus for the Reformation movement began to appear on the internet, as well as some anonymous pages critical of Tun Dr. Mahathir. An English news website called MalaysiaKini.com had emerged one year after the Reformation movement and nine days before the tenth general election in 1999. It was Malaysia's first local commercial online newspaper, running on a media business model and managed by dedicated

news professionals. MalaysiaKini.com stands out from the crowd as compared to standard English newspapers, which have bland and bureaucratic content. MalaysiaKini.com is also available in Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil. In the online news industry, it is still the older brother to this day (Chang, 2009). MalaysiaKini is Malaysia's leading online news outlet.

Today, online news is a critical medium for communicating messages to society, especially when breaking news occurs in any part of the world (Arguin et al., 2004). It is an important tool used for providing health information to the public during a pandemic outbreak (Jensen et al., 2010). As per previous studies, news consumption and credibility are growing throughout the pandemic because everyone, particularly young people and the uneducated, is eager to obtain news to improve their health-related awareness (Casero-Ripolles, 2020; Hassim et al., 2020). Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin used live stream technology to announce the deployment of the Movement Control Order (MCO) as a COVID-19 prevention measure. Almost every online news outlet used their own online channel to broadcast the live video. This is completely in line with the new Malaysian norm, as social media has become a forum for people to pass the time and keep up with the latest news in Malaysia while they are confined at home.

## **2. Problem Statement**

In today's content-overloaded world, it is worth considering how online news organisations can break through the clutter and become the audience's primary source of information. During COVID-19's raging time, all sorts of news and rumours emerge from all corners. Media professionals have used a variety of tools to communicate accurate information to the public. To reduce the risk of infection, people must have adequate health information (Seman et al., 2020). The public's health literacy can improve as a result of the media coverage. Only thorough coverage of the pandemic from various perspectives will provide people with a better understanding of a specific health risk or pandemic. According to Meng and Berger (2008), international countries have previously chastised China for failing to prevent Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) due to a poor information dissemination system. During the SARS epidemic in Canada, a similar situation occurred: majority of the undergraduate students were aware of the general hygiene and health issues, but they lacked sufficient knowledge of SARS (Bergeron & Sanchez, 2005). According to a study conducted in the United States, there was a lack of communication among the elderly about the H1N1 pandemic. People continued to practise good hygiene as normal, oblivious to the fact that they were in a health-hazardous climate (Jehn et al., 2011).

As a result, it appears that communication is crucial during periods of health risk. One of the benefits of online news is the ability to update it in real time as events unfold. Online news competes not only in terms of speed, but also in terms of the progress of news alerts (Rajaratnam, 2009). The most basic way to determine whether people have a chance to comprehend individual events is to reflect at the frequency of news. Therefore, the COVID-19 news frequency will indicate how much news about that issue has reached the general public. According to Chen et al. (2020) and Koh et al. (2020), social media has had a significant effect on the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. The online news agencies update a lot of coverage and updates on social media on a regular basis, as such, the information about the pandemic that the public would get from social media is usually enough to keep them from being contaminated (Azlan et al., 2020).

However, according to a study on H1N1, online media reached a broader spectrum of viewers with informational and persuasive messages about the pandemic, but public knowledge was still rated as poor (Bergeron & Sanchez, 2005; Jehn et al., 2011). Despite the fact that they had access to all online news sources, they were unlikely to have obtained accurate information. The increasing of news frequency blindly has no impact on improving people's awareness or preventing disasters; indeed, getting more news can even cause the community to become panicked (Luth et al., 2013).

Media may assist viewers in deciding which events or problems are important to be informed of and respond to by agenda setting. Framing, on the other hand, has the potential to manipulate public perceptions and attitudes by emphasising the most important aspect of the topic (McGinty et al., 2016). Consequently, the news patterns in news coverage would have an impact on the societal context along with people's perceptions of the pandemic. News slant or news tone is one of news patterns which can give reassuring or disturbing messages to the viewer (Berry et al., 2007; Casero-Ripolles, 2020; Klemm et al., 2014). And, in most cases, this would mean and relate to news value (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001) and news dimension (Bardhan, 2001). The news is chosen based on its news value. O'Neill and Harcup (2009) proposed eight categories of news values which include expectations, intensity, negativity, relevance, meaningfulness, unambiguity, continuity, and unpredictability. A piece of news should embody at least one of them during a crisis. On the other hand, Pan and Meng (2016) listed out six dimensions concerning the news frames on health crisis coverage, among which are health risk, medical or scientific issue, prevention or protection, economic consequence, societal problem, and political or legal issue. Since they are detailed enough to evaluate the thematic salience of news coverage in a health crisis, these six dimensions are accessible and appropriate for use in analysing a pandemic or outbreak news coverage. The use of news patterns in framing a story to deliver information and engage with readers, especially online users, involves news slant, news value, and news dimension. In order to compete with others, online news agencies have used a variety of tools to deliver the news and engage with social media users.

Previous studies (Casero-Ripolles, 2020; Mohamad & Azlan, 2020; Shimizu, 2020) looked at the audience's actions and awareness during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the news about COVID-19 is still being studied, especially by online news agencies. The Malaysian government enforced the Movement Control Order in four phases from 18 March 2020 to 12 May 2020, followed by the start of the Conditional Movement Control Order until 9 June 2020. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yasin, had issued a Recovery Movement Control Order that would last until August 31, 2020. When the third wave started on January 13, 2021, Movement Control Order 2.0 was re-implemented. Despite the fact that the Movement Control Order was in effect across the country with the aim to avoid the spread of COVID-19, the essential news from online news agencies were focused on informing the public about what is going on, what steps must be taken, and who is responsible for making the Movement Control Order a success. The aim to compare Movement Control Order 1.0 and Movement Control Order 2.0 is to explore how the news patterns have changed over the time of the pandemic. There was a half year gap between the first and the second Movement Control Order, so the media and the public both have had the experience in sharing and receiving news and information after Movement Control Order 1.0. The news patterns used by the media will keep changing, because the news frames need to align with the development and process of the issue, which is also known as "Frame Changing" (Houston et al., 2012).

### **3. Research Questions**

The research questions of this study are as below:

- What are the differences in the COVID-19 news frequencies between MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 in MalaysiaKini?
- What are the differences in the COVID-19 news patterns between MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 used by MalaysiaKini?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The study's key focus is on analysis of the frequency and news pattern of online news coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 by MalaysiaKini to disseminate the information and engage with its audiences. This research exposes the discrepancy of the function of MalaysiaKini in social media by using the framing theory. News frequency is important to understand how often the news is updated to viewers and what types of media forms are often used to convey the messages. Furthermore, the news patterns used for COVID-19 news will be examined in order to determine the news value, news slant, and dimension of health risk in COVID-19 news stories by MalaysiaKini.

### **5. Research Methods**

To accomplish the purpose of the research, quantitative content analysis was employed. Online news by MalaysiaKini's Facebook page about the COVID-19 pandemic was studied during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> phases of the MCO, which were from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and 13<sup>rd</sup> January 2021 to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021, respectively. This study focusses on MalaysiaKini because it is considered to be one the most popular online news sources among Malaysians. The Reuter Institute Digital News Report 2019 stated that MalaysiaKini was the most popular online news brand and it had successfully worked up a significant base of subscribers with more than 24,000 subscriptions. MalaysianKini is still the top online news source among the young people across all ethnic groups in Malaysia, among whom, 64% of the respondents are MalaysiaKini's readers (Nge et al., 2012). MalaysiaKini had gained an audience of about 44% of the total population, as it had maintained the trust of most of the Malaysians by continuous provision of independent news (Nain, 2018).

The code book and coding sheets were used to code the data in this research, which was developed into five sections, which were Part A (General Information), Part B (News Slants), Part C (Dimension of News), Part D (News Value), and Part E (Remarks/Additional Comments). The news slants were examined by the researcher to justify whether the news report's tone was reassuring, alarming, balanced or neutral. The approach of news slant was widely used in other studies on the pandemic as well. The tone of news was being analyzed in the studies by Lakoff (2004), Vasterman and Ruigrok (2013), and Klemm et al. (2014). The list of the dimensions of news was suggested by Bardhan (2001), who claimed that the news reported during health crisis is normally regarding health risk, medical or scientific issues, prevention or protection, economic consequence, societal problem, or a political or legal issue.

The intercoder reliability was measured using the pilot test. This research's intercoder reliability was tested by three qualified coders, one of whom was the main researcher and two were external coders. The primary coder was the main researcher, and the external coders were master's degree holders in mass communication. Krippendorff's alpha was used to assess the reliability. The intercoder reliability level for this study ranged from 0.8014 to 1.000. The research's face validity was also tested by two experts: one is an academic expert in crisis management and media framing, and the other is an industrial expert expected to take office in an online news agency. The data collected on the coding sheet from the research was analysed using SPSS to address the research questions, and descriptive analysis was used to help with the analysis and achieve the research objectives.

## **6. Findings**

The analysis of this study is divided to two parts, aiming to address the two research questions. The first part was to identify the differences in COVID-19 news frequencies between MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 in MalaysiaKini, followed by the online news patterns between MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0, which was the second part. The indicators of news patterns included news slants and dimensions of news. Furthermore, the analysis revealed the feedback of social media users' likes, comments, and shares on the dimensions of news of COVID-19 by MalaysiaKini in their Facebook pages.

### **6.1. COVID-19 Online News Frequency**

A comparison of the online news frequency in the COVID-19 news coverage between MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 was done in this analysis. The time frames were the 1st and 2nd periods of MCO, which were from 18th March 2020 to 31st March 2020, and 13th January 2021 to 26th January 2021, respectively. Table 1 displays the daily amount of COVID-19 news stories over a specified time span. In the first phase of MCO 1.0, a total of 961 news coverage items on COVID-19 issues were found, which saw a drastic decrease in the 1st phase of MCO 2.0, with only 347 news coverage items. The days with the highest volume of coverage items for phase 1 of MCO 1.0 were the 25th and 26th of March 2020. MalaysiaKini provided 8.9% of the total volume of news with regards to Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, where he confirmed the extension of MCO 1.0 on March 25, 2020. While 21st January 2021 was the date with the highest volume of news coverage on COVID-19 by MalaysiaKini during MCO 2.0, with a total of 41 coverage items (11.8%). The news reported on this date covered topics where the Menteri Besar Kedah cancelled the Thaipusam public holiday in Kedah, and the extension of MCO 2.0 due to the high numbers of new COVID-19 cases.

Generally, the biggest differences of the news coverages during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 in MalaysiaKini were in the news frequencies. There was a drastic drop of news frequency in COVID-19 online news between these two phased implementations of MCO. In fact, the higher number of news coverages showed the decrease of the number of recorded COVID-19 cases during MCO 1.0, whereas, the number of recorded COVID-19 cases do not show any decrease during MCO 2.0, even though the volume of the news coverages during this period was rather low. According to Mazur and Lee (1993), in the quantity of coverage theory, as the media's coverage increases, the public tends to start becoming more pessimistic,

fearful, and hostile. But in this case, the quantity of news played an important role in increasing the seriousness of the disease and constructing a deep perception into the minds of the readers. However, making good use of news patterns in the news coverage should be considered to avoid media hype. The news coverages may be described as dramatizing if they appear to concentrate on the danger using only emotional language and using emotion-evoking as a formal function rather than the actual situation (Klemm et al., 2014). Besides, the political issues related to COVID-19 also remained one of the main focusses of the MalaysiaKini news coverages, in order to engage and grab the attention of its users.

**Table 1.** The Differences of Daily Frequency of COVID-19 Online News Between MCO 1.0 And MCO 2.0 on MalaysiaKini’s Facebook Page

Date MCO 1.0	Frequency	Date MCO 2.0	Frequency
18-03-2020	51 (5.3%)	13-01-2021	20 (5.8%)
19-03-2020	76 (7.9%)	14-01-2021	16 (4.8%)
20-03-2020	70 (7.3%)	15-01-2021	22 (6.3%)
21-03-2020	53 (5.5%)	16-01-2021	6 (1.7%)
22-03-2020	53 (5.5%)	17-01-2021	9 (2.6%)
23-03-2020	78 (8.1%)	18-01-2021	16 (4.6%)
24-03-2020	79 (8.2%)	19-01-2021	38 (11%)
25-03-2020	86 (8.9%)	20-01-2021	39 (11.2%)
26-03-2020	86 (8.9%)	21-01-2021	41 (11.8%)
27-03-2020	65 (6.8%)	22-01-2021	32 (9.2%)
28-03-2020	64 (6.7%)	23-01-2021	19 (5.5%)
29-03-2020	51 (5.3%)	24-01-2021	14 (4%)
30-03-2020	77 (8%)	25-01-2021	38 (11%)
31-03-2020	72 (7.5%)	26-01-2021	37 (10.7%)
Total	961 (100%)	Total	347 (100%)

## 6.2. COVID-19 Online News Pattern

News patterns such as news slants, news value, as well as dimension of news refer to the ways the news are used to deliver the information to audiences. Each pattern can have an effect on the audience's feelings and further engage them to read or watch the news stories. To address the second research question of this study, the analyses of news patterns on COVID-19 online news during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0 in following section will based on news slants, news value, and dimension of news.

**Table 2.** The Tendency of News Slants used in the COVID-19 Online News on MalaysiaKini’s Facebook Page during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0

News Slants	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0
Alarming	229 (23.8%)	224 (64.6%)
Reassuring	144 (15%)	21 (6.1%)
Balance	82 (8.5%)	14 (4%)
Neutral	506 (52.6%)	88 (25.4%)
Total	961 (100%)	347 (100%)

A slant of balance indicates that both negative and positive tones are present in the news, while a neutral slant indicates that neither positive nor negative tones are present in the news. Table 2 shows the

total number of news slants on COVID-19 online News by MalaysiaKini during 1st phase of MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0. During 1st phase of MCO 1.0, more than half of the news were in a neutral tone, with a total 506 (52.6%) news stories, followed by the alarming tone, which was in about 229 (23.8%) news stories. To compare with the 1st phase of MCO 2.0, MalayaKini's news stories were used the alarming tone for more than half of the total news stories. A total of 224 (64.6%) news stories were in the alarming tone, followed by the neutral tone with a total 88 (25.4%) news stories during the 1st phase of MCO 2.0.

In summary, most of the COVID-19 online news coverages were in the slant of neutral during the 1st phase of MCO 1.0, in contrast to the 1st phase of MCO 2.0, where the COVID-19 online news coverages were in the slant of alarming. This suggests that the majority of the coverage in the 1st phase of MCO 1.0 was only used to inform the viewer about current issues and to provide statistics. The majority of the news coverage in the 1st phase of MCO 2.0 covered negative issues or intense wording which could elicit negative feelings among the public, but it may also raise or improve public knowledge on the pandemic. The slants of neutral and alarming news were the main news slants used in MalaysiaKini online news during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0. The change in news slants in the coverages of online news by MalaysiaKini reflects the deterioration of the situation in Malaysia during the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 3.** The News Values used in The COVID-19 Online News in MalaysiaKini's Facebook Page during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0

News Value	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0
Expectation	205 (21.3%)	25 (7.2%)
Intensity	205 (21.3%)	130 (37.5%)
Negativity	436 (45.4%)	219 (63.1%)
Relevance	839 (87.3%)	323 (93.1%)
Meaningfulness	535 (55.7%)	36 (10.4%)
Unambiguity	157 (16.3%)	3 (0.9%)
Continuity	192 (20%)	115 (33.1%)
Unpredictability	67 (7%)	7 (2%)

N = 961 (MCO 1.0); 347 (MCO 2.0)

Table 3 shows the news values used in the COVID-19 online news by MalaysiaKini during the 1<sup>st</sup> phases of MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0. News values in the news highlight the meaning of the news to the public and society. O' Neill and Harcup (2009) compiled 8 categories of news values which included expectation, intensity, negativity, relevance, meaningfulness, unambiguity, continuity, and unpredictability. The analyses show that relevance saw the highest usage rate in the MalaysiaKini online news coverages during both periods of MCO, with 839 (87.3%) and 323 (93.1%), respectively. Most of the news reported were local news or related to Malaysians. The second highest used news values were meaningfulness, which was used in 535 (55.7%) news stories during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0, and negativity, used in a total of 219 (63.1%) news stories during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0.

The results present that the news values used by MalaysiaKini during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0 were more towards the relevance and meaningfulness values, whereas the relevance and negativity news values were used in the news coverages by MalaysiaKini during 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0. The news values of these two periods of time focus on local news, as a news value of relevance indicates that the news is related to local persons. The news value of meaningfulness was the second highest used during MCO 2.0, where its



purpose was to give more information on the disease and regulations of MCO implantation. The news value of meaningfulness refers to news that is of public interest and that is important for all to know. Apart from that, the news value of negativity denotes that the news is bad news or about negative incidents that the society should be aware of, to consider reminding the public of the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia.

**Table 4.** The Dimensions of News used on the COVID-19 Online News coverages in MalaysiaKini’s Facebook Page during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0

Dimension of News	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0
Health Risk	230 (23.9%)	152 (43.8%)
Medical or Scientific	156 (16.2%)	88 (24.5)
Prevention or Protection	228 (23.7%)	63 (18.2)
Economic Consequence	225 (23.4%)	67 (19.3)
Societal Problem	470 (48.9%)	106 (31.4%)
Political or Legal Issue	264 (27.5%)	145 (41.8%)

N = 961 (MCO 1.0); 347 (MCO 2.0)

Dimension of news is a part of the news pattern and refers to the category of the news content. The aim of the news may be to raise awareness, inform them of new scientific findings, announce new rules and regulations, issue warnings to lawbreakers, or provide an update on the pandemic's progress and current status. Bradhan (2010) proposed six dimensions of news during the crisis of health including health risk, medical or scientific, prevention or protection, economic consequence, societal problem, and political or legal issues. Table 4 shows the volume of dimensions of news in the news coverages by MalaysiaKini during the 1<sup>st</sup> phases of MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0. The results show that almost half of the COVID-19 news covered in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0, which were 470 (48.9%) news stories, were on societal problems. This implies that the issue of people's livelihood was the most widely covered by MalaysiaKini at that time. The news coverages with a medical or science dimension, on the other hand, were in the lowest percentages of all the categories. This might lead to a lack of competent and reliable knowledge of COVID-19 among the general public, especially in this early stage of pandemic in Malaysia. By inviting professionals to share their knowledge, the media acts as an important forum for providing reliable medical and science information to the public.

In contrast, health risks and political or legal issues were the focus of news dimensions by MalaysiaKini during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0, with a total 152 (43.8%) and 145 (42.8%) uses, respectively. The news coverages in the dimension of health risk included the daily reports of the increasing number of recorded COVID-19 cases, clusters, and dead. The public's awareness of health risks can also be increased by news coverage with a risk dimension. But it seems useless as the news frequency of health risks was decreased as compared to the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0, and the news in the preventions or protection dimension was at the lowest percentage of all the categories. Furthermore, the dimension of news in political or legal issues was one of the main focuses of MalaysiaKini online news coverages during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0, which included the issues of emergency proclamation, ministers testing positive for COVID-19, and Menteri Besar Kedah cancelling the Thaipusam public holiday. The high numbers of news dimensions on political or legal issues in news coverage by MalaysiaKini during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0 maybe caused

by the high engagement of their users. Tables 5, 6 and 7 show the feedback in likes, comments and shares on the COVID-19 online news stories by users of MalaysiaKini's Facebook page during the 1<sup>st</sup> phases of MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0.

**Table 5.** The Feedback in Likes of News Dimensions on The COVID-19 Online News by Users of MalaysiaKini's Facebook Page during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0

Number	Health Risk		Medical or Scientific		Prevention or Protection		Economic Consequence		Societal Problem		Political or Legal Issue	
	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0
0-99	91 (39.6%)	107 (70.4%)	62 (39.7%)	65 (73.9%)	121 (53.1%)	49 (77.8%)	134 (59.6%)	44 (65.7%)	235 (50%)	59 (54.1%)	129 (48.9%)	86 (59.3%)
100-199	40 (17.4%)	16 (10.5%)	28 (17.9%)	12 (13.6%)	30 (13.2%)	7 (11.1%)	40 (17.8%)	7 (10.4%)	76 (16.2%)	15 (13.8%)	48 (18.2%)	12 (8.3%)
200-299	25 (10.9%)	6 (3.9%)	23 (14.7%)	6 (6.8%)	21 (9.2%)	1 (1.6%)	23 (10.2%)	4 (7.1%)	39 (8.3%)	9 (8.3%)	26 (9.8%)	12 (8.3%)
300-399	24 (10.4%)	5 (3.3%)	10 (6.4%)	1 (1.1%)	15 (6.6%)	2 (3.2%)	5 (2.2%)	3 (4.5%)	24 (5.1%)	3 (2.8%)	12 (4.5%)	4 (2.8%)
400-499	7 (3%)	3 (2%)	9 (5.8%)	0 (0%)	9 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.3%)	1 (1.5%)	12 (2.6%)	5 (4.6%)	8 (3%)	1 (0.7%)
500-599	7 (3%)	4 (2.6%)	3 (1.9%)	1 (1.1%)	10 (4.4%)	1 (1.6%)	6 (2.7%)	1 (1.5%)	17 (3.6%)	4 (3.7%)	10 (3.8%)	6 (4.1%)
600-699	5 (2.2%)	2 (1.3%)	3 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.3%)	1 (1.6%)	5 (2.2%)	1 (1.5%)	13 (2.8%)	4 (3.7%)	6 (2.3%)	6 (4.1%)
700-799	5 (2.2%)	1 (0.7%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (1.5%)	4 (0.9%)	1 (0.9%)	3 (1.1%)	3 (2.1%)
800 and above	21 (9.1%)	6 (4%)	11 (7.1%)	2 (2.3%)	13 (5.7%)	2 (3.2%)	8 (3.6%)	4 (6%)	8 (3.6%)	7 (6.49%)	17 (6.4%)	12 (8.3%)
2000 & above	5 (2.2%)	2 (1.3%)	5 (3.2%)	1 (1.1%)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.5%)	11 (2.3%)	2 (1.8%)	5 (1.9%)	3 (2.1%)
TOTAL	230 (100%)	152 (100%)	156 (100%)	88 (100%)	228 (100%)	63 (100%)	225 (100%)	67 (100%)	470 (100%)	106 (100%)	264 (100%)	145 (100%)

**Table 6.** The Feedback in Comments of Dimensions on The COVID-19 Online News by Users of MalaysiaKini's Facebook Page during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0

Number	Health Risk		Medical or Scientific		Prevention or Protection		Economic Consequence		Societal Problem		Political or Legal Issue	
	MC O 1.0	MC O 2.0	MC O 1.0	MC O 2.0	MC O 1.0	MC O 2.0	MC O 1.0	MC O 2.0	MC O 1.0	MC O 2.0	MC O 1.0	MC O 2.0
0-99	160 (69.6%)	126 (82.9%)	111 (71.2%)	76 (86.4%)	172 (75.4%)	53 (84.1%)	161 (71.6%)	50 (74.6%)	317 (67.4%)	75 (54.1%)	163 (61.7%)	99 (68.3%)
100-199	33 (14.3%)	10 (6.6%)	21 (13.5%)	7 (8%)	23 (10.1%)	7 (11.1%)	31 (13.8%)	8 (11.5%)	73 (15.5%)	14 (10.4%)	40 (15.2%)	21 (14.5%)
200-299	19 (8.3%)	8 (5.3%)	13 (8.3%)	3 (3.4%)	14 (6.1%)	1 (1.6%)	13 (5.8%)	3 (4.5%)	34 (7.2%)	7 (6.4%)	19 (7.2%)	8 (5.5%)
300-399	4 (1.7%)	2 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	7 (3.1%)	1 (1.6%)	4 (1.8%)	2 (3%)	16 (3.4%)	4 (3.7%)	15 (5.7%)	4 (2.8%)
400-499	4 (1.7%)	1 (0.7%)	4 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	7 (3.1%)	1 (1.5%)	7 (1.5%)	3 (2.8%)	9 (3.4%)	4 (2.8%)
500-599	3 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (1.1%)	3 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0%)	8 (1.7%)	1 (0.9%)	5 (1.9%)	3 (2.1%)
600-699	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.8%)	1 (1.6%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (1.5%)	2 (0.4%)	3 (2.8%)	1 (0.4%)	2 (1.4%)

				2	1	0	1	0	0	3	2	5	0	5	1
				(0.9	(0.7	(0%	(1.1	(0%	(0%	(1.3	(3%	(1.1	(0%	(1.9	(0.7
				%)	%)	)	%)	)	)	%)	)	%)	)	%)	%)
				4	1	3	0	2	0	2	0	7	2	7	3
				(1.7	(0.7	(1.9	(0%	(0.9	(0%	(0.9	(0%	(1.5	(1.8	(2.7	(2.1
				%)	%)	%)	)	%)	)	%)	)	%)	%)	%)	%)
				0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	7	0
				(0%	(0%	(0%	(0%	(0%	(0%	(0.4	(0%	(0.2	(0%	(2.7	(0%
				)	)	)	)	)	)	%)	)	%)	)	%)	)
				230	152	156	88	228	63	225	67	470	106	264	145
				(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10	(10
				0%)	0%)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
TOTAL	230 (100%)	152 (100%)	156 (100%)												

**Table 7.** The Feedback in Shares of Dimensions on The COVID-19 Online News by Users of MalaysiaKini’s Facebook Page during MCO 1.0 and MCO 2.0

Number	Health Risk		Medical or Scientific		Prevention or Protection		Economic Consequence		Societal Problem		Political or Legal Issue	
	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0	MCO 1.0	MCO 2.0
0-99	168 (73%)	142 (93.4%)	123 (78.8%)	84 (95.5%)	192 (84.2%)	60 (95.2%)	202 (89.8%)	62 (92.5%)	385 (81.9%)	97 (89%)	229 (86.7%)	130 (89.7%)
100-199	29 (12.6%)	6 (3.9%)	14 (9%)	2 (2.3%)	16 (7%)	1 (1.6%)	11 (4.9%)	3 (4.5%)	42 (8.9%)	8 (7.3%)	19 (7.2%)	8 (5.5%)
200-299	9 (3.9%)	0 (0%)	5 (3.2%)	0 (0%)	8 (3.5%)	0 (0%)	7 (3.1%)	0 (0%)	16 (3.4%)	2 (1.8%)	11 (4.2%)	3 (2.1%)
300-399	6 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.9%)	1 (1%)	3 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	8 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.7%)
400-499	1 (0.4%)	2 (1.3%)	3 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.9%)	2 (3.2%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (1.5%)	3 (0.6%)	2 (1.8%)	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.7%)
500-599	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)
600-699	2 (0.9%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.7%)
700-799	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
800 and above	11 (4.8%)	1 (1.7%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)	4 (1.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (1.5%)	10 (2.1%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.7%)
2000 & above	2 (0.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	230 (100%)	152 (100%)	156 (100%)	88 (100%)	228 (100%)	63 (100%)	225 (100%)	67 (100%)	470 (100%)	106 (100%)	264 (100%)	145 (100%)

The results show that, the news with the dimension of societal problems had slightly more feedback from the users in the aspect of likes, comments, and shares during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0. In the ranges of “800 and above” and “2000 and above”, there were 8 and 11 news coverages respectively in the aspect of likes, 7 and 1 news coverages respectively in the aspect of comments, and 10 and 1 respectively in the aspects of share. Overall, news with a social issue dimension were not only one of the most common news categories in the newsroom, but also received the highest response from the users. This reflects the public’s need to feel a sense of belonging in society in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0. They hoped to know more about the activities, accidents, developments, and other happenings in their community.

However, the interest of the users seems to have changed to the dimension of news in political or legal issues during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0. There was more engagement in the aspect of likes, comments and shares in political or legal issues compared to other dimensions of news. Tables 5, 6, & 7 show that the likes, comments and shares are slightly higher in the categories of ranges “800 and above” and “2000 and above” in political and legal issues during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0. There were 12 and 3 news coverages respectively in the category of range “800 and above” and “2000 and above” in the aspect of likes, 3 and 0 news coverages respectively in the category of range “800 and above” and “2000 and above”, as well as 1

and 0 respectively in the category of range “800 and above” and “2000 and above”, in the aspect of comments.

## 7. Conclusion

The media framing theory focuses on how the mass media uses the contents of news stories to assist readers in constructing mental barriers. In this study, news frequency played an important role in constructing and creating the high awareness towards the disease of COVID-19 in Malaysia. Between the two phases of MCO implementation, the results show that there was a drastic drop of COVID-9 news frequency by MalaysiaKini. Reduced news volumes for COVID-19 may not be one of the causes of pandemic deterioration, but it may be a factor in lowering public alertness and awareness towards the disease. Undoubtedly, the audience would ignore the news coverages because of overflow information on the internet. Thus, appropriate news patterns should be considered in the progress of framing the content of news in different stages of the pandemic. News patterns in news coverages can have an impact on the societal climate as well as people's perceptions of the pandemic. In the stages of crisis management in health crises covered by scholars (Coombs, 2011; Fink, 1986; Mitroff, 1994; Ungar, 2008; Vasterman & Ruigrok, 2013), there are three basic stages. These include the first stage, the content with fearful claims and alarm; second stage, a continuous treat and reassuring scientific data as well as a national strategy, and third stage, information would be used to alleviate any anxiety. In this case, the implementation of MCO can be referred to as the second stage on health crisis, with the information content being fearful, alarming, medical or scientific, as well as about prevention or protection. The research results show that both phases of MCO had a lack of medical or scientific and prevention or protection news slants in the news coverages of MalaysiaKini.

Additionally, the findings also present that societal problems were the main focus in the dimensions of news in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 1.0, whereas health risk and political or legal issues were majorly used in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of MCO 2.0. Notably, the dimensions of news in political or legal issues had more engagement and feedback from MalaysiaKini's Facebook users. Klinenberg (2005) believed that in order to preserve viewer loyalty, media organisations would not only serve the public, but also build their own communities. People with strong faith will stand together and trust the media to provide content that is in line with their beliefs. To summarise this, there are significant correlations between the dimensions of news and engagement of users in online news coverages.

The relationship between online news frequency and cognition of COVID-19 can be studied in future research. Such research could examine the impact of frequency of news towards user cognition, whereby information and data are turned into actionable “evidence”.

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