Editors' Choice Versus Readers' Choice: Press Role in Creating Public Awareness and Understanding of The Government Transformation Programmes (GTP)

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ABSTRACT

The research makes a contribution to understanding the different ways of how media is conceptualised through an investigation of how and why GTP is practised in Malaysia. Therefore, the main aims of this article are to analyse the role of *Berita Harian* (*BH*) newspaper in reporting on the Malaysian Government Transformation Plan (GTP), and to examine how editors understand and talk about GTP strengths and limitations to the society. The study was conducted in two phases; first, by exploring the frequencies of news articles from May 2010 and June 2013 and second, by examining the contributing factors influencing reporting of the GTP, based on the understanding of readers. In this regard, this research offers a comprehensive analysis of GTP strengths and limitations as reported in *BH*. The case study focuses on *BH* news article.   An analysis of 18 *BH* news articles between 2010 to 2013 is included, to investigate how *BH* frames GTP. Agenda setting by the government and the gatekeeper role by the editorials are also analyzed since it has an impact

on reportage, specifically on GTP issues. In addition, a survey among *BH* readers involving 50 respondents was conducted to understand their awareness of the GTP based on their reading of the editorial's section of the *BH*. The findings also demonstrate evidence of the importance to understand the editors' and readers' expectations. The editors as gatekeepers of the media organisation should ensure that the readers are aware of the information they wrote about the government's policy. However, the analysis of the survey responses clearly indicates that that the readers, or in the context of the gatekeeping theory, are known as 'the gated', were not really aware and have not really understood the message that the editorials re trying to put across.

Keywords: *thematic analysis, editor's section, news, Government Transformation Programme (GTP)*

INTRODUCTION

Media organizations in Malaysia play a crucial role as a partner of the government especially in delivering issues related to nation building. The government transformation programmes in any country are seen to be part of a positive movement/model for the society. The media plays a crucial role in these movements of transformation by the government. According to Gehlbach and Sonin (2012), a formal model of a government's control of the media illuminate variations in media freedom across countries and over time, with particular application to less democratic states. Therefore, contemporary challenges to institutional roles in a digital media environment and the three broad journalistic normative values, which are authenticity, accountability, and autonomy affect the credibility of journalists and the content they provide (Hayes, Singer, & Ceppos, 2007). However, the impact of personality characteristics (Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Psychoticism) on audiences' use of movies, television, and radio, and on genre preferences within these media are also explored (Hall, 2005).

The idea that the mass media holds political agenda setting power is undeniable. The government assigns their political relevance and importance to social problems by selecting and emphasizing certain issues and neglecting others (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). The media will play their role in deciding which issues should receive people's attention. The media will highlight governments' responses to good news that reflect positive developments in social problems because this could politicize policy success (Thesen, 2013). The media nowadays is not only limited to the printed media. The emergence of new media using new technology such as the Internet allows the government to build relationships with the citizens they represent. In the past decades, governments had to rely almost exclusively on traditional media specifically newspapers, televisions and radio (Dixon, 2010).

In many countries, the state also owns news agencies, newspapers, or other media. In Pakistan, political parties in the past have tried to establish daily newspapers that could function as their communication organs to the masses such as the daily *Masawat* (Mezzera & Sial, 2010). Russia has also seen an equally dramatic decline in media independence as the Kremlin has seized direct control of large segments of the Russian media market (Gehlbach & Sonin, 2008). Media advocacy is the process of disseminating information through the media of communication in which the objective is to perform an action such as policy changes or to change public opinions on the issue (Lane, Carter, Chi & M.I, 2012). In addition, the media

also has the potential to foster greater interaction between policy makers, government officials and their constituencies (Lampe, Larose, Steinfield & Demaagd, 2011).

In publishing news for the readers, the mass media, however, have to determine the main issues that will be an agenda in each campaign (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Therefore, the media is very influential in affecting people around the world and sometimes the media mobilize people to oppose the policy (Lieberfeld, 2009).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the GTP was introduced, it has becomes increasingly important to identify the government synergy among society. Many countries have done such transformation in economic, health, and social sector. One of the closest examples is the economic transformation in India that makes India's annual growth rate accelerate from an unspectacular average of 3.5% between 1960 and 1980 to over 9% per annum by 2005. Investments increases from 23% of the GDP in 1985 to 38% in 2005 while the FDI of India is more than $70 billion between 2000 and 2005 (Alfaro & Chari, 2009). From the peasant society, India is acclaimed in recent years as an information technology (IT) superpower and perhaps even as a major new player in the world economy (Corbridge, 2009). While Malaysia is attempting to transform not only its economy but also its social aspects, India has started the transformation earlier and moving towards a developed nation. Another country that shows a vast transformation in terms of its economy is Vietnam. Similar to Malaysia, by focusing on the rural areas in its NKRA, Vietnam aims for the rural areas to be transformed to generate economic growth. Vietnam and Malaysia have similarities because the agricultural sector used to be their main economic resource before both countries underwent substantial changes. The growth in agricultural is a crucial for the emergence of rural service commodity markets, which provides business opportunities on the off-farm (Ellis, 1998). While Malaysia's government tries to improve the living standards of the people, as early as 1993 the Vietnam had conducted detailed surveys on Vietnam's living standards which provided evidence of the vital roles of private business sectors in the creation of off-farm livelihoods (Vijverberg & Haughton, 2004). The GTP was introduced by the government to fulfill the Vision 2020 and they government is committed to achieve the nine goals outlined, encompassing economic, political, social, spiritual, psychological and cultural dimensions of national growth (PEMANDU, 2010). GTP has three horizons: GTP 1.0 is the First Horizon, GTP 2.0 is for Enhancing Change and GTP 3.0 is for the Future and Beyond. The First Horizon of the GTP was initiated in 2010 and played a key role in helping the government understand how to best serve the overall targets of the GTP. While GTP 1.0 is a 'tested' programme, GTP 2.0 was launched in 2013 where it expands and enhances GTP 1.0's initiatives and intensifies the initiatives that were started in the first phase. The last phase of the GTP will be the last stage for 2015 until 2020 where it will combine both earlier horizons in creating innovative governance structures that are people-centered. The GTP is basically a programme created by the government in creating an effective government while meeting the needs of the people.

All government policy should be communicated to the people. The mass media, especially newspapers, and television play an important role in disseminating information about the government. Mass media is clearly the main source of information about government (Dennis et. al., 1994:103). Therefore, the mass media is the mediator between the government and the people. Through the mass media, the government can explain the policies or projects to be planned or implemented (Mohd Hamdan Adnan, 1986:6).

Therefore, the editor's section of *Berita Harian* is the best platform to identify whether the GTP produces the desired effects for society. The implementation of GTP is one of the government's policies in promoting and upgrading Malaysia to become a developed, high-income nation by the year 2020.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An editor's column is seen as one of the most important section in a mainstream newspaper. This column normally highlights the insights and the major concerns or issues discussed daily in the country. Most of the editors normally highlight the main concerns they have about the country's issues locally or at international level. Editor column has specialized editors to write an article for the newspaper and on a rotation basis. According to David Manning White (1964), reviews by the editors fulfil three different roles related to the gatekeeper process. However, the main facet of the editor's role is to disseminate the news stories. The review by David Manning also emphasized that the important role of gatekeeper as the 'gate' in the process of news making. The role of editors is also based on the general role of the 'gatekeeper' in the areas of mass communications which focuses on the decision that goes into the news. In this scenario, the gatekeeper provides the active role of a journalist as the decision maker. In addition, the media has the ability to add pressure to the government in determining a policy in view of the general opinion that is constantly changing (June, Hong, & Sung-Min, 2011). This implies that the editors as gatekeepers have the capacity to challenge the policies introduced by the government.

According to Merriam-Webster (2013), the definition of a "column" is "a vertical arrangement of items printed or written on a page," and "one in a usually regular series of newspaper or magazine articles". As found in the Cambridge dictionary (2014), there are multiple types of newspaper columns: agony, "the part of a magazine or newspaper where letters from readers about their personal problems are printed, together with advice on how to deal with them"; critic reviews; editorial opinions; gossip, "the part of the newspaper in which you find stories about the social and private lives of famous people"; style; music and art critics; personal columns, "the part of a newspaper or magazine which contains short advertisements and private messages"; and many more.

Columnists include their opinions and feelings about the topic in which they are writing, and try to get the reader to think about the topic in question from a different perspective, whereas reporters simply state the facts. Columnists use facts, research, news, interviews, and social events as sources of input for their columns. Columns differ from all other types of writing in newspapers. Some articles only present the facts and try to remain as unbiased as possible. Other articles, like editorials, also contain opinions, but are different from a column in that an editorial is "a newspaper or magazine article that gives the opinions of the editors or publishers" (Merriam-Webster, 2013).

According to Ikuya (2012: p.41), it is widely acknowledged that book editors play a key role as intermediaries between the production and consumption of printed (and now, increasingly, electronic as well) cultural materials. Whether working chiefly in literary, journalistic, or scholarly fields, editors especially those at prestigious publishing houses are usually expected to window a vast number of potential manuscripts down to only a few so as to bring them and their authors to the attention of the consuming public. By serving as gatekeepers who decide on what and who should be let in, with the remainder kept out, editors sometimes play a considerable part in shaping not only the content and quality of specific books but also the overall configurations of various cultural fields.

OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The current article has two objectives:

1. To examine whether the Editor's Section in *Berita Harian* provides thematic information about GTP and NKRA's pillars.
2. To identify the general knowledge of GTP and NKRA's thematic issues among *Berita Harian's* readers.

This article discusses a study done earlier which aims to answer two questions:

1. How does the Editor's Section in *Berita Harian* provide thematic information about GTP and NKRA's pillars?
2. Do *Berita Harian*'s readers gain general knowledge about GTP and NKRA's thematic issues from *Berita Harian*?

SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

This research is important in researching the extent to which the articles published by the main newspaper in Malaysia are supporting and imparting knowledge to the people about the government's programmes. It is to evaluate whether the newspaper assists in achieving the government's target and to enlighten the citizens about the NKRA mentioned earlier.

This research only focuses on the editors' column in the Berita Harian. Analysis is accomplished from the year the GTP started in 2010 until year 2013 (version 1.0). The general discussion of the GTP and NKRA is the main focus of this research.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Editors' Section

The Editor's section carries multiple roles in the newspapers. The Editor's section is used in this research to measure the frequencies, positions, paragraph, sources and themes of news articles about the GTP and NKRA.

Government Transformation Programme

The government of Malaysia launched the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) in January 2010 and it was officiated by the Prime Minister (PM) Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. GTP has its own objectives which comprise priorities that matter most to the people. It aims to deliver nationwide fundamental changes (www.pemandu.gov.my). There are seven pillars or areas of concern in the NKRA, namely:

1. Reducing Crime
2. Fighting Corruption
3. Improving Students Outcomes
4. Raising Living Standards of Low-Income Households
5. Improving Rural Basic Infrastructure
6. Improving Urban Public Transport
7. Addressing Cost of Living

Each of these pillars correlates to a priority area that is deemed to have the greatest impact for the people.

National Key Result Areas (NKRA)

The NKRAs were formulated based on the people's ideas, inputs, and feedbacks, which were obtained through various channels such as surveys, call for ideas via SMS, focus group and interviews sessions with key stakeholders, online feedbacks and Open Days (Annual Report, 2010).

AGENDA SETTING AND GATEKEEPING THEORIES

Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972 in *Public Opinion Quarterly* suggested that the media sets the public agenda, in the sense that they may not exactly tell you what to think, but they may tell you what to think about. In their first article where they brought this theory to light their abstract states that:

> In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position. In reflecting what candidates are saying during a campaign, the mass media may well determine the important issues - that is, the media may set the "agenda" of the campaign.

It is clearly shown by this theory that a government's policy will be a policy agenda for the people as the result of a public agenda. This information will be conveyed using the media agenda that is known as the right way of conveying information. The mass media is the mediator between the government and the people. Through the mass media, the government can explain the policies or projects to be planned or implemented (Mohd Hamdan Adnan, 1986).

Agenda Setting Theory believes that the people will know what the elites want them to know. These elites, or media representatives, interpret the motives and beliefs of politicians (Baran & Davis, 2012). This theory is said to be a tool by the elites in shaping the mind of the people. According to (Tcw, 2010), the agenda setting describes a very powerful influence of the media – the ability to tell us what issues are important. To relate to this study, the government is trying to use the mass media in creating the awareness about the efforts undertaken by the government to serve the people.

This theory evolves when McCombs and Shaw (1972) noticed that there are links between people's perceptions and the trend of voters that can be created as a result of press coverage. Media plays it roles in persuading the public in focusing their attention on specific events and issues. According to Walter Lippman (1925), he stated that we must abandon the notion that the people govern and must adopt the theory that, by their occasional mobilization as a majority, people support or oppose the individuals who actually govern (Lippman, 1922). However, Lippman's idea opposed President Thomas Jefferson's earlier praise of the American people for the discernment they have manifested between truth and falsehood. The public, Jefferson claimed, "...may safely be trusted to hear everything true and false, and to form a correct judgment between them (Lipscomb, 1903, p.33).

Besly and Prat (2006) said that media capture is a widespread phenomenon, most of it is non-coercive. The government can exert control over the media in many forms, the extreme being direct bribes to media agencies. On the other hand, media capture can be

done indirectly through an administrative decision or a legislative intervention that benefits a firm controlled by the media owner. However, it was also stated that are several factors that influence the level of control the government wields over the media. One of them is the existence of a large number of independent media organizations, whereby the government would be forced to buy out all the media organizations to suppress information.

In an ideal world, the mass media is free of any external influences. However, only 33.5 percent of the world media are "Free", while the rest are "Partly Free" and "Not Free" in 2011 (Freedom House, 2012). In Malaysia, the government will determine the content and quality of public discourse in the media (Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, 2005). Thus, it is common for the government to use the media to inform and educate the public on its agenda and policies.

According to Arina Anis Azlan, Samsudin A. Rahim, Fauziah Kartini Hassan Basri and Mohd Safar Hasim (2012), public discourse following an important policy announcement in the media is restricted. Furthermore, the announcement of the new policies in the media has been positioned in such a way that shapes and controls the public's access to and opinion on the issue. In this case, the authors used the term political citizenship whereby the citizens are made to believe that they may hear or be heard, as long as it is what the government wants to be heard and to hear.

When a government or organization is seeking a transformation, it must be addressed using a holistic approach where every aspect of its construction, implementation, and expected outcomes are considered (Washington & Hacker, 2009). There must be a comprehensive study on the current national situation by taking into account the effectiveness of current policies and the needs of the people before the government embarks on a transformation programme (Washington & Hacker, 2009). In their study of Botswana's transformation, Washington and Hacker concluded with "Transformation is the creation of step-function results. At the heart of transformation, there must be a bold vision and a burning platform."

However, with the existence of new media such as the Internet, email, online newspapers and websites, the question arises of whether or not the press (i.e. newspapers) are still able to play role in shaping public agenda? Some scholars and social observers are predicting that audience fragmentation due to choices in online media will cause an end to traditional agenda setting (McCombs, 2005). With the emergence of new media, it will be difficult for the mass media to shape the minds of people thanks to the array of sources of news now available in the community.

Traditionally, the government uses mass media to explain to the citizenry about policies or projects to be planned or implemented (Mohd Hamdan Adnan, 1986). The mass media is the mediator between the government and the people.

Another theory which is relevant to the study is the gatekeeping theory. It is a mass communication theory which began with Lewin's (1951) work in relation to the regulation of an eating system (Pavelka, 2014) and/or food consumption (Soroka, 2012). Lewin started the selection process by which certain foods reach the dinner table, or not (Soroka, 2012). According to him, a "gatekeeper" is the member of the family who makes the decision on what food will be served to his/her family. In relation to the field of media studies, gatekeeping represents a conceptual system, in which news selection is regulated within the news agenda setting (White, 1950). It is a way in which a media organization or state authority regulates media content production (Pavelka, 2014). A gatekeeper's role is to

make a decision on what should be offered to the audience by the media, i.e. what topics and in which form. In media organisation, the role of the gatekeeper is taken by particular editors-in-chief, editors and media text authors (Pavelka, 2014). Authorized officers of the state or political apparatus may also be appointed to fulfill the role. Traditionally, Shoemaker (1991) argued that gatekeeping include not only the selection of information and events that journalists and editors cover and from what perspective, but also the general shaping of media narratives to construct a social reality for the target audience (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, & Wrigley, 2001).

Various studies which have been conducted on gatekeeping and they mainly focused on the selection of one event or another, rather than the selective framing of a single event (Soroka, 2012). Pavelka (2014) for instance, focused on the media coverage of the presentation of the event in Czech Republic. Soroka (2012) studied the media coverage in the United States by using a Lexicoder, a new automated content analytic software for content analysis approach. He found that mass media produce content that is systematically more negative than reality, by relating his analysis on employment, inflation, and interest rates. Soroka argued that if this negativity bias is linked to psychology and evolution, then his findings may be generalizable across cultures and countries, that is, the gatekeeping function identified may be roughly similar across a wide range of issues and media outlets. Xu and Feng (2014) studied the interaction between *the gatekeepers* (the media professionals - people work for professional news outlets) and *the gated* (audience) in the current technological setting via Twitter by using networked gatekeeping, an extension of the theory of gatekeeping. They found that citizens interacted with gatekeepers by sharing information/opinion, social chats, and self-serving promotion of individual opinions and agendas. In addition, politically active citizens interacted more often with journalists who share similar ideology with them.

Gatekeeping theory can be used to examine how media prioritize government policy in news coverage. In particular, the theory is very much relevant to the current study in which the main objective is to determine whether the editor's section in *Berita Harian* provides thematic information about the GTP and NKRA's pillars, and identify the general knowledge of GTP and NKRA's thematic issues to *Berita Harian*'s readers. Many studies on gatekeeping can be classified into these two forms: (i) explore, through interviews or surveys, about the decision-making processes by journalist and editors, and (ii) examine mass media content itself (Soroka, 2012). Hence, this current study adapts both approaches, i.e. content analysis of the editorials and a survey among *Berita Harian* readers.

METHODOLOGY

The research consisted of two methodologies which were a very simple content analysis and a survey. Content analysis provided data on priority articles in the editors' section by theme in the core areas of NKRA. Meanwhile, a random sampling survey was conducted to identify a reader's choice of NKRA areas (issues).

This research had employed two methods: 1) a content analysis of the news column in the daily newspaper to determine whether the editor's section in the newspaper *Berita Harian* provided information about the GTP and NKRA's pillars, and 2) survey of the readers. For the purpose of this article, the analysis was conducted to examine the priority articles by theme in the core NKRAs, and conclusions about the GTP and NKRA news in the editor's section of the *Berita Harian* newspaper from 2010 to 2013.

RESULTS OF SIMPLE CONTENT ANALYSIS

News of NKRA (2010-2013)

Since its launch in March 2010 by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, the first news about the NKRA was published twice in *Berita Harian* newspaper's editorial column in May, followed by two articles in June. In October 2010 a total of three articles had been published and these were followed by one article in the following months. The total number of articles that have been published about the NKRA during 2010-2013 were 18 articles.

The media plays its role in creating public awareness about the government's new policy. This data shows how the media supports the effort by the government in getting support from the citizen on the new policy. Most of the news about NKRA concerned the initial six NKRA which included reducing crime, fighting corruption, improving students outcomes, raising living standards of low-income households, improving rural basic infrastructure, improving urban public transport and addressing the cost of living.

Editors' Articles Priority by Theme in NKRA

When writing an article, the author of *Berita Harian* would select which theme in within the NKRA will be highlighted. The themes chosen by the author are be illustrated by the Table 1. The theme that has been given the most focus by the author is the 'Raising Living Standard of Low-Income Households' which is written in as much as nine (50%) articles. It shows that the author supports government's action in focusing on the households with lower income. The themes of 'Improving Students Outcomes' and 'Improving Urban Public Transport' are the least emphasized theme written by the author. Both themes are only mentioned once in the articles which constitute 5.56% from the overall number of articles. The 'Reducing Crime' theme is placed as the second-highest theme that focused by the author in supporting the NKRA. There are four articles mention this theme and and this constitutes 22.22% out of the total number of articles. There are three (16.67%) articles that discuss the 'Fighting Corruption' theme with the reference to the International Transparency as the source to indicate Malaysia's position in the world rank of corruption. While there are a number of themes that have been written by the author in creating public awareness on NKRA, there are two themes that do not appear in any of the articles which are 'Improving Rural Basic Infrastructure' and 'Addressing the Cost of Living'. This is perhaps because the daily news has already extensively focused on those two themes.

Table 1: Theme focus of articles

Year (Month)	NKRA Keyword						
	FC	RC	ISO	RLIH	IRBI	IUPT	ACL
2010 (May,10)		/					
2010 (May,22)				/			
2010 (June,7)				/			
2010 (June,11)				/			
2010 (Sep,8)				/			
2010 (Oct, 5)		/					
2010 (Oct, 16)				/			
2010 (Oct,29)				/			

Year (Month)	NKRA Keyword						
	FC	RC	ISO	RLIH	IRBI	IUPT	ACL
2010 (Dec,22)						/	
2011 (Jan, 29)	/						
2011 (June,18)				/			
2011 (July,25)		/					
2011 (Sep, 14)			/				
2011 (Dec, 27)	/						
2012 (Oct, 25)				/			
2012 (Dec, 7)	/						
2013 (Mar, 21				/			
2013 (Jun, 10)		/					
Frequency (*f*)	3	4	1	9	-	1	-
Percentage (%)	16.67	22.22	5.56	50.00	-	5.56	-

Note: FC= Fighting Corruption, RC=Reducing Crime, ISO=Improving Student Outcomes,
RLIH=Raising Living Standard of Low Income Household, IRBI=Improving Rural Public
Transport, Addressing Cost of Living

Editors' Section of the GTP and NKRA

The analysis showed that the content of the news about the NKRA reported in the editor's
section of the *Berita Harian* from 2010 to 2013. However, this type of news can be considered
negligible. Furthermore, they are not released on a regular monthly basis. News of the NKRA
wereoften reported between the pages 16 to 33. Generally, the information regarding the
NKRA was often articulated by the Prime Minister and it is followed by information released
by government officials from the relevant sectors. There is also information alleged by NGOs.
Most of the articles make references to the NKRA in the first and second paragraphs. This
suggests that information about it is considered important. The core area of improving the living
standards of low-income households is the most widely reported, followed by fighting crime
and corruption. The result of this phase demonstrates an effort by the *Berita Harian* newspaper
to make national policy as the agenda of the media for the benefit of the public agenda.

SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was conducted in the second phase to determine whether information about
NKRA is known and understood by the readers of *Berita Harian*. The analysis phase was
broken into several parts: the profile of the respondents, source of information, and the
National Key Result Areas (NKRA) namely fighting corruption, reducing crime, improving
student's outcomes, raising living standards of low-income household, improving rural
basic infrastructure, improving urban public transport, and addressing the cost of living.

Profile of Respondents

The respondents of this research are those aged from below 21 to 53 years old with 34% of them
are male and 66% are females. More than 50% of the respondents have a degree while 12%
hold only SPM/SPMV. Some of the respondents work in private sectors (44%), government
sectors (24%) and only 6% are self-employed. Detailed information is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Profile of respondents (n=50)

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	17	34.0
Female	33	66.0
Age		
< 21 years	2	4.0
21-25 years	4	8.0
26-30 years	18	36.0
31-35 years	4	8.0
36-40 years	4	8.0
41-45 years	1	2.0
46-50 years	4	8.0
> 51 years	13	26.0
Min = 46, SD =29		
Highest Academic Qualification		
SPM/SPMV	6	12.0
STPM	2	4.0
Diploma	7	14.0
Bachelor	30	60.0
Others	5	10.0
Job		
Government	12	24.0
Private	22	44.0
Self-Employed	3	6.0
Student	13	26.0

Sources of Information

60% of the respondents get their information on NKRA from printed media while 82% of the respondents use electronic media to gain information on NKRA. The column pertaining to sources of information is based on a multiple selection answers as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Sources of Information (n=50)

Sources	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Printed Media*	30	60.0
Electronic Media*	41	82.0

*Multiple Selection Allowed

National Key Result Areas (NKRA)

Table 4 shows the level of reader's awareness about the government's focus on the NKRA. The overall mean score is 3.7150 while the overall standard deviation is .5907. The study finds that the majority of the respondents indicate that they know and understand the transformation process undertaken by the government. The majority of the respondentsare aware that the government is implementing the transformation process (mean = 4.340, SD = 0.7453).

Table 4: General knowledge on GTP and NKRA

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know Malaysia's government is in the process of transformation.	4.340	0.7453
2.	I know transformation made to make government institutions become more efficient.	4.320	0.7401
3.	I understand the meaning of 'People First, Performance Now'.	3.940	0.7930
4.	I know the objective of GTP is to fix the delivery system in a matter that concerned by the people.	3.900	0.9091
5.	I know GTP only focused on certain areas.	3.400	0.9476
6.	I know GTP also have the components of Ministerial Key Results Areas (MKRA).	3.340	0.9607
7.	I know GTP have 9 pillars set in the NKRA.	3.280	1.1073
8.	I know GTP have three phases.	3.200	0.9035

Overall mean score= 3.7150, Overall SD = .5907

Fighting Corruption

Overall, the respondents are aware of the government's efforts to combat corruption through the implementation of NKRA (Mean=4.0156, SD=.8190). The majority of the respondents tend to highly agree with the statement "I know our country's corruption rob wealth and resources' (Mean=4.660, SD=0.5194), while the respondents seem to have less cognizance about facts related to corruption (see Table 5).

Table 5: Fighting Corruption in NKRA

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know corruption rob our country's wealth and resources.	4.660	0.5194
2.	I know corruption is in conflict with moral values, ethics and religion of the majority of Malaysians.	4.600	0.6701
3.	I know the fight against corruption is one of the cores in the GTP.	3.960	0.8071
4.	I know people are not happy with the government's performance in fighting corruption.	3.920	1.0661
5.	I know corruption can cause loss of RM10 billion per year as estimated by PEMUDAH.	3.680	0.9570
6.	I know the SPRM set up a special task force headed by the Chief Secretary of the Government (KSN) Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan review the Auditor General 2008.	3.600	0.9476
7.	I believe the Global Corruption Barometer 2009 showed the government's actions in the fight against corruption is ineffective.	3.600	0.8571

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
8.	I know the Corruption Perception Index, Transparency International is the 56th in 2009 and 23rd in 1995.	3.360	0.9638
9.	I know Malaysia is a founding member of the Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) which has more than 300 organization's member.	3.220	0.9538
10.	I know December 9, 2012 is World Day Against Corruption.	3.200	1.1429

Overall mean score= 4.0156, Overall SD = .8190

Reducing Crime

As shown in Table 6, the majority of the respondents indicate a high awareness of the government's efforts to reduce crime (Mean=3.7800, SD=.5632). The respondents tend to agree that crime is also a type of theft and robbery that leaves a deep trauma to the victim (Mean=4.500, SD=0.6145). Their awareness of facts related to crime is considerably less. This shows that the respondents are less likely to take note of the reports issued by the authorities from time to time about the crime rate statistics.

Table 6: Reducing Crime in NKRA

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know street crimes such as snatch thefts and robberies without guns cause a lot of trauma to the victim.	4.500	0.6145
2.	I know the government's efforts to fight crime to satisfy people.	4.200	0.7559
3.	I know the existence of the young volunteer programme that aims to help prevent street crime.	4.000	0.8081
4.	I know the use of mobile police stations and motorbikes are enhanced.	3.980	0.7690
5.	I know the addition of CCTV has helped to prevent crime.	3.940	0.9127
6.	I know the involvement of the Voluntary Patrol Scheme (SRS) and Cop as the 'eyes and ears' of the authorities in the fight against crime.	3.860	0.9691
7.	I know the government's target to reduce street crime rate in 2010 as much as 20%.	3.700	0.8631
8.	I know senior officers are required to 'walkabout' to meet with people in their respective areas.	3.620	0.9666
9.	I know PDRM have managed to reduce the crime index rate for 5% for 3 years in a row and street crime as much as 20% by the end of 2010.	3.560	0.8369

Overall mean score= 3.7800, Overall SD = .5632

Improving Student's Outcome

The majority of the respondents are aware of the efforts made by the government through the NKRA to improve students' achievement. Even so, they moderately agree (Mean =3.4620, SD = .7717) with the statement. The respondents show the highest tendency to agree with the statement 'I know the rewards will be given to the principal as well as teachers if the required targets are achieved by the Ministry (Mean=3.680, SD=0.9781), while the lowest

tendency is allocated to the statement "I know about the increasing public-private partnership in pre-school education in order to achieve the required number of classes and to comply with the national standards' (Mean=3.280, SD=0.9485). These findings are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Improving Student's Outcomes in NKRA

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know the rewards will be given to principal as well as teachers if achieve targets required by Ministry.	3.680	0.9781
2.	I know there are a growing number of pre-school classes especially for children aged 4 years and above.	3.600	1.1066
3.	I know about the performance of a school is determined based on a composite score.	3.600	1.0302
4.	I know about the consistency of the assistance provided to pre-school students by the government including standardization of per capita grants.	3.500	1.0152
5.	I know about improving the quality of pre-school teachers and teaching assistants in the last three years involving almost 30,000 people.	3.500	0.9742
6.	I know that the model developed in literacy and numeracy concepts easier to understand would be taught early in the pre-school.	3.460	0.9941
7.	I know about the existence of relaxation methods to students of High Performing Schools for driving excellence in education.	3.360	0.9424
8.	I know about the availability of intensive monitoring and supervision will be made to the bottom 10% of schools by education officers.	3.340	0.9607
9.	I know about the appointment of facilitators' specialist at the district level in order to assist teachers in literacy and numeracy in schools.	3.300	0.9313
10.	I know about the increasing in public-private partnership in pre-school education in order to achieve required classes and comply with national standards.	3.280	0.9485

Overall mean score= 3.4620, Overall SD = .7717

Raising Living Standards of Low-Income Household

Most of the respondents knew about the government's efforts to improve the living standard of low-income households through the NKRA (Table 8). Overall, the respondents moderately agreed on almost all items. The highest tendency is for the statement "I know about the increasing number of medical clinics in urban and rural areas, as well as mobile medical clinics' (Mean=3.820, SD=0.8497) while the lowest level of agreement is for the statement "I know about the standardization of the definition of low-income groups' (Mean=3.060, SD=0.9982).

Table 8: Raising Living Standards of Low-Income Household in NKRA

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know about the increasing of medical clinics in urban, rural and mobile medical clinics.	3.820	0.8497
2.	I know about the implementation of employment opportunities through establishment of a retail store 1 Malaysia.	3.720	0.8340

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
3.	I know about the provision of training enable low income households to improve their economy.	3.700	0.9530
4.	I know the expansion of financial aid to people of low-income households to buy artificial limbs and prosthetics.	3.560	0.9723
5.	I know about the supply of 1 Malaysia insurance scheme which covers areas such as education, and critical illness to poor households.	3.560	0.9071
6.	I know about increasing in assistance for home ownership by offering 44,000 low-cost housing, for sale and rent.	3.540	0.8621
7.	I know about the government's efforts to accelerate the pace of poverty and eliminate extreme poverty by 2010.	3.440	1.0910
8.	I know there are more than 200,000 households are classified as poor.	3.420	0.7584
9.	I know about the distribution of federal welfare assistance to those who qualify on the first day of each month.	3.240	0.9596
10.	I know about the standardization of the definition of low-income groups.	3.060	0.9982

Overall mean score= 3.5060, Overall SD = .6199

Improving Rural Basic Infrastructure

Table 9 shows the results of the respondents who agree with the statements related to government efforts to improve rural infrastructure through the NKRA. The majority of the respondents indicate a moderate level of agreement. They show the highest propensity agreement on the statement "I know that there is assistance to build and repair houses for the poor in rural areas' (Mean=3.880, SD=0.9398). This may indicate that they are aware of the help to build and repair homes of the poor in rural areas, run by the government. The lowest level of agreement is the statement "I know about fresh fruits and vegetable farms that are driven by the private sector on land owned by the state or federal government, in rural areas' (Mean=3.020, SD=1.0971). This indicates that there is an activity or a new program initiated by the government which has come to the knowledge of the respondents.

Table 9: Improving Rural Basic Infrastructure

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know that there is assistance to build and repair houses for the poor in rural areas.	3.880	0.9398
2.	I know about the improving access to clean or treated water supply to all houses in rural areas.	3.780	0.9957
3.	I know about the increased access to electricity for 24 hours to residents of rural areas.	3.720	0.9698
4.	I know about the increased access to paved/gravel road/street red stone (Laterite) in rural areas.	3.680	0.9988
5.	I know there is maintenance of rural basic infrastructure to monitor and maintain the roads and power generation in rural areas.	3.680	0.9134

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
6.	I know about the programme of promoting young entrepreneurs in rural areas.	3.620	1.0280
7.	I know the improvements that target village cooperative development and operation of the existing plant industry in rural areas.	3.280	1.0698
8.	I know about the initiative to create a modern integrated farming driven by the state government to promote economic activity and provide jobs and housing for the poor in rural areas.	3.260	1.0264
9.	I know about the programme of the 21st Century Village (KA21).	3.160	1.0759
10.	I know the goal of KA21 programme is to encourage youth to remain living in the village and start a business there.	3.060	1.0184
11.	I know about fresh fruits and vegetable farm that are driven by the private sector in land owned by the state or federal government in rural areas.	3.020	1.0971

Overall mean score=3.4673, Overall SD=.7604

Improving Urban Public Transport

Table 10 shows the respondents' level of agreement with statements related to increased public transport services initiated by the government through the NKRA. The majority of the respondents indicate a moderate agreement (Mean=3.6338, SD=.6920). The majority of them are aware of the various efforts that have been reported in general through mass media such as 'I know about the refurbishment and rebranding comes back Pudu Sentral (Pudu Raya Bus Terminal)' (Mean=3.980, SD=0.9145). However, much knowledge are less understood by the respondents that require better explanation through media channels, such as the statement "I know about the introduction of a new taxi business model' (Mean=3.440, SD=0.8610), which needs to be explained better.

Table 10: Improving Urban Public Transport

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know about the refurbishment and rebranding effort Pudu Sentral (Pudu Raya Bus Terminal).	3.980	0.9145
2.	I know about the improvement of bus stops including the construction of a new bus stop and upgrading existing bus stops.	3.760	0.8935
3.	I know about the program to transform Malaysia taxi system to enhance quality taxi services in Malaysia.	3.740	1.0063
4.	I know about the improvement of the system bus.	3.720	0.9044
5.	I know about the efforts to improve the bus system and improve the bus network endlessly in the Greater Kuala Lumpur / Klang Valley.	3.720	0.8816
6.	I know about the implementation of Fast Flow Bus (Bus Rapid Transit, BRT) to cover the entire Klang Valley.	3.700	0.9949
7.	I know the upgrading of the rail system covers the Greater Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley KTM Komuter trains between cities, Transit and Rapid KL Monorail between cities.	3.680	1.0190

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
8.	I know about the efforts to increase the capacity of trains between cities and towns.	3.580	1.0515
9.	I know about the efforts to improve the control and management of parking space.	3.500	0.9530
10.	I know about the implementation of a centralized taxi service.	3.480	0.9311
11.	I know on the enhancement of system integration UPT (Urban Public Transport).	3.480	0.9528
12.	I know about travel demand management that encourages the use of public transport in the Greater Kuala Lumpur / Klang Valley.	3.460	0.9082
13.	I know about the introduction of a new taxi business model.	3.440	0.8610

Overall mean score=3.6338, Overall SD=.6920

Addressing Cost of Living

The government's efforts to address concerns regarding the cost of living are known by the respondents. The majority of them show the tendency to agree that they are aware of the assistance provided by the government such as the BR1M, 1Malaysia Clinic, and PR1MA initiatives. Nevertheless, they are more aware of the general knowledge pertaining to the specialized assistance such as 1Malaysia book vouchers and efforts to reduce the cost of raw materials in the market.

Table 11: Addressing Cost Living

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I know about giving 1 Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) by the government.	3.940	0.6824
2.	I know about the financial assistance under the BR1M for households earning below RM 3,000 a month by giving a cash voucher worth RM500.	3.800	0.7825
3.	I know about setting up 1Malaysia clinics to help people get affordable treatment (RM1 for each session).	3.800	0.7284
4.	I know about the provision of public housing for low income groups (PR1MA) by the government.	3.780	0.7900
5.	I know about the abolishment of school fees and to provide a free public education.	3.680	0.8676
6.	I know about the 1 Malaysia Book Store (KB1M) was created in an effort to reduce the costs associated with education.	3.660	0.6263
7.	I know about the Menu Rakyat 1Malaysia (MR1M) was created to help low-income workers and students.	3.640	0.6627
8.	I know about mini market opening is to provide essential supplies to low-income people who live in urban areas.	3.620	0.8781
9.	I know subsidies given by the government RM260 million under the 1Malaysia book assistance program for universities / colleges, matriculation and Form 6 students.	3.460	0.8621
10.	I know about the government's efforts to reduce raw material costs by increasing supply in the market.	3.280	0.7826

Overall mean score=3.7440, Overall S.D=.8155

DISCUSSION

Based on the analytical results of the two phases, a general conclusion can be made to determine whether what was intended by the editor of *Berita Harian* was accurately understood by the readers. A comparison was made between the Core NKRA articles written by the editor with the NKRA information obtained by the *Berita Harian*'s readers. The purpose of this comparison is to anticipate the meeting point and the assumption of parallelism between the editor's and readers' comprehension.

Table 12 shows that half of the NKRA information reported by the editors are concerned with the government's efforts to improve the lives of the low-income households. This agenda (media agenda) is likely to inform the people that the government (policy agenda) is working seriously to help low-income earners who are burdened by a low standard of living. However, surprisingly, the readers (public agenda) do not obtain the desired information. Instead, they appear to focus on the government's efforts to combat crime through their reading of the newspaper. This reader may be selective for they tend to want to read something of interest instead of just reading them alone.

Table 12: Comparison of Core NKRA written by Editors against the Related Information of Core NKRA receives by Readers from *Berita Harian* Newspaper

No.	NKRA	EDITORS		READERS	
		Freq.	%	Mean	SD
1.	Raising Living Standards of Low-Income Households	9	50.00	3.51	6.20
2.	Reducing Crime	4	22.22	4.02	7.27
3.	Fighting Corruption	3	16.67	3.78	5.63
4.	Improving Urban Public Transport	1	5.56	3.63	8.99
5.	Improving Student Outcomes	1	5.56	3.46	7.72
6.	Addressing Cost of Living	-	-	3.74	8.15
7.	Improving Rural Basic Infrastructure	-	-	3.47	8.36

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of the research have opened up a broader perspective in finding a mutual point for the relationship between the message conveyed by the editorials and message received by the public. A message that is objective may not be successfully communicated and objectively understood because people actually have a comprehensive perspective in accordance with their individual desires and needs.

Most of the information on GTP and NKRA were placed in the first and second paragraphs. Meanwhile, the themes of GTP and NKRA mainly focused on raising the living standards of low income household, followed by reducing crime and corruption. This pattern shows that the main concern of the editor was on these three main issues of GTP and NKRA. However, the main concerns of the readers were in reducing crime, fighting corruptions and addressing the cost of living.

Overall, the findings can be deduced in twofold. First, political leaders' input as the main sources of information, on the content of the editor's column do exist, and second, there are differences between the editor's choice and the readers' main concerns about the issues related to GTP and NKRA.

The findings also demonstrate evidence of the importance to understand the editors' and readers' expectations. The editors as gatekeepers of the media organisation should ensure that the readers are aware of the information they wrote about the government's policy. However, the analysis of the survey responses clearly indicates that that the readers, or in the context of the gatekeeping theory, are known as 'the gated', were not really aware and have not really understood the message that the editorials re trying to put across.

This study concludes that the *Berita Harian* has a different main focus on the GTP and NKRA issues compared to the readers. This study offers insights into the development of journalism where ideology has become part of the structure of journalism. Hanitzsch (2007, p.372) states that "this dimension reflects the extent to which journalist pursue a particular mission and promote certain values referred to as the interventionism dimension". Therefore, normative concepts can be found in this study. However, the extended primary position is that journalism is not the only media form that supports those in power. As claimed by Kovach and Rosenttiel (cited in Hanitzsch 2007, p.374), it is assumed that the primary purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with the information they needed to be free and self-governing. This research has discussed the values of editors' and readers who are partly constructed through the normative journalism ideology.

This study has thus opened up a number of pathways. Future research could deal with larger samples from *Berita Harian* readers to compare and contrast how the editor's section is constructed and regulated. Although this study explores a number of the editors' news articles and readers as samples, they are considered limited because it is only involved descriptive analysis. Obviously, additional research is needed to compare and contrast the expectations and attitudes of the editors in delivering information to the readers. Such research should incorporate in-depth interviews with editorial staff to identify what constitutes news and the role of the editorial team.

Therefore, future comparative studies in gatekeeping may offer further insights about more sustainable journalism models, and a more socially useful way to inform and communicate about our world. Gatekeeping theory at its best will continue to inform and inspire public debate and participation. The gatekeeping theory will cover the individual's routines, organization, extra media and ideology of the editors. However, this will not happen automatically and needs investment and strategic thinking, not only by the journalism industry itself, but also by the government and civil society.

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APPENDIX

Inter-Coder Reliability Sheet (2 Coders)

No.	Items	Coder	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total A? (TA)
1		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
2		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	X	/	/	/	/	/	6
3		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
4		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
5		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
6		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
7		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	X	/	/	/	/	6
8		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
9		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
10		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	X	/	/	/	/	/	/	6
11		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
12		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	X	/	6
13		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
14		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
15		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
16		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
17		C1	/	/	/	X	/	/	/	6
		C2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
18		C1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
		C2	/	/	X	/	/	/	/	6
	Total		17	17	16	17	18	17	18	120

Calculation: $PA_o = 2A / (n_A + n_B) = 2(120) / (125 + 121) = 0.975$