

SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Book review

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Struggling with Digital Pandemic: Students' Narratives about Adapting to Online Learning at Home during the COVID-19 Outbreak

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Abstract

With the ongoing catastrophe of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world seems to have come to a standstill. Daily living routines, work, and schools predominantly launched into a state of confusion, and people across the globe excessively find ways to cope with their experiences of this traumatic disaster. Concerning schools, the pandemic has dramatically challenged the education system with teaching and learning processes managed remotely, utilising online platforms. This paper explores university students' perception of online learning, specifically during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, to uncover how they respond to this 'new normal' digital mode of teaching and learning and how they seek to regain control over the sudden shift in their lives. Through interviews with students from Universiti Darussalam (UBD) and Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali UNISSA, this original article reveals students' transformative behaviours during online learning, and institutional supports that contribute to the shaping of students' online learning experiences in Brunei.

Keywords: COVID-19; Online Learning; Student; Experiences; New Normal

Introduction

Hoon and Alam (2021) referred to the online learning phenomenon as a 'Digidemic' (digital pandemic) to allude to the impacts of online learning on students and teachers. Their study indicated how this digidemic, in the form of spatial disconnection, occurs as students struggle to accustom to the new norm of conserving their private space while also having to share the space with other various diversions. As they have argued, that situation is beyond the students' control (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020; Leinaweaver et al., 2017; Sumuer, 2018). Similarly, our research shows how students' learning experiences at home deconstructs the dividing line between their private and public spaces. With online learning, students have to maintain their academic responsibilities in a space supposedly meant for destressing and relaxing (Kay, 2020). This causes them to feel mentally detached even to appreciate and be engaged in their online learning, especially with the existence of other disruptions at home (Kim & Frick, 2011). This spatial disconnection can result in increased boredom with learning, reduced learning efficiency (LaPointe & Reissetter, 2008), detachment from reality (Lim et al. 2021), inability to assimilate knowledge (Baran & AlZoubi, 2020), and devalued determination in the learning process (Appadurai, 2020). Thus, this article contributes to a better understanding of how online learning has transformed rigid

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spatial structures and compromised students' insight capabilities to acquire knowledge.

In response to the devastating COVID-19 outbreak globally, higher education institutions have transitioned to online learning as it is considered the most viable mode of conserving education while maintaining a safe distance (Xiangming & Song, 2018). It is important to emphasise that online learning is one of the many options for distance education (Chen et al., 2019). Generally, distance education refers to any form of learning experience where the student and instructor are physically apart. Nagro, Fraser, and Hooks (2019) argued that such an experience is the perfect context for free-flowing thought that allows the students to move beyond the restricted confines of a familiar social order. Furthermore, Biana (2013) puts forth that distance education aims to benefit everyone, especially those who are less privileged, under-resourced, and out of reach with educational access (Dube, 2020).

Therefore, this form of learning is highly suggested as it provides the best learning opportunities for every student, regardless of their circumstances (Migueliz Valcarlos et al., 2020). Especially in the distressing time of the pandemic, distance learning has become a prime element in the lives of all learners and educators (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). However, this seems to rest on a stark assumption. Universiti Brunei Darussalam implemented online learning back in March 2020 as a preventive measure against the transmission of the COVID-19. Lectures had to be taught through synchronous remote learning, and classes were done at home (Dong et al., 2020). With the sudden change from a physical to an online environment, university students in Brunei instead have to face the inevitable challenges that follow the new mode of learning. First, there are issues concerning the efficiency of the online learning environment; the lack of interaction in the process amongst peers and with the instructors (Dube, 2020). As there is a lack of social integration in an online community, this confirms Edge and Loegering's (2000) assertion that students may comparatively learn less than in the traditional physical classroom. There are also socio-economic concerns where there is a clear digital divide between those who have and those who do not have access to sufficient school and technological facilities (Clark et al., 2021), and computers and the internet, thus contributing to the hardship that students may face in their experiences of online learning.

The findings of this study benefit society, considering the increased significance of distance learning and the role of technology, in general, in the 21st century, and particularly so during this pandemic. These days, the greater demand for e-learning should justify the need for more effective teaching and learning techniques (Aliyyah et al., 2020). Even though the main idea of e-learning has been introduced and established in Brunei, it has not been employed to a great measure. This is evident in how students, some teachers, and even parents have problems coping with online learning and are still attempting to adjust to it (Mukhtar et al., 2020). Institutions and instructors will be able to teach more efficiently and provide a better learning environment for students using the approaches that may emerge from the study results. Students and parents can also reflect on their experiences and comprehend what they can do better to manage e-learning and technology as a learning medium.

As for the researcher, this study will hopefully help unravel concealed experiences and build upon those to explore critical areas that can contribute to and fill in the gaps, if any, of the existing studies of many other researchers for the benefit of the general public.

Literature Review

Online learning or ‘distance learning’ is a term that alludes to a form of studying outside the traditional classroom or a face-to-face setting. Particularly in this time of distress, the COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably seized and compelled the idea of utilising online learning to a great extent. A new paradigm has undeniably formed, and students are obliged to learn to manage and cope with the inevitable shift. Building on the work of Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (1999), Anderson (2011) assessed the possibility of forming a theory of online education in which he discussed how four key elements; Learner-Centred, Knowledge-Centred, Assessment-Centred, and Community-Centred, should be considered to achieve effective learning environments, including online learning. Following this statement, many researchers have constructed a variety of studies focussing on processes and strategies for a successful online learning experience. This study will include substantial research into how the community or students’ institutions contribute to making the experience for the students wholly bearable and meaningful. The role of students as learners will also be looked into to understand better how they can modify their experience.

Virtual Belonging

Based on the findings of Garris Garrison and colleagues (e.g., Aragon, 2003; Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005; Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007) in expanding the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework, it is well established that along with the students, the responsibility of creating a supportive and an all-inclusive structure whereby students can easily engage and feel at ease with the online learning community also lies with the institutions and the faculties. The CoI model underlines three crucial presences (Social, Teaching, and Cognitive presence) that can serve as fundamental factors to enable a successful educational experience in remote learning environments. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) note that the key to successful student engagement in online learning is meaningful connections with the institution (Sahi et al., 2020).

With that being the case, it is also pivotal to acknowledge the community surrounding the students—their family and friends—which plays a crucial role in being a central pillar of support in helping the students cope and manage better with their learning (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). Additionally, as individuals, the students should be able to recognise their capability and potential to control and alter their experience. Students should understand that they have the upper hand in their choices for themselves and, thus, develop individual characteristics to cope better with their online learning in this pandemic (Masterton et al., 2021).

This sense of belonging, be it within the physical or online community, is essential as it reveals how an individual can feel familiar with the community around them and

engage smoothly and regularly (Rashid & Yadav, 2020). Oomen-Early and Murphy (2009) put forth that the online learning community is widely known to have higher attrition rates compared to traditional campus face-to-face studies (Spanenberg et al. 2020). With that, he emphasised that this sense of belonging acts as a principal factor affecting a student's engagement and can act as a safeguard against deterioration. In addition to inaugurating the components that can strengthen the sense of unity and belonging, the institution observes the students' progress and identifies initial signs of detachment (Beaudoin, 2002; Dennen, 2008). Moreover, promoting an open discourse between the students, instructors, and their colleagues, which has always been assumed for granted, is essential to online learning (Coomey & Stephenson, 2001).

Student-Instructor Interaction

In light of a better understanding of the institution's responsibility, several studies have attempted to emphasise the importance of student-instructor interaction for a successful and better way of coping with online learning. Cannady (2015) theorised that online-friendly academic resources and profuse chances for student-instructor interactions are plausibly the most pivotal support an institution can offer for online learning students. Similarly, researchers such as Lee (2010) and Ralston-Berg et al. (2015) have highlighted the vital link between a large and frequent number of student-instructor interactions and increased student course satisfaction, emphasising that it is a critical component of successful student learning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). With the fundamental reliance on asynchronous modes of communication for online learning, it has been proposed that, for successful online learning, interactions can transpire through a variety of methods, including learner-to-content, learner-to-instructor, and learner-to-learner (peer) interaction (Bolliger & Martindale, 2004), that demands a more proactive, self-regulated approach on the students (Brown, 1997; Khiat, 2015; Tsay et al. 2000). Furthermore, Mazzolini and Maddison (2006) emphasised that the instructor's role is to act as the person who allows students to adopt a more central role in their learning. Numerous studies (Barrett, 2006; Butler, 2000; Chang & Fisher, 2003) have suggested that the new standard has, thus, shifted from teacher-centred and institution-centred learning to student-centred learning. Based on these findings, it is critical to recognise institutions or instructors. In particular, it plays an important role as a supportive pillar for a student learning online, as a lack of social interaction is widely regarded as a significant barrier to student success in online learning (Muilenburg & Berge, 2005).

Active Learners

E-learning undeniably places a great deal of differing demands and difficulties, especially on the students. The review article, *Applying Best Practice Online Learning, Teaching, and Support to Intensive Online Environments: An Integrative Review* (2017), explores the main characteristics for effective online learning (Roddy et al., 2017). Especially in this time of a life-altering pandemic, the details of this study can provide an adequate understanding of how students can become the advocates of their own experiences by adjusting and adapting to the 'policy' that is online learning for a steadier means of coping. Several studies have focused on the necessity for students to be more active as learners (Palloff & Pratt, 1998) and develop

‘sophisticated’ skills such as collaborative working (Cowan, 2006; Chang & Fisher, 2003) to be successful in learning remotely. To further support the statement, Zariski and Styles (2000) suggested that becoming a more proactive learner is to encourage oneself to become self-directed or self-regulated learners. This can be achieved by being responsible for organising their learning structures and constantly reflecting on their progress.

Cases of self-regulated learning whereby students utilise self-cognizant skills for a better means of learning have also been highly linked with outstanding academic achievements (Johnson, 2015; Khiat, 2015). In his study, *E-Learner Competencies*, Birch (2002) noted that to be an e-learner is to be able to “identify and prioritize his or her skill gaps” and to “manage the learning experience which includes establishing defined goals, establishing specific plans, and securing needed resources.” (p. 11). Hence, with these studies, there is a constant affirmation that self-regulated learners are most likely to hold an optimistic and supportive attitude towards themselves as the learners and to have a better understanding of the subject content, which can assist in coping better with online learning (Pham & Ho, 2020). Furthermore, Foucault refers to power as “relationships of power” (Foucault, in Bernauer & Rasmussen, 1987:11). In *How Active Involvement in Learning Mathematics Can Preclude Meaningful Engagement: contributions from Foucault*, Klein (2000) highlighted the students’ transformation on their positive identity as learners. Using Foucault’s theory as a foundation, she revealed that mathematics students can engage with the mathematics courses as they have established self-identities as motivating students (Klein, 2000). In that study, the students were aware that using own resources and finding intrinsic motivations about the benefits of learning mathematics were instrumental for their success in the future employment (Klein, 2000). As a result, the concept of power or knowledge constitutes identity. The constituted identity can alter and affect engagement with knowledge processes in the classroom context; in this context, how power can be used to comprehend and cope with online learning.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach to collect data. Six respondents were selected and interviewed using purposive sampling. The respondents are university students; five from Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) and one from Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA). The purposive sampling was preferred to choose students who have had personal experiences with online learning to obtain in-context data more conveniently. To gain a better insight into the respondents’ perception of online learning, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were conducted. This method allowed more room for natural probing and profound discussions for a more in-depth comprehension of the respondents’ perceptions (Bolliger & Martin, 2018). The interviews were conducted in both English and Malay, as most young Bruneian people speak bilingually (Noorashid & McLellan, 2021). The interview questions posed to the respondents explored their preferences to online learning, and the interviews lasted between 30 minutes to one hour each. Before conducting the interview, the respondents were asked for their consent to record their

responses, and confidentiality of each response was assured. The interviews were conducted using a mobile phone as well as face-to-face meetings, with some conducted via WhatsApp due to different time schedules. The interview recordings were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and this involved a thorough interpretation and examination of the data to identify substantial themes (Tuckett, 2005). In what follows, we present detailed narratives of the various experiences of the research respondents in times of online learning.

Unproductive Temporality and the Challenges of Online Learning

Generally, similar notions surfaced when respondents were asked about their thoughts on online learning. It is noteworthy that online learning has emerged as a new norm in Brunei's higher education. Therefore, behavioural adaptations to it are necessary. Cognitive aspects such as stress and difficulty are associated with how online learning has affected the respondents' overall learning experience. The sudden transition to virtual learning proved overwhelming for the students. Meanwhile, the readiness for this new learning system was an unpredictable challenge: 'I never thought I would ever be in an online learning situation. For me, online learning is more challenging than physical learning' (Izzan, UNISSA). Face-to-face learning has revolutionised the scholarly habitus experienced by students in non-pandemic times. This transition to online learning, on the other hand, forced them to compromise with the old learning model. One student conceals his shock at this new mode:

In my opinion, online learning is not something that I would want to go through. We're all so used to physical learning throughout school life, and we never really had the chance to have online learning. After the pandemic, it took up such an important role for everyone in Brunei that it became such a huge shock to adapt to (Hamizah, Female, UBD).

Not all students are well-prepared for this new structure imposed by the educational institutions. All modules or courses are conveyed through a virtual platform in online learning. This situation prompts students to regularly stay up-to-date with information circulated via the distance learning platform such as Canvas, Moodle, and others. Subsequently, online learning forces them to always be in a virtual domain with their computers/laptops or handheld devices. From the socio-technical perspective, this condition requires students to keep up with the accelerated flow of information. However, this isolates them because their reality cannot coexist with the fluidity of the online space, causing them distress. It is emphasised in a student's experience as follows 'I felt like it did affect me greatly because I felt like I got super pressured by online learning and whatever was happening in classes. I am sort of left behind' (Nadrah, UBD). Breaking away for a moment from the hustle and bustle of online learning is an adaptative mechanism for the students so as not to feel overwhelmed by the new learning experience. However, the important goal of observing the advantages and disadvantages of online learning is to be able to provide body and mental readiness to embark on this virtual learning engagement. As confirmed by a student: 'I wasn't taking the online learning seriously at first, as I wanted to give chances (sic) to my body and mind to digest what is going on in this [online] learning mode' (Fatrisya, Female, UBD). In general, this narrative informs us about the sudden shock experienced by the students when they transitioned from a face-to-face mode of learning to online.

Despite the fact that the instructors have a critical role to play, the students demonstrated thoughtful consideration in understanding how, like themselves, their lecturers may also find the situation perplexing, a change that is difficult to grasp and adapt to with ease. In addition, social change at home was found to be implicated by online learning. The present study found that the experiences of these respondents were affected by their similar opinions of online learning in a home environment. The respondents asserted that a home is designated for comfort and relaxation, where all other obligations could be deferred, including school matters. However, online learning interferes with this luxury and bounds the students instead within their home with online lectures and work.

You're situated at home, in front of your laptop, and you dismiss yourself from your working mode. When you think about home, it's a place to relax and school is for work. There's just that missing piece that sets your mind into studying. (Izzan, UNISSA).

A house was defined as a physical and emotional space that provides an inner bond for individuals and cultural and emotional security for its residents (Cristoforetti et al., 2011). When online learning is imposed, this redefinition of the house comes to the fore. For instance, students tell of a house as rendezvous for a sense of belonging and convenience: 'Home is their comfort space, and it's a place that you are most likely to rest and ignore whatever responsibility you have outside, but online learning was intruding in it' (Hamizah, Female, UBD). This testimony implies online learning has shifted its meaning within the home itself and the temporality it has developed within.

As the students undertake online learning at home, they gradually become aware that disruptions are inevitable. These disruptions include slow internet connections, trouble accessing online lectures through applications such as Zoom, house chores, as well as internal student factors such as laziness or procrastination. Thus, recognising how these disruptions have made their learning progress difficult, the majority of the students developed their initiatives to alter their remote learning experience. One of the respondents recounted how being at the comfort of her home demotivates her as she willingly chooses to procrastinate rather than study. So, instead of conforming to the general idea of remote learning at home, she developed an alternative to help her to refocus and cope with online learning better in which she stated,

I feel like my home is so full of distractions, and I just can't seem to do anything about it. Doing my online learning at home has allowed me to procrastinate a lot, and I tend to just leave the class and enjoy the pleasure of doing something else like cooking, or taking a bath, or even sleeping (Khairani, Female, UBD).

Face-to-face learning and teaching at university are moulding students to be disciplined while on-campus as they are required to obey the norms and regulations, such as class schedules, participating in group work, moving from one lecture hall to another, and wearing formal and proper attire. In sum, on-campus learning embodies the authority to discipline them (Neumann, 2001). Since online learning is accessible

off-campus, the home becomes a space for students to escape the regulatory power held by the university. Moreover, as emphasised in the narrative above, the students can be more autonomous, free and also carry out individual activities.

For this matter, we discovered that substantially as the university is the authoritative party implementing and setting up the online learning system, the respondents expected their institutions to provide more comprehensive guidance. The belief that the students have mastered the forte of online learning could have prompted the institution's deficiencies in management and providing guidelines. This then creates a challenge for the students to have a good learning experience. What about their routines at home? The next section explores how they demonstrate individualised routines.

Individualised Routines

As mentioned above, on-campus learning prompted students to always comply with certain regulations such as wearing formal and proper attires, preparing learning materials for the class before commuting to universities, and entering class punctually according to the schedule. In other words, the university is a disciplinary space for the students in general (Hackley, 2009). Societal role or the surrounding community is commonly a prevalent subject used to elucidate particular social concerns. The respondents agreed on the possible accommodating roles of three important institutions in assisting students in coping with online learning: the contribution of the educational institution, student-instructor interaction, and the family. However, while the data attest to how these institutions can help, we also found prominent perceptions of how these expectations differ from reality.

Online learning makes students achieve individual autonomy and get out of regulatory restraints on campus (Mathieson, 2012). At home, there is no need for them to carry out personal preparation: 'before this I would take the time to dress up to go to school and now that it's mostly online learning, I don't need to dress myself up anymore, so I just need to wake up, open my laptop and start the class' (Alif, UBD). More than that, the students admit that they are more passionate about their own space during the online learning process. With relief during the interview, they also acknowledged the convenience of studying in their own sanctuary and being free from all external control, as is normally the case with face-to-face learning: 'during an online lecture (...), there's no one to tell you, "do not do that", so you are in your own space.' (Hamizah, UBD). Although online learning allows respondents to build closeness with their own space, self-disciplining is challenging. Online learning does not completely give freedom to students at home as they found that face-to-face teaching equips them with emotional attachment to the class ambience. One of the emerging routines they learn through online learning at home is time management. A student acknowledged this argument by stating: 'online learning at home has improved my time management in a way, especially now that I'm in my final year' (Alif, UBD). Another student told us that online learning made her to be an independent learner: "It also does improve you in a way that encourages you to take your own learning seriously' (Rina, UBD). This points to students' reflectivity, enabling them to build autonomy through online learning.

However, despite the challenging notions associated with their experiences, some respondents also expressed the easiness side of online learning, with its convenience for mobility and how it has allowed them to improve themselves as active students, especially as final year students. ‘...those who are constantly on the move, or those who work part-time or have transportation problems, they might have it easier (Izzan, UNISSA). This statement indicates online learning can lead to a transportation problem for students living off-campus.

Societal role or the surrounding community is commonly a prevalent subject used to elucidate particular sociological concerns. The respondents agreed on the possible accommodating roles of three important institutions in assisting students in coping with online learning: the contribution of the educational institution, student-instructor interaction, and the family. However, while the data attest to how these institutions can help, we also found prominent perceptions of how these expectations differ from reality, especially in Brunei Darussalam.

Discussion

The data demonstrate the mixed notions of university students on remote learning during the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak and how it forms their overall learning experience (Domingo & Bradley, 2018). Our findings also found the actuality behind the students' expectations on the role of their educational institutions and their family in providing support and encouragement to help them cope with online learning (Kaufmann & Vallade, 2020). In addition, in order to better understand how students cope with online learning, we observed in the narratives how the students' motivation and initiative in changing their circumstances play a significant role. Since the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic back in December 2019, higher educations in Brunei Darussalam have seen a rise in the use of remote learning, what more with Brunei's great access to advanced digital technologies (Bolliger & Halupa, 2018). Even though ‘Blended Learning’; an approach to education that combines traditional physical classroom learning with online components, was introduced and initiated long before the pandemic, our findings demonstrated how the online learning aspect has not been instilled and deployed to the full extent. Our respondents described the difficulty of online learning and their feelings of being shocked and pressured as a result of the abrupt transition from a traditional face-to-face class to online learning and the need to quickly adapt to the new situation, as well as for teachers and parents. This is consistent with Khalil et al.'s (2020) study, which found that despite the educational sector's resilience during the pandemic, students and educators around the world were subjected to extreme new pressures (Cole et al., 2021).

Contrary to the claims by Hoon and Alam (2021) that emphasise the situation as beyond the students' control, our results suggest that the students are, in fact, capable of taking charge of their situation and altering it for the better sake of their learning process. In our findings, the respondents demonstrated how they identify themselves as a power tool capable of changing and determining their own experiences, rather than merely accepting the learning situation that hinders their own progress. Our

findings fit with previous literature that proves individuals' inventiveness to modify any social structure that constructs their behaviour, in this case, changing the educational arrangement of online learning that demotivates the students to help them get through with online learning (Henderson et al., 2017). Additionally, building on the existing evidence of Birch's (2002) study, the researcher asserts that online learners should be able to recognise and focus on their learning skills or weaknesses. It is argued that they should know how to be in control of their experiences, which includes initiating their own goals and resources (Bolliger & Martin, 2018). Evidently, one of our respondents spoke of the importance of being disciplined when it comes to learning in general. To avoid any unpleasant experience with online learning, he identified his strength as a disciplined student who knows how to manage his time well, establishing necessary boundaries between his academic and personal life. This helps him steer clear of any possibility of degrading his motivation and drive to study and thus, helps him to cope better with his online learning.

This study also provides an insight into the role of the educational institution and the family as two other main contributing parts in helping students cope with online learning (Sellnow-Richmond et al. 2020). A majority of the respondents remarked how the encouragement and boosterism of the instructors or the lecturers of the educational institution can motivate the students to interact and learn better and relieve the dull feeling prompted by the lack of sociality, which Bowers and Kumar (2015), and Rose (2017) have argued to be secluding and can be difficult for many students especially in online learning environments (Cole et al. 2021). Our findings of the lecturers' instructiveness, care, and emotional support highlight their positive impact on the students' learning and success (Busteed, 2019). The data also attest to Bandura's (2011) study of the social cognitive theory, which postulates that learning takes place when individuals interact and engage in social contexts. We have argued that as cognition is not an innate process, it is acquired and formed by the different interactions a student has with other people within different social contexts. Thus, in the context of online learning, our data demonstrate how students can cope with their situation and absorb knowledge better with the reciprocal action of engagement within the social spaces at home (Mamun et al., 2020).

However, while acknowledging previous studies that have focussed on various societal, individual, and spatial matters, our results highlight a significant gap in that we have also identified the role of the family and educational institution in how they can help students cope better with online learning (Domingo & Bradley, 2018). In the event of a pandemic that disrupts students' learning at home, the current study emphasises the importance of promoting mental health to students. The absence of understanding and providing emotional reinforcements are found to further debase students' motivation and enthusiasm to study, especially with the recent normalised situation of online learning in a pandemic.

Conclusion

Imagine falling into the deep blue ocean with little or no knowledge at all about swimming or even staying afloat. On top of that, there is no one around to help, and

you feel simply hopeless. The ocean may seem wondrous, blue, and beautiful; however, it is full of surprises that one might not expect. Now apply the metaphor to online learning. These students fall into the dazzling ocean of online learning with little knowledge as to how to manage themselves. This research shares the accounts of university students transitioning to socially isolating online learning, which was not a smooth process. It highlights various fundamental results that help to comprehend the different notions surrounding the idea of online learning and identify the collective responsibilities of social agencies. Based on a qualitative analysis of the data, it can be concluded that these responsibilities are prime factors that can contribute profoundly to a student's coping strategies with online learning yet are very much overlooked.

The findings of this study reveal how the online learning phenomena disrupt the entire teaching and learning process, necessitating an understanding of the critical solution of instructors' pedagogical methods and the emotional support of the family in order to create an interactive and dynamic online learning experience for students. We emphasise that students have the power and the choice to alter and turn the situation around for their best interest instead of adhering entirely to the structures of online learning that evidently affect the students' learning progress. While the study has provided preliminary discussions on the perceptions of online learning in today's world of the pandemic, the generalisability of the results is limited by the fact that they are not representative of the general community of university students in Brunei Darussalam. Furthermore, one must understand that online learning is a new phenomenon for everyone, an event no one has ever experienced personally, especially in a pandemic. It is undeniable that everyone is still constantly at odds about what they can do in this disheartening circumstance.

Thus, the findings of this study will hopefully be conducive to the benefits of society, considering the increased significance of distance learning and the role of technology in the 21st century, notably during this pandemic. The greater demand for online learning should justify the need for more effective teaching and learning techniques. Even though the main idea of online learning has been long introduced and established in Brunei, it has not been employed to a great measure. This is evident in how students, some teachers, and even parents have problems coping with online learning and are still attempting to adjust to it. With the results derived from this study, we hope institutions and instructors will be able to teach more efficiently and provide a better learning environment for the students. Students and parents can also reflect on their experiences and comprehend what they can do better to manage online learning and use technology as a learning medium.

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Screen Industry Snap-Shot: A Study of the Bruneian Screen Industry amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

This is the first data-driven pilot study that is focused on the micro-scaled but burgeoning Bruneian screen industry. The scope of the study includes employment modes, frequency of productions, payment codes of practice and exhibition platforms, based on the data collected by both online surveys and semi-structured, face-to-face interviews between January to June 2021. The aim of this paper is to investigate the possible creation of a temporarily closed system of interaction between the local screen industry and other Bruneian businesses. It is hypothesised that the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent action taken by the Bruneian Government to restrict international travel and border crossings resulted in a new and rare interchange of production-based activity. The study targets a wide variety of parties, from industry professionals, e.g., production house managers, senior producers, freelancers, and the so-called gig-lancers, to governmental policymakers, i.e., representatives from Authority Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI) in Brunei.

Keywords: *Bruneian Screen Industry, COVID-19, Economic Impact, Film Production, Brunei Bubble, Closed-system of Interaction*

Introduction

Since the first case of COVID-19 infection in Brunei was detected on 9 March 2020, it took less than two months to contain the first wave of the pandemic when there was no local COVID-19 infection case reported on 6 May 2020. The next fifteen months without any community transmission of the virus in Brunei described “an unexpected COVID-19 success story” (Hayat, 2021), allowing Bruneian people to enjoy their business-as-usual lives inside the ‘Brunei Bubble.’ During the same period of time, Brunei’s Southeast Asian neighbours such as Malaysia, Indonesia fared the pandemic much worse; therefore, the Brunei government has since imposed strict air and borderland controls with the outside world in order to contain the virus. As of the time of this writing, Brunei has been enduring a more severe and graver second wave COVID-19 outbreak since 7 August

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2021, after zero community infection for over 450 days (Huaxia, 2021). So, such a strict border restraint is still in place in the sultanate.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the possible creation of a temporary closed system of interaction between the local screen industry and other Bruneian businesses. It is hypothesised that the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent action taken by the Bruneian Government to restrict international travel and border crossings resulted in a new and rare interchange of production-based activity, which included but is not limited to the following:

- an increased demand for locally produced screen content by the private business sector;
- a rise in the prevalence of non-screen industry professionals producing content for payment;
- a disruption to the established screen production hegemony.

Evidence used to support this hypothesis is derived from the first data-driven pilot study focussed on the economic impact of the small but burgeoning Bruneian screen industry amid the first COVID-19 outbreak. The scope of the study is comprised of a variety of screen industry aspects such as employment modes, frequency of productions, payment codes of practice, and distribution platforms. All the data for this research was circulated and collected by an online questionnaire, followed by a series of semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with senior producers, freelancers, and what this study terms 'gig-lancers,' as well as governmental policymakers from Authority Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI) in Brunei, between January to June 2021.

Scope of Study

The dearth of rigorous academic study into the inner workings of the Bruneian Screen Industry meant the authors took great care to ensure appropriate and valuable data was collected for this investigation. As this was the first attempt to identify and analyse the economic boundaries of the Bruneian Screen Industry, great importance was devoted to the type of the information gathered both in terms of the period under examination and the participants involved. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions placed on travel meant the year 2020 represented a rare opportunity to study the Bruneian Screen Industry with little to no outside influence from larger and more developed media production hubs such as Singapore and Malaysia. The irregular occurrence of Brunei's border closure created what may be viewed as a temporary closed system of interaction between Bruneian businesses and local production companies.

The authors purposely limited the information gathered to Bruneian-based production houses engaged in paid services with Bruneian businesses. These paid services included, but were not limited to, television commercials, motion picture social media content,

feature films and television productions for the Brunei Government-owned and operated Radio Television Brunei (RTB).

All production houses that attended an industry breakfast meeting called the ‘Unnamed Creative Talk’ were invited to participate in the production survey. A select few additional production houses were also invited to participate because the authors had deemed them to have a noticeable presence in the Bruneian content creation industry. The production houses that participated in the survey represented established businesses (existing more than ten years) as well as start-ups less than a year old. For the sake of simplicity and due to the fact that this study would focus upon the economic side of production, only producers were asked to take the survey and participate in the interviews.

The authors gathering information from the following four areas:

- Production levels in 2020;
- Economics of production;
- Exhibition of production;
- Economic impact of production upon other sectors in Brunei.

It was only through the examination of the data gathered from these four areas that the authors began to recognise a correlation between an increased level of production-based activity and the closure of Bruneian borders. In order to build a more robust conceptual framework of this correlation, the operational infrastructure of the screen industry was analysed as a social system. Unlike biological, chemical, or other physical systems, social systems require participatory interaction to stimulate cyclical activity. So, this analysis of the Bruneian Screen Industry sought to identify how particular attitudes, beliefs and perceptions concerning local production houses could have changed as a result of the pandemic.

The further recognition of the system of interaction as ‘closed’ instead of ‘open’ highlights the extraordinary circumstances resulting from the restriction of international travel and border crossings. Simply put, the bubble meant to protect the population of Brunei from COVID-19 has resulted in a previously implausible self-contained arrangement of interaction between local businesses and domestic production houses.

Methodologies

Information about the Bruneian Screen Industry was collected via a two-step process. First, producers of local production houses were given a google link with the written description: ‘Please only one survey per company and feel free to share to any professionals making video content as a business in Brunei’ (Google Form, 14 February 2021). The rationale for ‘sharing’ the link was to potentially grow the available database of known domestic production houses and include any additional established content creators that might have been overlooked. It is not certain if any of the producers shared the link but it ultimately garnered no new participants for this survey.

The Google Form consisted of 11 questions: ten of which were in multiple-choice format from which participants could select only one answer that best described their production company. An 'other' option was available for producers who felt none of the multiple-choice answers suited their situation. At the end of the survey, the participants were asked if there were any missing questions or subject areas that they felt needed to be investigated related to screen/video-based productions.

On 1 March 2021, the survey was closed. A total of 13 production companies participated. The information gained from this survey was used to formulate the framework of the Industry Snap-Shot research. Producers who elected to provide additional information in the form of an individual interview were contacted privately. Five private interviews were conducted with the producers who completed the Google Survey in which anecdotal information and further elaboration were provided regarding the state of screen production in Brunei during the COVID-19 pandemic. All interviews were conducted for 30 minutes in a casual setting such as a coffee shop. Leading questions based upon the individual producer's responses were asked to give the interview a structure. However, participants were allowed to discuss a variety of tangential topics that pertained to the Brunei Screen Industry. All interviews were recorded for transcription purposes.

Literature Review and Rationale

The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused many robust and thriving industries to lose ground and fall into economic despair. In the first half of 2020, some industries were completely shut down due to the different levels of lockdown restrictions implemented by most countries around the world to battle the pandemic. Silva (2021) noted: 'As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the many infected ships in the first quarter of 2020, the entire cruise industry was stopped, and a prohibition on resuming this industry was imposed worldwide.' Among these deeply struggling and daunting industries, the film and tourism industries were two of the most gravely damaged ones (Liu, Chin, Nechita & Candrea, 2020).

Filmmaking and other forms of screen production amid the COVID-19 pandemic has been extremely challenging, if not terrifying, especially before vaccines were made available. "Whether it's a film, TV show, or commercial, it's a complex assembly that requires dozens, if not hundreds, of people working together in a relatively confined space over a long period of time. Working in any kind of isolation is impossible" (Lindahl, 2020). However, as the famous catchcry of show business stresses, the show must go on, so too the entertainment industry must reopen from the complete shutdown caused by the coronavirus and resume production.

In early April 2020, when California was still under a strict stay-at-home order, Hollywood studio executives started to discuss how to implement a slew of safety

protocols from insurance to testing, crowd gatherings and craft services, in order to “get the industry back on its feet while ensuring the safety of everyone involved” (Andreeva & Fleming Jr, 2020, para. 1). For example, Art Director and Prop Master, David Bridson, elaborated: “Creating a safe workplace when you are bringing so many things from the outside — people, materials, grip equipment, lighting equipment — all of that is going to have to go through some kind of checkpoint” (Lindahl, 2020, para. 11). While productions slowly resumed, the international film industries looked for new platforms to distribute new releases to directly appeal to viewers at home (Sweeney, 2020). This new strategy has made online streaming and other over-the-top (OTT) distribution platforms become more and more popular and profitable globally.

In spite of the state of ravages and reshuffles for the global film and screen industries amid the global pandemic, the screen industry in the tiny sultanate of Brunei had fairly turned the tide against such a downturn and even enjoyed a production boom for fifteen months between early May 2020 and 7 August 2021, before Brunei’s ‘unexpected COVID-19 success story’ (Hayat, 2021) temporarily halted. Historically, since the release of Brunei’s first feature film *Gema Dari Menara* (1968), in which a melodramatic family tale manifested Brunei’s ‘booming post-curfew years in the late 1960s as a time capsule of Brunei’s lost pop history’ (Espina, 2013; Kathrina, 2021; Liu, 2021b), it was not until 2013 that Brunei’s second feature film *Ada apa dengan Rina* (Harlif Hj Mohamad & Farid Azlan Ghani, 2013) was produced and released in the domestic cinemas. While Liu (2021a) contended that Bruneian local image-makers took advantage of digital technologies and thrived with digital content creation and circulation for online self-expression and cinematic storytelling (p. 218); “it is difficult to analyse the status of Bruneian film-making through the perspective of a mature industry, which is why one might claim that the Brunei film industry is an emergent one in its infancy” (Liu, 2021a: 216).

Moreover, Liu pointed out some consistent themes such as family values and filial piety closely relevant to the predominant *Melayu Islam Beraja* (MIB, lit. Malay Islam Monarchy) philosophy revealed in contemporary Bruneian films “can act as an asset for Bruneian filmmakers, enabling them to nurture a distinctive Brunei screen culture and strengthen the emergent Bruneian film industry” (2021a: 232). It is evidenced by a successful golden jubilee celebration and weeklong re-screening of Brunei’s first feature film *Gema Dari Menara* (Director’s surname, 1968) in October 2018. “All the re-screenings for this ‘hidden gem’ of Brunei cinema have been sold out through pre-purchased tickets without any promotion effort” (Chin & Liu, 2018: 47-48). Fischer believes “a Bruneian Screen Identity is directly connected with an audiences’ demand for (Bruneian) content ... less about featuring Bruneian locations, language/slang or even culture. Rather it’s an elevation of Bruneian films above the pitfalls and snares indicative of the Hollywood hegemony” (Liu, 2021a: 231-232). To achieve such an elevation will benefit the Bruneian film industry’s long-term establishment and development.

In this research, however, the authors' primary purpose is to investigate the possible existence of a temporary closed system of interaction between the local screen industry and Bruneian businesses. In doing so, it is important to understand that film production is a social system by which members of the screen industry interact with clients, funders, government officials, audience members and the general public through the four stages of pre-production, production, post-production, and exhibition.

Social systems are understood to be 'contrived' and 'imperfect' because the foundations for interaction are "anchored in the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, motivations, habits, and expectations of human beings" (Katz & Kahn, 1978: 37) rather than in physical necessity. For this reason, the resources needed from the environment (i.e., inputs) cannot be assumed because, while stakeholder participation may be predicted, it cannot be made certain. Thus, systems theory can be seen to bear a striking resemblance to the production of screen-based content. The economic and business-related interaction between the Bruneian Screen Industry and its sources of capital is an under-researched area. None of the above existing literature has been discussed yet. Mohamad (2020) gave an overview of the emerging Bruneian creatives' 'affective work and labour on social media; her analysis, however, was more focused on individual creatives who work beyond the screen industry.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed an unprecedented challenge for many business sectors, it also provides a rare opportunity for the authors to observe closely the operation of the Bruneian Screen Industry at a time when the country remained insulated from the outside world, including its close neighbours, during the over a yearlong de-escalation process. This 'insulation' produced what could effectively be seen as a closed system of interaction between local, Brunei-based stakeholders. It must be clarified that closed systems typically only involve a single actor, but in this study, the authors examine two actor groups: Brunei-based businesses and local production houses. However, for this study, the definition of a closed system as a "system that does not interact with the external environment" (Daft, 1997: 55) will be applied as the localised interaction and resulting screen-based productions were not intended to exit the system, or in this case – the physical border of Brunei.

There are two key factors that help strengthen the proposed concept of Brunei as a closed system of interaction. First, external entities such as production houses from Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia were not allowed to enter Brunei thus, local businesses were required to hire local production companies for their production needs. Second, the vast majority of the Brunei population was not allowed to exit Brunei due to the borders remaining closed to international travel. The result of this closure meant a large portion of Bruneian capital typically spent abroad was now repurposed for local expenditure.

Through this study we tend to use Bruneian Screen Industry, instead of Bruneian film industry, to be as inclusive of screen-based businesses as possible for our research target,

not only limited to the film production business, because the Bruneian film industry is still an emergent one in its infancy stage (Liu, 2021a: 216). By employing Bruneian Screen Industry, we mean to include all the modes of screen productions, from the content made for tiny mobile phone screens, as well as for tablet computers, indoor and outdoor multi-screen displays, and television screens, to feature films and commercials shown on big screens in cinemas. Besides, we have the following two terms to classify the two types of active players in the Bruneian Screen Industry:

1, *Established* - This term, with reference to Bruneian production companies, identifies production-centric businesses that have operated continuous economic cycles over a period of 12 months in which money recouped from paid jobs has further perpetuated operational sustainability.

2, *Gig-lancer* - Permanent job in another industry such as social services but will take production jobs when an opportunity arises. The Gig-lancers represent a substantial portion of Brunei's social media content creators. While they do not immediately threaten established production companies, they do impact the pay rates for productions. In many cases, Gig-lancers are able to severely undercut other content creators because media production is not their main source of income. One of the reasons for the formation of the 'Unnamed Creative Talk' was to address the impact Gig-lancers had on potential clients in undercutting proposed production budgets. Additionally, producers expressed some concern that Gig-lancers were reinforcing the perceived low production quality stereotype commonly associated with the Bruneian Screen Industry.

Data and Analysis

The data and analysis section examines four major areas indicative of the economic boundaries of the Bruneian Screen Industry and the degree by which social system-based interaction occurs between the local production houses and domestic businesses. The sections were identified because they offered the widest catchment of information without overly taxing when answering. As mentioned before, the purpose of this study was to gather the information that could be used as a starting point for further, more in-depth research about the Bruneian Screen Industry.

Each of the four areas was composed of at least two questions that sought specific information regarding the production of screen-based content in Brunei. An overview of the four sections and brief description is as follows:

Production Levels in 2020: This section is specifically interested in identifying if the year 2020 offered less than, equal to, or greater than production opportunities due to the closure of the borders. This section consisted of two questions.

Economics of Production: This section is focused upon the economic exchange between production houses and local businesses. It investigates the possible existence of consumer bias and the likelihood of incentivised pricing. This section consisted of two questions.

Exhibition of Production: This section sought to identify the three most commonly used distribution/exhibition platforms in Brunei. This section consisted of three questions.

Economic Impact of Production upon other sectors in Brunei: This section examined how production budgets were spent and the economic ‘footprint’ of production capital on other sectors utilised in content creation. The sample size of the survey was 13 production companies. The producers or managing directors of these established businesses indicated an interest in participating in this study when it was first suggested at the authors' creative industry breakfast meeting.

Production Levels in 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing travel restrictions presented a rare opportunity to investigate the type, number and level of interaction between the Bruneian-based production houses and local clients. The first section of the Google Form survey was concerned with gathering data indicative of how the interaction experienced by production companies in 2020 differed from 2019. This section was titled Frequency of Screen/Video-based Productions and consisted of two questions.

Question 1: How many screen/video-based productions were made by your company in 2020?

The function of this question was to establish the parameter of activity of local production houses. There was no distinction made between paid and non-paid productions. Participants were provided with a selected range that was grouped by ten and asked to select the group that represented their production level in 2020. The production range selected by the participants is evident in Table 1.

Table 1. Production levels of 13 Bruneian production houses in 2020

Number of Productions (12 months)	Number of Production Companies
1-10 productions	3
11-20 productions	4
21-30 productions	2
31-40 productions	1
41-50 productions	1
51-60 productions	1
61-70 productions	0
71-80 productions	1

Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021)

Data and Analysis: The information gained from this question indicates that there was quantifiable interaction between production houses and local businesses in 2020. This interaction is representative of a social system and, therefore, a substantial starting point to further investigate the interchange between the local production houses and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. This interaction alone does not prove the existence of a close system of interaction. However, it provides an appropriate commencement point to examine how production during the pandemic differed from previous years.

The number of productions also allowed the authors to categorise the 13 production companies into three groups. The purpose of these groups was to provide interpretative order and ease of clarification when formulating conclusions through this data analysis. Group 1 includes the production companies that created 1-20 productions in 2020; Group 2 the production companies that created 21-40 productions in 2020; Group 3 the production companies that created 41-80 productions in 2020 (see Table 2)

Table 2. Three groups of production companies based on 2020 production numbers

Number of Productions (12 months)	Number of Production Companies
Group 1	
1-10 productions	3
11-20 productions	4
Group 2	
21-30 productions	2
31-40 productions	1
Group 3	
41-50 productions	1
51-60 productions	1
61-70 productions	0
71-80 productions	1

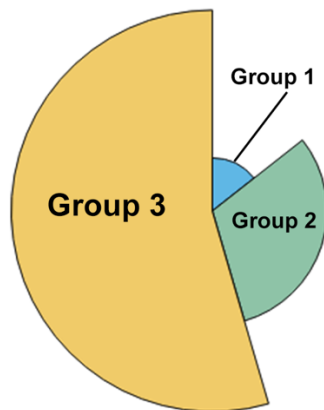
Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

The data suggest that Group 1, which accounts for 53.8% of the production houses surveyed, produces less than 20 productions a year. This Group 1 majority might represent a threshold barrier in which companies that are physically similar in terms of crew size, production expertise, and equipment naturally compete for similar jobs from local businesses. Companies that operate at this production level might discover that efforts to

increase their clientele are negated due to an abundance of choices for similar production services. Further analysis with regard to the closed system of interaction will be discussed in the Exhibition of Productions section.

A rough parameter of activity signals that as few as 283 (mean) and as high as 400 (max) productions were completed in 2020. While these numbers might seem low, it is important to view these figures in context to the population of Brunei, which was estimated at around 471,103 as of July 2021. It is also important to note that more than 60 production companies are rumoured to operate in Brunei. Many of these production companies focus solely upon a wedding and corporate video.

Graph 1 suggests that inequalities can exist even in the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic environment. Group 3, which accounts for 23.1% of production companies, engages in the greatest number of jobs - nearly half of the productions in Brunei. The dominant production levels of Group 3 do not ensure stability or continued operation, but it does suggest that higher levels of production might provide a competitive advantage over less active production houses. Keeping this in mind, if the COVID-19 travel restriction and border closure facilitated a closed system of interaction, it is possible that production companies in Groups 3 would benefit the most from a 'Brunei Bubble' that would completely eliminate external competition while continuing to exert domestic dominance.



Graph 1. Collective representation of production jobs (mean) by the group in 2020. Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

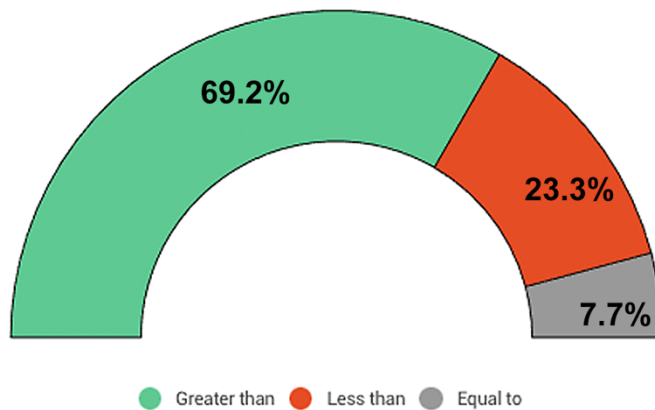
Question 2: How did the number of screen/video-based productions made by your company in 2020 differ from previous years?

This second question was a continuation of the first. The information gathered by this question could indicate a closed system of interaction due to the

environmental changes resulting from the pandemic. Participants were given three main options and asked to select the one that best represented any difference in production levels experienced in 2020. These three options were: Greater than, Less than, and Equal to; a fourth write-in option was also available for companies that were start-ups in 2020.

Data and Analysis: As indicated in Graph 2, 69.2% of Bruneian-based production houses experienced an increase in the number of jobs compared to previous years. These changes

might represent a systematic change from the Bruneian Screen Industry competing with external factors pre-pandemic towards a border-based closed system of interaction with domestic businesses due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Graph 2. Changes in production levels from 2019 to 2020. Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

Further analysis indicates production companies in Group 1 represented the only quantifiable divide between those that

gained and those that lost productions. That is, of the seven production companies in Group 1 only 4 (57.1%) experienced growth during the pandemic. As mentioned before, it is possible that the competition that exists between this particular group of production houses affects each other on a one-to-one basis. So, when one production house secures a job, it is at the loss of a fellow local production company. It is also possible that a fluctuation of production activity could be the result of such factors as reputation, price of production, specialised production skills, formal/informal partnerships and availability of work, to name but a few.

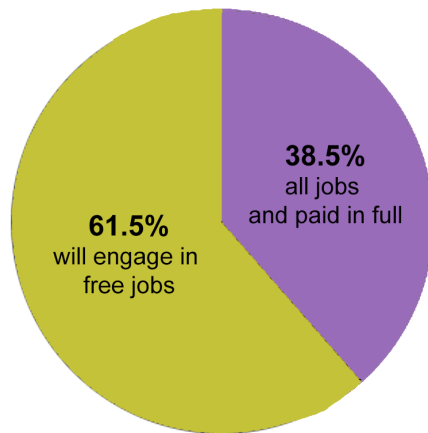
Economics of Production

The second section's questions investigated the economic interaction between the Bruneian production companies and local businesses. These questions aimed to explore concerns related to the practice of undercutting proposed budgets by the local production companies, the need for established pay rates for the local film industry professionals and the validity of a designated tiered pricing system. These concerns were all raised at the 'Unnamed Creative Talk'. They may represent a reaction by the established members of the Bruneian Screen Industry to control and take advantage of the changed social conditions resulting from the COVID-19 restrictions.

Question 3: What percentage of screen/video-based productions made by your company are 'paid' jobs?

The purpose of this question was to determine the degree by which production companies entered into money-based interactions with local businesses. Participants were provided with ten percentage ranges that best represented the portion of their paid versus non-paid

production work. For the purpose of this question, participants were informed that a ‘paid’ job represented interaction in which money is exchanged for a production service. This question forced participants to make a clear division between paid work and unpaid work without consideration for in-kind contributions, pro-bono, formal or informal partnership or reputation building exercises. Creating this division was to determine how unpaid work could be used as a competitive business strategy within the Brunei Screen Industry and investigate the justifiable establishment of a tiered payment system.



Graph 3. Percentage of production companies engaged in free jobs versus jobs paid in full in 2020. Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

Data and Analysis:

As Graph 3 indicates, 61.5% of production companies surveyed willingly produced content for free during the COVID-19 pandemic leaving only 5 production companies (38.5%) that only engaged in 100% paid work. Further data analysis indicates that three individual production companies, one from each group, actively

engaged in free work on 50% of their productions. That is, half of all jobs taken by these three production companies in 2020 did not result in payment. It is possible that the three production companies strategically engaged in free work to prevent rival production companies from working. Similarly, the producers may have identified pro-bono productions as a means to strengthen the relationships with local businesses, valuing social system interaction above minimal capital gains. For example, it is possible that a production company from Group 1 may provide free content to a client of a production house in Group 3 with the eventual goal of securing future paid jobs.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate the economic worth of ‘free’ work and its long-term effectiveness in Brunei. However, the concerns raised by established production companies regarding the undercutting or availability of free production services are valid, especially in a closed system of interaction. As social systems are based upon attitudes and perceptions, the self-relegation of a majority of Bruneian production houses to free-of-charge work does little to inspire the business community to change existing prejudices regarding the quality of local productions.

Question 4: Number of productions that were ‘friendly or discounted pricing’?

This question sought to understand local clients’ perceived value of the production companies. Similar to Question 3, 10 percentage ranges were provided to participants. A

clarification that ‘friendly or discounted pricing’ represented projects produced at less than what the production company would consider the regional or international market rate.

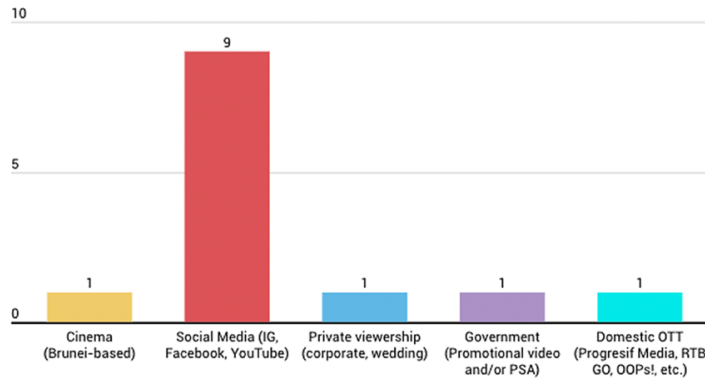
Data and Analysis: All production houses surveyed reportedly gave their customers a discount, and there seemed to be no correlation between the percentage of paid jobs and the percentage of discounted pricing. Simply put, discounts are a part of the Bruneian Screen Industry and, therefore, used strategically to out-bid competitors for jobs. It is, however, possible that the ‘Unnamed Creative Talk’ proposed introduction of a rate card system could be seen as a means of neutralising this business strategy; a development that would favour the more established production houses’ hegemony over the production codes of practice in Brunei. As discounted pricing existed prior to the pandemic it is not uniquely the result of a closed system of interaction. It does, however, provide some evidence of the fluid nature of the Bruneian social system-based relationship between local businesses and domestic production companies. Discounted pricing is a negotiation tool that can reaffirm important social bonds within a local community. Unlike free-of-charge work, minimal or symbolic payments, though well under the market rate, are emblematic of appreciation, thus a positive starting point for future interaction.

Exhibition of Productions

The third section of the survey was devoted to identifying how the interaction between production companies and local businesses would be exhibited. No distinction was made regarding the budget, scale or type of productions, only the platforms by which an audience would view them. Unlike previous sections, three questions would be utilised to gather information. The three questions would require participants to select and rank nine distribution platforms currently available in Brunei. If a platform was not explicitly named, participants could write down other exhibition platforms as necessary.

Question 5-7: What is your top / second / third distribution/exhibition platform for screen/video-based productions?

Data and Analysis: As demonstrated in Graph 4, the majority of production houses (9) identified Social Media as their primary exhibition platform (69.2%). The remaining four production houses selected Domestic OTT, Government Public Service Announcements, Private viewership, and Domestic cinema.



Graph 4. Primary exhibition platform with corresponding production company numbers in 2020.

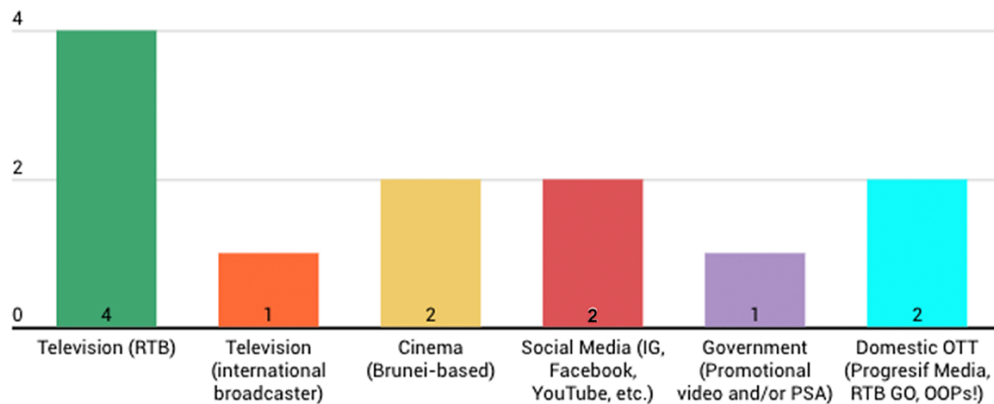
Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

The prevalence of social media as the top exhibition platform might indicate the emergence of a COVID-19 trend among local businesses. That is, as the pandemic forced more Bruneians to consume domestically, business owners may have opted for social marketing as opposed to more traditional forms of advertising in Brunei. Additional data suggests this correlation as 7 out of the 9 production companies listed social media as the top distribution platform also indicated their production levels in 2020 were greater than the previous year. This increase in production levels could be part of a causal chain in which a domestically-bound Bruneian population typically travels to nearby Malaysia to shop must now spend money locally.

This situation would contribute to the close system interaction between the Bruneian Screen Industry and the local businesses as companies hired production houses to fulfil their new social marketing needs. If this is the case, an association may be made between the demand for content specific to Instagram, Facebook and Tik Tok and the number of production companies creating this type of content. The client's chosen exhibition platform might also influence competition, especially in a closed system of interaction. Though there was no specific mention of exhibition platforms in the Unnamed Creative Talk, the rise and expressed opposition to new competitors such as the Gig-lancers can be attributed to local businesses utilising social media platforms to reach their target audience. More professional platforms such as cinema, broadcast television and select OTTs to have certain gatekeeping measures connected to technology that considerably limit the penetration of the Gig-lancers.

The second most used distribution platform presented substantial diversification of productions. As indicated in Graph 5, 4 or 30.8% of the production houses identified Radio Television Brunei (RTB) as their exhibitor. From these four production houses, there was an even split between Group 1 and Group 2. Social Media, which dominated as

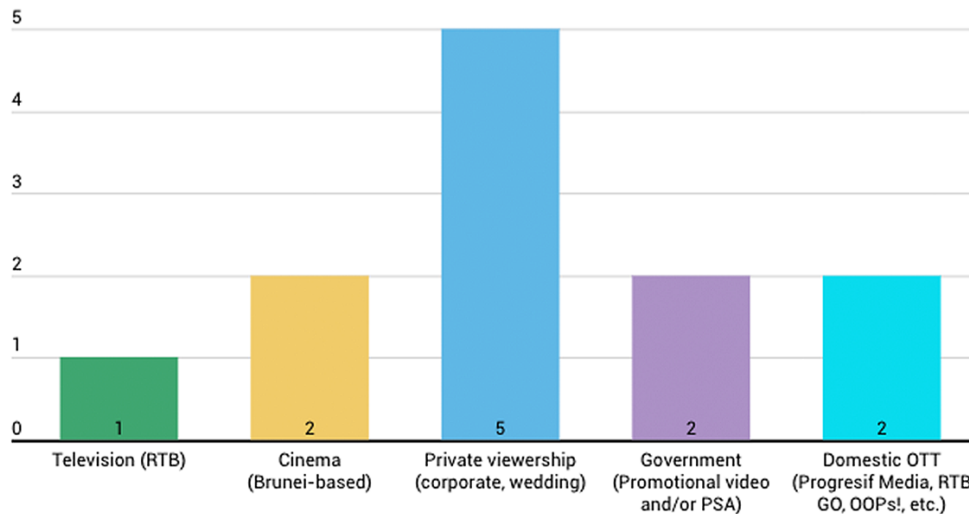
the first choice of the exhibition, tied with Domestic OTT and Domestic Cinema at 15.4%, respectively. Other production companies individually selected Government Public Service Announcements and International Television as their second most commonly used exhibition platform. For the purpose of this paper, International Television is viewed as a secondary market and therefore still part of the closed system of interaction due to the proximity of production and lack of external funding.



Graph 5. Second most used exhibition platform with corresponding production company numbers in 2020.

Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

The appearance of Radio Television Brunei as the second most commonly used exhibition platform might have some connection to the COVID-19 pandemic. As RTB is the only national channel available in Brunei, it would seem reasonable to believe it was, at one time, the preferred choice for advertising by local businesses. However, the production costs associated with an exhibition on RTB could also have limited the number of businesses that could afford its services. Suppose the pandemic was a catalyst for the adoption of social marketing as the new preferred choice of the exhibition. In that case, it could also cause a disruption for the older, most established production companies who used technology and industry knowledge to monopolise the RTB exhibition market. So, it is possible the nomination of RTB as the second most used platform represents more of an artifact of pre-COVID production practices than a viable platform for exhibition.



Graph 6. Third most used exhibition platform with corresponding production company numbers in 2020.

Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

Data and Analysis: As indicated in Graph 6, most of the production houses (5) identified Private Viewership, which includes wedding videos and corporate videos, as their primary exhibition platform (38.5%). Interestingly, only participants in Group 1 and Group 3 selected this choice as production houses in Group 2 ranked Domestic OTT, Domestic Cinema and Government Public Service Announcements as their third most commonly used exhibition platform. The sudden appearance and domination of Private Viewership are most likely not connected to COVID-19 as there is a large wedding video market prevalent in Brunei, and it is exclusively serviced by small production companies that have not been included in this study. So, the data here does not necessarily represent predation of this niche market by larger production companies as a means of survival during the pandemic; rather, it might be indicative of a large and robust private video economy.

Economic Impact

The final section of the survey focused on employment and local productions' economic footprint. The questions in this section addressed issues related to the monetary impact of the Bruneian Screen Industry and the contributions it has made in terms of economic spending in other local sectors and of addressing issues of unemployment. Both issues have relevance when considering the benefits of a closed system of interaction and its impact upon Brunei as a whole.

Question 8: How many staff members/crew does your company typically employ on a production?

This question was used to gather data concerning the size of the screen industry workforce. Participants were instructed to include both permanent employees and freelancers before selecting a number between 1-9 staff members/crew. Productions that typically employ 10 or more individuals on a shoot were grouped into a single category.

Data and Analysis: All of the production companies registered employment of at least three crew or staff, with 8 of the 13 (61.5%) companies identifying as having seven or more employees per production. Additionally, production companies that engaged in less production in 2020 averaged six employees per production, while production companies that engaged in more production averaged 7.1 employees. No single group demonstrated a characteristic of more or fewer employees, which is surprising given the volume of content Group 3 produces. However, two companies from Group 3 (66.6%) employed ten or more people on productions, so it is possible that the production companies that make more productions have larger crews. To better break down the data, employment will be examined according to specific exhibition platforms.

Social Media: The average employment size of production companies that identified social media as their primary platform was 7. This number dropped to 6.7% when all production companies that produced content for social media were averaged together.

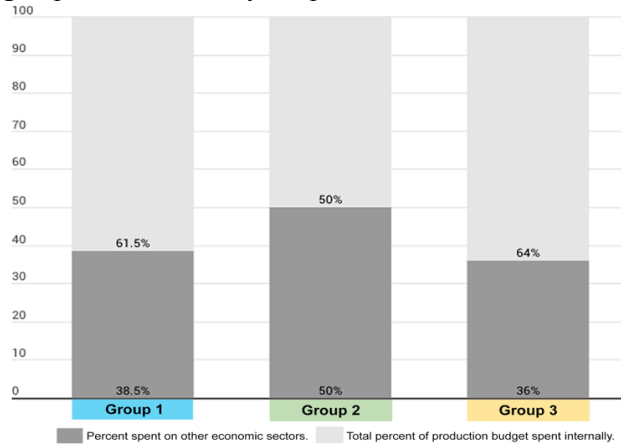
Domestic Cinema: All companies that produced content for exhibition in Brunei's six movie theatres employed 10 and above staff and crew. This is most likely due to the demands of theatrical production both in terms of technology and physical crew size. Due to the increased number of productions in Brunei during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was also a growth of jobs in the screen industry. The existence of a closed system of interaction meant a greater interchange between the business community and the local production houses. The decision by the business owners to incorporate Social Marketing into their advertising campaigns also meant more start-up production companies could find production work. Though, as mentioned previously, this gateway production genre also presents the most potential competition and, therefore the greatest risk of non-establishment.

Question 9: What percentage of your typical screen/video-based production budget is spent on other businesses?

The information from this question is relevant when mapping the economic contributions, the Bruneian Screen Industry makes to other local business sectors. Participants were instructed to view 'other businesses' as any business entity, production-based or non-production-based; the production company exchanged money for goods/services connected to the typical screen/video-based production. This production expenditure was

viewed as a positive benefit of the COVID-19 regulations as it solidified the Bruneian Screen Industry as a contributor to the overall economic system of Brunei.

Data and Analysis: The 13 production companies averaged to spend 40% of their production budgets on other businesses in Brunei. The average of the three independent groups, as indicated by Graph 7, is as follows:



Graph 7. The average production budget spent by Bruneian production companies in 2020.

Source: Online survey questionnaire disseminated between 14-28 February 2021

Average Spend Group 1: 35%

Average Spend Group 2: 50%

Average Spend Group 3: 36%

The closed system of interaction imposed by the COVID-19 travel restrictions placed the Bruneian Screen Industry in a position to stimulate the domestic economy. For example, 11 out of the 13 (84.6%) production companies indicated that they spend at least 30% of their budgets in other local business sectors. Similarly, 8 out of the 13 (61.5%) production companies responded that they spend at least 40% of their budgets in other local business sectors, while 5 out of the 13 (38.5%) production companies specified that 50% of their production budgets was spent in other local business sectors.

Conclusion

In August 2021, the 'Brunei Bubble' popped as local transmissions of COVID-19 steadily grew throughout the population. The Brunei Screen Industry was immediately impacted. The closed system of interaction collapsed as mandatory quarantine orders and work-from-home mandates greatly influenced 'regular' life in Brunei. It is unlikely another

closed system of interaction will develop unless outstanding circumstances similar to the pre-August 2021 COVID-19 restrictions resume.

This paper was a 'snap-shot' of the Bruneian Screen Industry and only captured a brief moment of what can be seen as the motion pictures of a developing screen industry. As of the writing of this paper, many new and exciting opportunities have arisen from the recent, more limiting COVID-19 lockdown. OTT services from Progresif Media, RTB GO and the YouTube-based OOPs! have generated more interest from local audiences. Similarly, AITI has completed and launched a second Pitch to Produce initiative aimed at generating more Bruneian screen content. The goal of these 'snap shots' is to freeze frame and take note of the developments of the Bruneian Screen Industry, providing analysis and insight into this exciting and burgeoning sector of the Bruneian economy.

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Mahathir on COVID-19's Impacts and Crisis Responses in Malaysia

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Abstract

At the age of 92, Mahathir Mohamad served his country as the Prime Minister for the second time. But unlike his first stint as the head of the government, which lasted 22 years, this time, his tenure was less than two years. His resignation, which was linked to some internal issues within the Pakatan Harapan (PH) allied parties, came at a time when many countries in the world were in the early stages of the coronavirus outbreak. Mahathir was aware of the power struggle that was adversely affecting the government's response to combat the virus transmission and reduce the rising number of COVID-19 infection cases. With his long experience in governance and as a former medical officer, Mahathir offered some advice and recommendations to the existing government on ways to address the public health crisis. Since the coronavirus outbreak, the domestic political and economic developments also drew his direct criticism and critical commentaries.

Keywords: Malaysia; Mahathir Mohamad; COVID-19; politics; economic.

Introduction

Mahathir is a prominent, accomplished, and seasoned Malaysian statesman and politician. He is very much involved in his country's development, be it politics, economics, or society. Mahathir was born before Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957. Thus, he has witnessed how his country strives for development, both before and after independence. "Love him or hate him, support him or fight him, worship him or damn him" (Plate, 2011: 17), Mahathir is the Prime Minister who has transformed Malaysia from near oblivion to a respected international actor.

For seven years, Mahathir served as a medical doctor in Kedah, his birthplace. As he talked about his original intention, he always dreamt of becoming a politician. It was true when he was a member of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) at the age of 21. He pursued his medical studies because he only needed the recognition of a university to gain public trust. He said, "I was a politician first, who became a doctor because without some degree or awards from universities, people would not believe what I say to them" (Camoens, 2018). Mahathir was and still is a very cunning man. When he became a politician, he did not shed his knowledge and expertise in medicine. In fact, he applied the procedure of medical treatment to heal political illness. He explained this while he was delivering a speech back in 2018:

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"In medicine, when you have a problem, you go into history, do some physical examination, X-ray and diagnose the disease and give treatment. In politics, it is the same – administration is also the same, you have a problem, you get to the origins, the problem's history, look at what contributed to the problem, the nature of it and prescribe the medicine for it" (Camoens, 2018).

Despite the fact that Mahathir is no longer the Prime Minister of Malaysia, he remains an active citizen, following almost all issues on the ground attentively. Almost every day, he tweets his message on social media. Regardless of whether his advice influences the country's policies and measures to curb the pandemic, Mahathir is not exhausted to deliver his views, ideas and expertise on this issue. His medical knowledge and practice likely shaped his mind about coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper intends to examine Mahathir's comments and criticisms on Malaysia's crisis responses to COVID-19, including political and economic uncertainties in the country.

A Serious Public Health Risk

Mahathir was fully aware of the danger of the virus. He had received information that the country where COVID-19 was claimed to have originated had taken a critical step to contain the virus' transmission; China enforced quarantine measures to 11 million people in Wuhan, the place where the outbreak had first begun, and closed a few cities in the country. On January 25 2020, Malaysia recorded its first COVID patient who had contracted the virus in Wuhan (Shah et al., 2020). On the same day, during a press conference, Mahathir, who was the Prime Minister then, informed the nation that his administration would not ban Chinese visitors from visiting Malaysia for the time being. Instead, it would rigorously screen all foreign visitors, especially those from China (Camoens, 2018). This decision presumably took into account China's preventative measures and the low number of COVID cases in Malaysia at the time. The economy could also be a crucial factor in this decision making given that Chinese visitors constitute the largest number of tourists in Malaysia. Should Mahathir's administration rush to close its border to the outside world, the potential economic consequences for the country could be far more damaging.

By mid-April, the number of COVID cases in Malaysia decreased due to the government's efforts to control the virus' spread. Travel restrictions, quarantine measures, the Movement Control Order (MCO), and medical screening were examples of these containment manoeuvres (Tang, 2020). The decline, however, was very brief. COVID cases began to rise after the Sabah's state election in June 2020, triggering a 70% increase in new cases in the state. The Sabah election also accounted for the rise in the number of cases in other parts of Malaysia, with an increase of 64.4% in new COVID patients following the election travels made to and from Sabah (Lim et al., 2021).

After more than a year of the global health crisis, the pandemic has killed millions worldwide. Neither Malaysia nor any other country was spared. Between early 2020 and August 2021, the COVID death number in Malaysia had gone up to 12,000

people. The daily cases of infected people also jumped, exceeding 20,000 per day. Mahathir was very concerned by these statistics and closely monitored the situation on the ground (Mohamad, 2021).

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Mahathir believed that the contagious disease was difficult to contain for several reasons. First, the emergence of modern transportation that allowed travellers to reach their destination in just a couple of hours, thereby intensifying human contact. Second, the virus, presumably, has its origins in wild animals, which means that to halt its spread equals curbing the movement of these animals, and that, in itself, was deemed an impossible feat. Another concern expressed by Mahathir had to do with the lack of information on the onset symptoms in individuals who had just contracted the virus.

The term 'Standard Operation Procedures' (SOP) is used during this period to refer to both public, and private preventative measures in managing the spread of the virus, and these include social distancing, mandating quarantine, the wearing of face masks, and observing personal cleanliness (Ting & Edmund, 2021). Mahathir emphasised the importance of adhering to the SOP, which would be an additional layer of protection against minimising the spread of COVID-19. As early as January 2020, Mahathir encouraged the public to wear face masks because the virus had been discovered to be highly infectious and deadly. He also called for the public to be disciplined in adhering to the SOP, even though, as he pointed out, observance practice may not be easy. Mahathir proposed a few simple steps as to how people could make adherence to the SOP more manageable. He advised on the need to be mindful and aware in observing the SOP, particularly in the early days. Observance of the SOP, such as social distancing, the wearing of masks, and the use of hand sanitisers, would eventually become a matter of habit, something that people would inculcate in their lives without much of a thought (Mohamad, 2021).

Mahathir is a Langkawi member of parliament, and very cautious about the potential threat and transmission of the virus to his constituency. When Langkawi, an island famed for its tourism industry, 'opened' in 2021, Mahathir continued to encourage everyone to follow the SOP. He suggested that passengers on flights and ferries should not sit near each other, and one-metre social distancing measures should be practised to curb the virus' transmissibility. However, this transportation arrangement would inevitably mean more trips to Langkawi with fewer passengers on board. Mahathir also encouraged tourists and Langkawi residents to observe the SOP (Mohamad, 2021).

Mahathir's call to observe the SOP was justified as, by the end of July 2021, the number of infected individuals in Malaysia had exceeded the 1 million mark. This indicated that the remaining 31 million people (Malaysia's population is around 32 million) had not yet been afflicted. They were relatively 'safe', according to Mahathir, because of their social distancing practices. Given that the virus is a war machine, the only way to survive the pandemic is by taking it seriously. When people fail to follow the SOP, the daily cases of COVID infection would see an increase. This was exactly what happened in Kelantan, which had remained in phase two of the National

Recovery Plan. Just in one day, the state documented over 1000 COVID-positive patients and people's infringement of the SOP was said to be the main cause for the spike (Bernama, 2021).

Local COVID infection medical specialists also called for the public and government officials to comply with the SOP. The rationale was clear; there was a possibility COVID cases would bounce again, even if the number of positive cases was falling in some areas (Babulal & Ying, 2021). Mahathir's worry about the exigency to adhere to the SOP was consistent with the government's approach; the Minister of Health announced a means by which members of the public could notify the government of people who were blatantly flouting the SOP. Reports could be made via *MySejahtera*, an online application, by clicking on the report button, specifying the misconduct, stating the location, and then uploading a photo of the offence (Rahman, 2021).

National Vaccination Program

Mahathir also strived hard to persuade the public that vaccinations are effective and that any lingering doubts about their use should be dispelled. Vaccination is one of several methods for reducing the number of infection cases, and there was significant pressure to expedite the immunisation programme. When the country's vaccine stockpile was depleted, Mahathir urged the government to accept any available vaccine type, particularly those that had been widely used in other countries (Osman, 2021). He also proposed that the government expedite the approval of additional vaccinations authorised in some other countries. Sputnik V, a Russian-made vaccine, was one such example. When Mahathir made the following remark, "Are we going to test Panadol too? Germany has already approved its usage, but we are still testing it," it was clear that it was an intended jibe towards the government (New Straits Times, 2021).

Despite some glitches, particularly in the early days, the vaccine registration system proved to be key in Malaysia Government's efforts to combat COVID-19. In March 2021, Mahathir called on all Malaysians to register for their vaccination using *MySejahtera*. However, other flaws with the programme had to be addressed immediately; Mahathir continued to highlight his dissatisfaction with the bureaucracy tying up the immunisation programme and stressed the need to ease the vaccination process.

The government had asked people to register, which he claimed delayed the immunisation procedure. According to Mahathir, unlike in the United States, almost 3 million people were vaccinated on a single day. The rapid process could be attributed to government procedures; as Mahathir put it, 'I do not believe they [Americans] had all registered' (New Straits Times, 2021). Rather than requiring registration, as Mahathir remained firm on his proposal, the government should start the immunisation procedure instantaneously. To speed up the vaccination process, Mahathir thought that anyone who wanted to vaccinate should be able to do so by simply visiting a vaccination centre. They merely needed to carry their identification card.

When considering some people who lived in villages and rural areas and their limited capacity to deal with technology, Mahathir's perspective and recommendations on vaccination sounded old-fashioned, yet simple and practical. He also mentioned those who failed to keep immunisation appointments. Mobile immunisation, where the vaccine was delivered from one house to another, would make it easier for these people to acquire the vaccination. The procedure only required a small number of people: two physicians, two nurses, and one assistant. Then, several groups should be formed and dispatched to the communities. To put it differently, dedicated teams should be organised to distribute immunizations to villagers (Mstar, 2021). Once those people have been vaccinated, the staff should gather and record their personal information, such as identity card details and phone numbers.

Large facilities for vaccination programs were beneficial, but additional mobile units were critically needed to ensure more people received immunizations (Mstar, 2021). Failure to speed up the vaccination procedure would result in a surge in new cases and deaths; thus, the lockdown remained in place. Lockdown impacts social well-being, in which suicide cases have lately jumped. This would be a new issue for the government to deal with (Mohamad, 2021).

Commenting on the daily achievement of the vaccination process, Mahathir argued that 500,000 vaccinated people were insufficient, though the fact that these figures could reduce the daily cases. He congratulated the government on this achievement, but he wanted the figures to increase to 800,000 per day (Mohamad, 2021). The reason was that many people around us were infected by the virus and under self-quarantine at home. They lived with the family members, who were free from the infection. Following SOP would be a great challenge in this situation, and thereby self-quarantine proved ineffective (Mohamad, 2021).

Total Vs. Partial Lockdown

Lockdown was the only option for dealing with the infection when vaccines were unavailable. Even if the vaccinations were on their way, as Mahathir said in May 2020, they would take six months to test. When the vaccinations were ready for use, more time was needed to manufacture them in order to meet demand. After all, these processes consumed time (AFP, 2020). Mahathir backed the government's decision to impose a nationwide lockdown beginning in June 2021. But, he noticed that this lockdown was less restrictive, unlike its first-time implementation in 2020. He was vexed when he saw people moving around and working during the lockdown. The road was congested as some people went to work as normal. The lockdown appeared to allow some people to move around, despite various restrictions imposed by the authorities. Accordingly, Mahathir contended that the government name its initiative as a partial lockdown (Mohamad, 2021).

Mahathir insisted on a comprehensive lockdown, requiring everyone, including frontline, to stay at home, avoid gatherings, and maintain social distance. His suggestion, however, entailed significant risk; individuals would lose their income and be unable to afford their meals. To him, the government should hold this responsibility and bear the cost, ensuring that people survive during a hard time. He

went further to propose public kitchens that cooked and distributed meals to the public. Although the cost would be high, the government must execute the total lockdown.

Lockdown's efficacy was unsatisfactory and disappointing. Mahathir concluded that the ongoing lockdown was a failure. The lockdown supposedly curbed the spread of the virus, but the number of deaths and new cases continued to rise on the ground. He also predicted that more cases would be recorded and that more days of lockdown would be reinstated. As Mahathir continued to express his frustration, the public had to pay the price for the government's less stringent measures to curb the spread. He also argued that people's suffering and pain were not in the government's interest. In fact, they had to accept that business sectors had to continue operating since the government could not afford to lose RM2 billion every day (Astro Awani, 2021).

Instead of total lockdown, there could be an alternative and practical approach that centred on individual responsibility. Health director-general, Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, said that when people moved and some sectors involved mass gatherings in their operations, the number of infected cases would remain. Even though some people refused to follow the regulations, others still had available options to contain the virus. Dr Abdullah urged every individual to adopt self-lockdown to save more lives. Malaysia was battling two new variants, Beta and Delta, which caused high infection rates and fatalities (Astro Awani, 2021).

Self-Quarantine

Self-quarantine is an important step in preventing the virus' transmission. Mahathir was critical of this matter, claiming that home quarantine had resulted in more new cases to boom. When he termed 'multiplier effect of home quarantine cases' in his writing, Mahathir explained in detail and provided an example of how the virus spread. Malaysia, for example, had 17,000 new COVID patients every day, with 1,000 of them being admitted to the hospital because of their worsening health condition. The remaining 16,000 people were quarantined at home. If they failed to follow the SOP obediently, they risked infecting their family members who were not yet infected. It would be even worse if these family members moved around and interacted with other people before they realised they were also infected with the virus. This was how the multiplier worked.

Mahathir emphasized several flaws when the COVID patients had quarantine at home. First, seeking assistance if the patient's health was deteriorating. For example, none of the family members could do anything when the patient was ill. The patient's condition deteriorated over time and eventually brought them to death (Mohamad, 2021). Second, there is a need for oxygen supply. The main problem with the COVID patient was breathing difficulty. Should this situation happen at home, the patient may struggle to breathe because there is no oxygen supply (Karim, 2021). What Mahathir had proposed for a viable solution to home quarantine difficulties was an establishment of temporary quarantine centres. In the United Kingdom, as he referred to, the government had built a temporary hospital with 4,000 beds to treat COVID patients (Mohamad, 2021).

Malaysian Politics During COVID-19

Malaysia's political situation has been relatively vulnerable and insecure since COVID-19 made headlines around the world, beginning with Mahathir's resignation as Prime Minister of Malaysia on 24 February 2020 and his successor, Muhyiddin Yassin of the Bersatu party, on 1 March 2020. During Muhyiddin's premiership, Malaysia's political environment was in good shape, with the COVID-19 issue under control. With some people being compelled to stay at home and others being banned from going out, Malaysia finally had zero local transmission of COVID-19 cases on 1 July 2020 (Ministry of Health, 2021). However, after the election in Sabah on 26 September 2020, the number of COVID patients escalated. Malaysians blamed the election for the unexpected rise in cases. They started questioning politicians' integrity and credibility, culminating in a bleak political situation in Malaysia. This includes Mahathir, who always comments on politics, the economy, and the state's well-being. His opinions and advice deem necessary for his country and beyond. This section, therefore, will examine Mahathir's views on democracy, elections, emergency powers, and Malaysia's uncertain political climate.

The State of Emergency

The Malaysian government had proposed the state of emergency, which later was granted by His Majesty the Yang Diptuan Agong (YDPA). The Proclamation of Emergency was in line with the powers conferred by Clause (1) of Article 150 of the Federal Constitution (Kheong, 2021). It was made public immediately after the prime minister imposed tighter restrictions on COVID-19-affected states. The national emergency was the first time it had been proclaimed in more than 50 years, and just the second time, parliament had been suspended since the country gained independence from Britain in 1957 (Reuters, 2021).

The state of emergency and a suspension of parliament were believed to help the cabinet and prime minister immediately combat COVID-19. However, Mahathir had a different view on this government's approach. He contended that the emergency proclamation was unnecessary to deal with the pandemic (Mohamad, 2021). The reason was that the government had a lot of power, and Malaysians had always followed the government's orders or directives regarding COVID-19. They did not raise any objections to these orders. Malaysia, according to Mahathir, was not like liberal Western countries where individuals openly challenged government orders and claimed that their rights and freedoms were being abused (Mohamad, 2021).

Malaysia took a range of actions to curb the spread of COVID-19 from January 2020, most notably by enacting the MCO. The MCO's implementation was viewed as effective, thanks to robust enforcement and greater COVID-19 awareness, which resulted in a decrease in new COVID-19 cases in April 2020 (Tang, 2020). Based on the declining trend of active COVID-19 cases in 2020, the Malaysian experience suggested that public compliance and collaboration were important components for the effectiveness of government interventions to contain COVID-19 (Tang, 2020).

Some believed the Emergency Proclamation had helped the prime minister escape imminent leadership challenges (Mohamad, 2021). It also gave extraordinary powers to the cabinet and the Prime Minister in which they could introduce laws without consent and approval from parliament. In his blog and on Twitter, Mahathir said the Emergency Ordinance that Muhyiddin's government had been implementing was a form of violation of democracy. He wrote, "With the emergency in force, the power of the Prime Minister is above challenge. There is no more democracy." (Mohamad, 2021). He also believed the emergency proclamation was seen as an act that killed democracy because no vote of agreeing or disagreeing was held; the Proclamation of a State of Emergency removed the last vestige of democratic rights of the people (Mohamad, 2021). This position had also been backed by Rafidah Aziz, one of the stateswomen of the country. As Anand R. (2021) reported, Rafidah Aziz, in her Facebook post, believed the emergency declaration would affect parliament, democratic processes, and disregarding democratic norms was excessive (Anand, 2020). The government did not require a majority to pass legislation with this emergency power. As a result, the majority of the opposition denounced this emergency action (Anand, 2020).

The outcome of democratic processes could be altered at any time. Mahathir (2021) said that people might choose their government through elections; but, the government could now change without an election, and the people's choice can be replaced with the government that the people had rejected. He stated on Twitter that the losers governed Malaysia and the winners were the opposition. Based on the two changes of administration under COVID-19 and the declaration of emergency, Malaysia's democratic system was a complete mess. In other words, the Malaysian democracy seemed to be non-functional after the power shift in 2020 until Muhyiddin quit, especially when the YDPA declared an emergency.

Despite Mahathir's criticism of the national emergency, according to Freemalaysianews (2021), he and Rafidah Aziz considered it was an excellent attempt to battle and handle the surge of COVID-19 cases in Malaysia (Aiman & Ariff, 2021). However, Mahathir also criticized the administration for failing to maintain law and order with this emergency decree. On the other hand, the government had implored citizens to obey and respect all laws. As a result, he believed the Malaysian people should ignore the law (Aiman & Ariff, 2021).

When it came to democracy, Mahathir thought that one of the most fundamental aspects of democracy was that governments and citizens must adhere to the Rule of Law (Mohamad, 2021). In a tweet, Mahathir asserted that if the government committed to the Rule of Law, Malaysia would have good governance, and the law would protect the people. Unfortunately, with the unmanageable COVID-19 cases, Malaysians observed laws being exploited to accomplish neither democratic nor just goals (Mohamad, 2021).

Elections and COVID-19

Democratic elections are an integral part of any country that follows a parliamentary and democratic system. Malaysia's most recent general election (GE14) was held in

2018, and Parti Pakatan Harapan won with a simple majority. Pakatan Harapan is a coalition of several parties, including the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, the Parti Keadilan Rakyat, the Democratic Action Party, and the Parti Amanah Negara, that won 113 seats in parliament (New Straits Times, 2018). Mahathir was concerned about the implications of a simple majority. If the government were changed, the new government would also be weak because of the simple majority. Any subsequent political action would only exacerbate the situation. Mahathir went on to say that the attempt to seize power was the root of political problems.

The resignation of Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and three by-elections in Batu Sapi, Gerik and Bugaya demonstrated a series of political instabilities in Malaysia. This was even worse when the declaration of a national emergency led to the postponement of elections (Manimaran, 2021). This showed that if the government were unable to handle the COVID-19 health crisis, the democracy in Malaysia would be in jeopardy. According to the initial announcement, the three by-elections would be held after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The timing of the country's general election should be carefully considered. As a long-time political actor, Mahathir argued that the GE15 should not be held if COVID-19 cases in Malaysia remained high, even if the GE15 would have to be held in 2022. Holding elections next year, or at any period deemed "dangerous", as Mahathir explained, might result in a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in Malaysia. The direct relationship between government effectiveness and the COVID-19 pandemic was apparent. He then recommended that national elections be called in 2023 when the current parliamentary term ends (MalaysiaKini, 2020).

Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, GE15 was predicted to be difficult to call. Despite the fact that the two by-elections, Chini (in Pahang) and Slim River (in Perak), were held smoothly and effectively amid the coronavirus outbreak, most people were unprepared to vote, especially for GE15 and PRN Sarawak (MalaysiaKini, 2020). People learned from the Sabah state election in 2020, which resulted in a substantial surge of COVID-19 cases. This event made them anxious and angered. In his tweet, Mahathir also expressed his dissatisfaction with the idea of holding an election, citing the consequences of the Sabah election, which led to increased COVID-19 infections (Aiman & Ariff, 2021).

An adequate preparation was necessary before the election was called. Mahathir explained that Malaysia needed to develop herd immunity before GE15 could be held (MalaysiaKini, 2020). By October 7, 2021, a total of 20,786,568 individuals or 88.8 percent of the adult population, had received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine shots (Azaman, 2021). Given that nearly 90% of the population had received the full vaccination, the people would be given a lot of freedom, including the future polls. Hence, according to Mahathir, GE15 should not be done while COVID-19 cases remained high in Malaysia, yet the least the government could do was achieve herd immunity.

In keeping with Mahathir's idea, the Election Commission of Malaysia (EC), which oversaw Malaysia's voting system, voiced concern about elections conducted during COVID-19. When the COVID-19 outbreak struck the country, Abdul Ghani Salleh, Chairman of the Election Commission, concurred with Mahathir that general or state elections were unsuitable. It was difficult, he claimed, to keep people safe during the health crisis. Abdul Ghani said this when asked to comment on the Sarawak State Election (PRN): "I beg when the epidemic is raging, if possible there will be no election (held) this time" (MalaysiaKini, 2020). According to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), almost 80 countries have postponed various types of elections, including general elections, by-elections, local government elections and referendums following COVID-19 since the beginning of this year (MalaysiaKini, 2020). Moreover, Malaysia is still not ready to host elections amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are still not properly followed.

Mahathir Initiative - The National Operations Council (NOC)

Malaysia had once formed the National Operations Council (NOC) or *Majlis Gerakan Negara* (MAGERAN) to address the racial issue in the 13 Mei tragedy. During the 1969 emergency, a comparable administrative body was established as the de facto government (Guler, 2021). MAGERAN, which was in power for two years, was thought to have allowed Malaysia's second Prime Minister, Abdul Razak Hussein, to solve the country's political crisis by inviting opposition parties to join the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, giving the coalition an even larger majority.

In his Twitter address, Mahathir expressed concern about the COVID-19 situation and the economy and social problems, which would worsen because there was no urgency and no idea how to deal with this issue. He remarked on the government's apparent lack of urgency during the COVID-19 administration, despite many Malaysians experiencing financial hardship and losing loved ones due to the pandemic (Aiman & Ariff, 2021). He went on to say that a "unity government" had not been discussed and that it could only function properly if the right people were in place.

Malaysia faced several internal crises from 2020 to 2021, including a political crisis, an economic crisis, and a health crisis that did not appear to end except with immunised herds. Aware of these three issues, Mahathir proposed establishing MAGERAN to take over government administration and offered himself to lead it (Chung, 2021). An expert council akin to the MAGERAN of 1969, according to Mahathir, should be apolitical. On 12 June 2021, Mahathir tweeted that the Council Members would be medical experts, including psychiatrists, non-partisan economists with experience assisting the country in overcoming the crisis, experienced investment experts and social mobilizers with evidence of ability to help people during pandemics, non-partisan legal figures, and some political figures who did not act on behalf of the party. The membership would be limited to no more than 20 people. The National Rehabilitation Council was free of politics (Mohamad, 2021). This council would be effective because it would just include all these members.

Mahathir believed that repeating the history of 1971 would be successful and that MAGERAN would deal with the impact of COVID-19.² MAGERAN could assist the government in combating the COVID-19 crisis and in addressing a political and economic crisis. Mahathir stated on Twitter that he and his team knew how to combat the crisis, but it was impossible to put it into action because they were not part of the government and had no authority (Teoh, 2021). Mahathir recognised his limitations, saying, "We have a lot of ideas on how to manage these challenges, but we cannot implement them if there is not a council set up" (Aiman & Ariff, 2021).

However, Mahathir's proposal was rejected by his opponents. Pakatan Harapan (PH) rebuffed Mahathir's proposal to establish a body similar to Mageran to address the country's problems that resulted from the COVID-19 outbreak. Three senior PH leaders were briefed on the situation: the opposition leader and PKR president, Anwar Ibrahim; the president of Parti Amanah Negara (AMANAH), Mohamad Sabu; and the DAP secretary-general, Lim Guan Eng. PH rejected Mahathir's proposal because the current state of emergency should end immediately, and Parliament reconvened rather than handing over the country's administration to MAGERAN (Adnan, 2021). "Pakatan Harapan believed that the solution to people's problems in the COVID-19 issue, economy, and even politics required a well-functioning democracy, and the best place to listen to the voice of the people and find a solution was in Parliament," Anwar Ibrahim (opposition leader) explained in a joint statement issued on 11 June 2021. Marzuki Mohamad, the Prime Minister's Private secretary-general, also expressed his opinion, stating that the proposed establishment of MAGERAN was not an appropriate step because it would impede the government's plans to address the current health and economic crisis (Adnan, 2021).

Economic Impacts and Prospects of Recovery

Mahathir saw COVID's economic impact as enormous and disastrous like other observers. He cited the tourism sector, where the ban entry had caused the cancellation of flights and hotels. Later, this development precipitated billions of ringgit losses to the tourism industry. Mahathir described the pandemic impact on every stage of the tourism sector: 'Because of this pandemic, tourists cannot travel anywhere. The whole tourism industry will suffer - hotels will suffer, restaurants will suffer, supplies will suffer, everyone will suffer' (The Straits Times, 2020). So did the other economic sectors, much more upset by the MCO. When the government imposed the restriction movement, workers stayed at home. Consequently, they stopped producing goods and delivering services, which, in due course, impaired business performance and wealth creation (The Straits Times, 2020).

In 2021, a Japanese automobile firm, Toyota, suspended the operations of its two plants in Malaysia. Mahathir was upset by this situation and worried that Malaysia was no longer appealing to foreign investors. Instead, they could direct their

² The government established MAGERAN on 16 May 1969 and MAGERAN was dismissed in 1971 (Esa & Ationg, 2020).

investment to another country, Indonesia. To him, this scenario would adversely affect the Malaysian economy (Choong, 2021).

While the reason for the suspension was related to MCO, Mahathir appeared to have slightly modified his previous stance on limiting people from going to work. Now, he held the view that the people could do the work unless the working environment would unlikely cause the virus transmission. In his words, "I am not saying it is wrong to stop others from going to work due to COVID-19 safety precautions. But there must be a way to ensure one can work while determining infections will not occur so easily" (Choong, 2021).

The government's spending on COVID-19 crisis response, as Mahathir claimed, was massive. His curiosity about this matter was intense in the sense that the government had consumed roughly RM600 billion for this response within a short period. However, the outcome of this spending was most likely unexpected; the government had relatively limited capability to combat the pandemic (Mohamad, 2021). Mahathir assumed the national economic recovery of his country would begin when the COVID restrictions were lifted. The recovery would consume some time as Malaysia needed to redevelop its economic fundamentals. Nevertheless, it could be swift and speedy if Malaysians were working very hard. At the September 2021 parliamentary session, Mahathir urged all Malaysians to prepare for a new type of economy in the aftermath of the pandemic. This economy's nature would be different from previous ones. Malaysia was expected to consolidate a knowledge-based economy that relied heavily on IT and artificial intelligence (AI) (Placeholder2) (Carvalho, Rahim, & Tan, 2021).

Conclusion

When Malaysia was battling against COVID-19, Mahathir made constructive comments to improve the government's approach and public measures for dealing with the threat to national health security. His government took a serious step weeks before his resignation as Prime Minister, screening the health of international visitors at the border. Mahathir wanted the fight against COVID-19 to be more impactful, so he insisted on punitive movement control, a strict adherence to SOP, and a swift vaccination programme. He called for a greater concern for public health when he pointed out the shortcomings of self-quarantine.

Malaysia was also struggling with another battle: a series of abrupt changes in the country's leadership in a short period. Power-hungry political parties and politicians caused considerable political turbulence in the country. Mahathir advised that herd immunity be formed prior to the upcoming general election. He disagreed with the declaration of a state of emergency, which he saw as a threat to democracy. He proposed the formation of the NOC in order to address the country's dire COVID-19 situation.

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The Impact of COVID-19 on Palliative Care Services in a Tertiary Hospital in Brunei Darussalam

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Abstract

The wake of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic had caused substantial disruptions to the usual delivery of healthcare services. This is because of restrictive orders that were put in place to curb the spread of the infection. Palliative care services in Brunei also face challenges to deliver effective services during this period. However, the impact of advanced illnesses on patients' health and end-of-life care are issues that cannot be planned, postponed or cancelled. Hence, the palliative care team needs to continue to deliver effective palliative care services. As Brunei faced its second pandemic wave in August 2021, crucial adaptations were made to ensure palliative care service was not disrupted. This reflective case study aims to discuss the adaptations made in providing palliative care during this era of disruptions.

Keywords: COVID-19; RIPAS; Palliative care; Brunei

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is far from being just a health crisis. It also posed unprecedented challenges to various aspects of life. While the impact may vary in different countries, the pandemic has profound socio-economic effects on societies (World Bank, 2020) as a result of measures taken by governments such as lockdowns and stay-at-home orders. Apart from the economic impact of the pandemic, many essential healthcare services are disrupted, affecting the health, well-being and quality of life of societies in many countries (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2021a).

Brunei reported its COVID-19 second wave/community spread on 7th of August 2021, 17 months from its first reported wave of imported cases on 9th of March 2020. Following the successful containment of the first wave with only three deaths, Brunei reopened and loosened its strict economic and social activities before the second wave hit the Sultanate. By then, only 9.2% of its population had completed their COVID-19 vaccination, and 24% were partly vaccinated (Ritchie et al., 2021). The Brunei government quickly implemented stricter levels of lockdowns in all areas of services in response to the second wave, which has undoubtedly led to changes in the healthcare landscape. Hence, adaptations have to be made on delivering healthcare services safely without compromising the quality of patients' care.

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The significance of this study

This case study highlighted the adversity of the COVID-19 pandemic to the usual standard palliative care deliveries in Brunei. It has disrupted healthcare services and has also affected how healthcare professionals provide care. In the discussion above, the authors have highlighted the improvisations and adaptations made in the services in order to address the challenges. What has been learnt from the critical analysis of this case study is that the changes implemented will not and cannot be a temporary or a reactive solution to the state the world is in at the moment. The authors suggest that the experiences made during this period should be taken as an opportunity to foresee and prepare ourselves to 'living in the new normal'.

The catchphrase 'living in the new norm' has frequently been heard throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. To healthcare professionals, the term equates to embracing novel strategies in providing care and treatment to their patients while also realising that the coronavirus is still 'alive' amongst the community. Although social restrictions may be relaxed as the number of infected people reduces, 'living in the new norm' in the healthcare domain means continuing to prioritise strict health protocols (Chen, Tan, and Chan, 2020).

Palliative care services around the world have been observed to adapt to the COVID-19 challenges equally. The utilisation of technology in palliative care will be the 'new norm' for the long run. An investigation on specialist palliative care services across a few countries in Europe found that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, only 21.6% of palliative services used telehealth/video support/e-learning for clinical care. The number now stands at 83.7% (Dunleavy et al. 2021). The same study also reported that 84.4% of the services use virtual technologies to communicate with fellow healthcare professionals, a substantial increase from the pre-pandemic era. A telehealth study in Taiwan (Wu et al., 2020) was conducted on the use of smartphones for family conferences in palliative care decision-making. Out of the 12 families who were using videoconferences for family meetings for the first time, ten families reported their willingness to use the video conferencing facility again. Though some of the families indicated their preference for face-to-face consultations (citing a lack of satisfaction with communication done virtually), having no negative feedback on telehealth shows that the use of technology in communication in the palliative care setting is a new norm many are now embracing.

Similar to the situation in Brunei, the pandemic has also impacted palliative care at home and across the community setting in many countries across the globe. Brunei's palliative care team's strategies of providing a helpline to their patients as well as of triaging telephone assessment before any home visits were also observed in other countries. For example, during the period when the government tightened its restriction policy, the palliative care teams in Singapore had to discontinue home visits to stable home care patients. In its stead, support was provided via phone or videoconferencing. This increased the number of phone calls made for assessments and advice and a decrease of home visits from January to May 2020 (Kumar Radha

Krishna et al., 2020a). Many palliative care services across the European countries reported similar findings, with 40.6% of the respondents in Dunleavy et al. (2021) claiming that there is an increase in the number of patients needing support at home.

There are advantages and disadvantages of providing palliative care support via telehealth and video conferencing. A rapid literature review carried out by Sutherland, Stickland, and Wee (2020) to aid their decision-making on using telehealth in palliative care found that there is global evidence to support video consultation as an effective, accessible, acceptable and cost-effective method of service delivery; telehealth can radically reduce the spread of COVID-19 while maintaining the standard of palliative care.

These transformational changes may be exciting, but the use of technology, especially smartphones or tablets, can cause issues pertaining to the boundaries of space and time when going about one's professional activities. Before the pandemic, teleworking was seen as a means to improve work-life balance, but it is now seen as one of the preventive measures to protect health during the pandemic. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2021) reveals that, in general, there is no accepted approach yet for ensuring health and safety during teleworking. One example, however, can be seen in Chile, where new teleworking legislation was introduced, which requires employers to respect their workers' right to 'disconnect' for at least 12 consecutive hours in any given 24-hour period. During this 'disconnection' period, teleworkers are not obliged to respond to any communication (International Labour Organisation, 2021).

While remote video consultations may offer a huge benefit to healthcare delivery during the pandemic, the WHO cautioned against its rapid implementation without a full assessment of an evidence-based model of care, taking into account patients' safety. The WHO guidance includes establishing a standard operating procedure, clinical protocols for when video consultations can or cannot be used, policies to ensure the equity of access in disadvantaged populations, adequate staff training, and administrative support (World Health Organisation, 2021b).

The authors posit that, in establishing an evidence-based model of telehealth in palliative care in Brunei, the use of telehealth as supplemental palliative care and support to the patients and their families at home is the 'new norm' that is here to stay. The WHO recognises that the virus will be with us for a long time, and that is a call for the world's governments to take the opportunity to invest in robust health systems which can benefit the population beyond COVID-19, as well as to prepare for future public health emergencies (World Health Organisation, 2021a).

There is a need for a long-term investment in training the healthcare staff to improve their use of information technology and enhance their clinical skills, such as patient assessment and triaging skills. The upgrading of skills can assist in building the confidence of the healthcare professionals in adapting to the new way of working. More studies need to be carried out to provide evidence-based telehealth provision for palliative care patients. A proper working environment and well-articulated standard

operating procedures need to be established that are befitting with the 'new norm'. All these strategies certainly need major funding and investments. Greater collaborations between the stakeholders, such as between the government and the private organizations, are much needed as we transition to this life in the new normal. These collaborations could come in the form of driving forward innovations, minimising duplications of efforts, and the optimising of resource use.

The pandemic has clearly affected the well-being and morale of the working population. Proactive innovations should be implemented to help ease these burdens. Healthcare leaders need to be more creative and innovative in establishing strategies that provide a balance between costs, the services provided, and employees' well-being. Not only should there be a provision to ensure enough supplies of personal protective equipment and adequate training on clinical safety and competency, but there is also a need to allocate time and to provide a safe space for open communication and debriefings as an approach to keep healthcare professionals' mental health in check (Dunleavy et al., 2021; International Labour Organisation, 2021). Instituting clear yet responsive guidelines and protocols is also paramount in alleviating doubts and confusion as healthcare workers swiftly adjust to their changing environment (Kumar Radha Krishna et al., 2020). These guidelines need to be developed with the cooperation of other services that are also affected by the crisis of COVID-19 (Powell and Silveira, 2020). These strategies should not be considered as mere reactive solutions towards the pandemic, but rather a proactive approach in the transition towards living with COVID-19 as an endemic era.

Aim of study

COVID-19 pandemic posed many challenges to various aspects of life, including to healthcare services. There is limited published literature on how the palliative care services in Brunei continue to strive to deliver the best possible quality of care to their patients and families. This case study is developed based on two of the authors' personal experiences and the clinical observations of the third. Personal experiences were critically discussed and reflected based on current health issues regarding palliative care provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This case study aims to reflect on the challenges facing palliative care service worldwide and how it has affected the services in a palliative care unit of a tertiary hospital in Brunei Darussalam. Strategies, improvisations and adaptations to the challenges so as not to compromise the quality of the service deliveries will be discussed. It will also discuss the opportunities that COVID-19 has brought to the palliative care realm of the healthcare services in Brunei.

Brief background on Palliative care

Palliative care is crucial for any integrated healthcare service (World Health Organisation 2021c). The WHO defines palliative care as care that;

"...improves the quality of life of patients and that of their families who are facing challenges associated with life-threatening illness, whether physical, psychological, social or spiritual. The quality of life of caregivers improves as well" (World Health Organisation 2021c)

Palliative care as a medical discipline has evolved rapidly since the 1970s. It originated from the modern hospice movement that stemmed from the work of Dame Cicely Saunders, who drew that attention to the quality of end-of-life care of patients with cancer in the United Kingdom. Palliative care continued to progress as a medical specialty in its own right that provides physical, social, psychological and spiritual support for patients with a life-limiting illness. Such a specialty is delivered by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), which often consists of doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical social workers and in some cases, chaplains or religious leaders (Clark, 2007).

Unlike many elective or planned health activities and treatments in healthcare, critical life events such as childbirth and death cannot be scheduled, cancelled or postponed. High-quality palliative care must continue despite the main agenda imposed by the Ministry of Health Brunei, which focusses on controlling the spread of the pandemic (Cairns and Coghlan, 2021). At present, there is no evidence to support any specific model of palliative care during national healthcare emergencies (Nouvet et al., 2018). WHO has issued guidance on maintaining essential health services during the pandemic, highlighting immunisation, maternal care, emergency care, and chronic diseases, among others. However, there was no mention of palliative care.

Challenges of Palliative Care globally during the pandemic

Pandemic posed unique challenges to the delivery of palliative services everywhere in the world. The demand is expected to increase, where at the peak of a crisis, medical consults for palliative care increased by four- to sevenfold for both long-term and acutely patients. At the height of the pandemic, palliative patients and families often face symptoms, emotional distress in decision-making that is full of uncertainty (Powell and Silveira, 2020). These needs often surpass the capacity of the palliative care team (Blinderman et al., 2021).

Access to palliative care services is one of the key challenges many patients face during the pandemic where human and medical resources are scarce, and rationing needs to be made. Many typical patterns of referral and occupancy in hospitals and palliative care units have changed due to COVID-19 (Blinderman et al., 2021). The directives designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 had caused limited access to health care settings such as hospitals and primary health care clinics, leading to an increased demand for home care services. Therefore, many health and palliative care bodies have created mechanisms to deliver more efficient palliative care services at home.

The issue of access to medications and healthcare equipment also needs to be dealt with. Throughout the pandemic, it is essential to plan for the possibility of constraints

on the supply chain for medications and equipment such as medical beds for immobile patients and oxygen assistance devices for palliative patients with difficulty in breathing. These issues are most notable in community settings. Palliative care teams need to plan and consider conserving some key medications or providing reasonable alternatives by assessing and prioritising the urgency of patients' needs (Blinderman et al., 2021)

Clinical workloads are expected to increase due to the rapid restructuring of healthcare services to meet the pandemic crisis needs. As a result, healthcare workers are more prone to illnesses, fatigue and burnouts from the demand for direct involvement in screening and treating COVID-19 positive patients. Fatigue and exhaustion have also been reported to be the main symptoms experienced by healthcare workers for having to cope with the adversities experienced during the pandemic (Roslan et al., 2021). Coupled with the challenges described above, ensuring that the palliative care providers' safety and support needs are met is also a challenge in its own right. The most palliative care team cannot afford to lose their team members due to prolonged illness. Protection of limited resources is thus essential to keep the palliative care team provider well and healthy to serve society (Powell and Silveira, 2020).

Palliative care services in Brunei have certainly faced similar challenges outlined above. Palliative care clinicians are deployed as frontliners at the Tutong isolation centres and swab centres all over the country. In light of limited staffing, the palliative care team has to make use of the available resources most efficiently and safely. The strategies used to deal with these challenges during the pandemic will be discussed following a brief introduction on the palliative care services available in Brunei.

Palliative care services in RIPAS Hospital

The Ministry of Health Brunei Darussalam puts in a considerable effort to implement an integrated healthcare service to its population by providing health care to patients and clients on a continuum of preventive and curative care and treatment across different levels of its system. The palliative care unit at the Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha Hospital (RIPASH) is a specialist unit established in 2008 to manage patients with advanced diseases' health and well-being and improve their quality of life we; as those of their families. The team consists of a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that comprises four doctors and five nurses supported by allied healthcare providers that include physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dieticians, and medical social workers. The team provides care and treatment for patients in inpatient (hospital) and outpatient (community) settings.

Inpatients services refer to patients being admitted to wards. The MDT sees them of the palliative care team address acute medical issues experienced by chronically ill patients to optimise their quality of life. Outpatient services involve routine clinic appointments made for palliative patients discharged from the hospital and newly referred patients from other medical specialties who feel that their patients require palliative care inputs and support. The palliative care team also provides home visits and telephone follow-ups to patients who are too ill or too weak to travel to the

hospital. Our palliative inpatient services oversee between 20 to 30 patients a day on average. In contrast, our outpatient services have between 40 to 50 clinic patients seen monthly. On top of that, our home visit team organised about 20 visits each month, overseeing those who are bedbound or have difficulties attending outpatient clinic appointments.

Palliative Inpatient services during the pandemic

Similar to the global phenomenon in palliative care described earlier, palliative care resources in terms of the workforce are finite in Brunei. Hence, in light of the pandemic, it is crucial to managing the human resources appropriately so that patients affected by the pandemic and patients who make up the 'usual palliative population' are being cared for effectively and appropriately. At the same time, it is prudent to balance out the fluidity of the clinical situation, given the progress of the spread of the pandemic and the safety of healthcare workers.

A few measures have been made to address the management of human resources and their well-being. Firstly, by ensuring social distancing and minimising physical contact between healthcare providers and patients. The clinical staff in the palliative care unit at the RIPASH are divided into two sub-teams referred to as the '*Clean Team*' and the '*Dirty Team*'. The '*Clean Team*' also acts as the standby team if the '*Dirty Team*' members fall ill or are required to serve quarantine/isolation orders. In this way, any interruptions to the palliative care services are minimised. The '*Dirty team*' is at a higher risk of being exposed to the infection due to the high risk of COVID-19 positive cases being admitted to the inpatient settings of the RIPASH. Thus, 'quarantine/isolation order' is a situation that the palliative care team aims to avoid as much as possible due to the already limited human resources. Depending on whether the healthcare worker (HCW) is a positive case or a direct contact of a positive case, the 'quarantine/isolation order' would involve doctors and nurses undergoing the COVID-19 swab test, followed by a self-isolation for at least seven days or up to 14 days.

The '*Dirty Team*' is a ward-based team led by a consultant stationed at specific, designated wards. The team will manage all types of general medical patients admitted to that particular ward, regardless of the patients' health issues. As a result, the '*Dirty Team*' will consult both palliative and non-palliative care patients. The aim is to avoid unnecessary bed movements and physical contact among patients and healthcare team members in the hospital. Inputs from specific specialities will be consulted as needed. Currently, the RIPASH does not have its palliative care wards for palliative patients. During the pre-pandemic era, all palliative care patients were admitted to any of the four of nine medical wards available (two female and two male medical wards). However, during this challenging period, all newly admitted patients who are expected to be under the care of the palliative team are assigned to just one specific ward. As a result, the number of palliative care patients admitted to the hospital for support and treatment is limited and triaged according to those who need urgent attention.

As the palliative care team anticipated an overwhelming demand from the healthcare system, the focus of the inpatient palliative care services is to expedite the early but safe discharge of patients whenever possible. Safe discharge of patients here refers to the patients being holistically stable to continue their treatment at home. To ensure this holistic stability, care and treatment referrals must be made to the MDT to ensure the patients' smooth transition from the ward to their homes.

The allied healthcare team of the MDT comprising several physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical social workers, and dieticians, are also limited in numbers. Referrals for treatment to these professionals need to be made early and strategically. In normal circumstances, this would involve a weekly MDT meeting where the palliative care and allied healthcare teams develop a treatment and care plan for the patients and their carers at home in preparation for their discharge. However, this weekly meeting has been replaced with a daily e-platform group discussion on the pandemic-imposed changes. A few days following a patient's discharge from the hospital, a follow-up check will then be carried out by the '*Clean Team*' through phone calls from the palliative care clinic. If needed, this will also be followed up by a video call conference with the patient and the patient's family to address more complex matters such as pain management or end of life care issues faced by the patient and his/her family at home.

The '*Clean Team*' is led by a team of senior clinicians who work remotely from the clinic at RIPASH. The main role of this team is to deal with all inquiries and concerns pertaining to palliative care management of patients under the care and treatment of other wards, departments, and specialities, including the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of RIPASH well as other smaller hospitals in Brunei. To aid these palliative care consults and inputs, patients' clinical details and progress can be assessed via the hospital e-health platform, the BruHims, and appropriate advice is made via phone consults with the respective clinicians. If there is a need, video conferences will be scheduled with the patients and/or their family members.

The '*Dirty*' and '*Clean Teams*' switch roles every four weeks to reduce any risks of burnout and of being infected with the COVID-19. Switching positions will also ensure the safety of the patients and the other healthcare professionals that the palliative care team interacts with daily. This protocol has helped maintain the fluidity of the palliative care services. Every second of interruptions to the care and treatment will have an impact on the quality of life of these patients.

'The Muleh Care bundle'

Even with the designated '*dirty*' and '*clean*' teams in place, there have been instances when palliative care patients with urgent support needs were admitted to wards that are not designated for the palliative care team. A non-palliative care specialist would carry out the medical consult for the palliative care team when this happens.

To ensure patients are assessed appropriately from the 'lens' of the palliative care specialty, the palliative care team has developed a care tool called the '*Muleh Care*

Bundle' for terminally ill patients (Figure 1). The bundle aims to guide the non-palliative care specialists on the holistic approach to ensure that patients do not suffer at the end of life and that close family members are constantly updated on the latest development of the patients' journey. Non-palliative care specialists may have limited knowledge and practice on the palliative care approach. The '*Muleh Care Bundle*' is based on the principles of the Liverpool care pathway (LCP)(Seymour and Clark, 2018), which was developed in the United Kingdom as a pathway covering care options for patients in their final days or hours of life. The LCP is also intended to help and doctors provide end-of-life care. The '*Muleh Care Bundle*' consists of seven sections of simple tick boxes that the clinician needs to go through daily. It ensures effective communication with the patients and their family members and serves as a tool to check that the patients' symptoms are well controlled with medications. Religious rights of the patients are also taken into account for a more holistic approach.

'Muleh' Care bundle- DDIL (DNACPR status)

Date	Ward
Day of Admission	Bed

Communication

Relay to patient/family members that patient is dying	Done	Not Done
Discuss with patient/ family members re plan for symptom control	Done	Not Done

Review of symptoms which may develop in the last hours or days of life

Pain	
Agitation	
Respiratory tract secretion	
Nausea / Vomiting	
Dyspnea	

Medications

Current Medication reviewed and non-essential medication discontinued	
Start medications to control above symptoms-See appendix	
Anticipatory / PRN medications-See appendix	

Access for drug administration

IV access	Subcutaneous access
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Review monitoring and current intervention

Routine vitals	Per shift
D stick monitoring	Discontinue Continue
IV Antibiotics	Discontinue Continue
O2 therapy	Capped at if SpO2 < 92% but capped O2 at
Inotropes if started prior	Capped at
IV/SC hydration	Discontinue Continue
Artificial nutrition	Discontinue Continue
Central Line/ Catheter	Remove if deemed medically appropriate. Otherwise keep

Religious Beliefs

Offer Ustaz/Cleric to recite prayers/patients last rights	Done	Not Done
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Daily review

Above symptoms	
Oral care	
Bowel care	
Skin care	

Figure 1. The Muleh Care Bundle

Palliative outpatient services during the pandemic

Many outpatients' services are currently reduced to enhance the physical distancing protocol mandated by the Ministry of Health during this period. The nurse clinicians contact all patients under the team's follow-up care to stratify the cases that need early or urgent tele-consults. Non-urgent clinical appointments are deferred with advice, and medications are prescribed for a more extended duration of use.

To ensure continuous palliative care support, a helpline palliative service is offered to the patients and their

families as a means for them to directly contact the palliative care nurses and to reduce the need for them to visit the healthcare facilities. The palliative care team is also in regular communication with the home-based nursing services to ensure that the patients' long-term care needs, such as clinical procedures for maintaining long-term urinary catheters and nasogastric feeding tubes, are effectively managed. The home-based nursing services continue to deliver their care in patients' homes with extra caution against the transmission of COVID-19. For this type of clinical care to be carried out, pre-visit telephone consultations enquiring COVID-19 risk factors are made prior to each home visit. If the concerned patients or any household members

are COVID-19 positive or on quarantine order or an isolation notice, the home visit will be postponed or even, cancelled; thereby leading to further delay in their care.

Communication challenges

As the Ministry of Health has imposed a no visitor policy during this pandemic period, one of the palliative care team's biggest challenges is effective communication with the patients and the patients' family members. Pre-COVID-19, with the patients' consent, the team would occasionally gather the family members in order to discuss the patients' diagnosis, expected trajectory, and the treatment plan. All healthcare and treatment issues would be discussed in depth. For people who suffer from advanced diseases, their primary carers would often be their family members. These individuals often find it challenging to care for their loved ones at the advanced stage of their illnesses. This is particularly true of the patients who have difficulty coping with symptoms such as pain, breathlessness and fatigue (Potter et al., 2003). It has been documented that the patients' families often struggle without the support of the palliative care team (Greer et al., 2020).

Advance care planning (ACP)

Another vital role of the palliative care team is to initiate 'advanced care planning (ACP) with patients and their families. ACP offers patients the opportunity to plan for their future care and support, including medical support, while they have the capacity to do so. As Brunei is a close-knit, family-orientated society, patient care is often discussed with family members. In many other global palliative healthcare settings, these discussions would typically be carried out mainly with the individuals afflicted with the advancefamily members often discuss patient careir families' wishes (National Institute of Clinical Excellence, 2021).

Initiating ACP is often a delicate matter that requires ample training and adequate experience in palliative care communication skills, and the conversation should only commence when the timing is appropriate. Based on their rapport and the relationship they have built with their patients, the palliative care team will be able to gauge which patient is ready to discuss ACP. However, there have been occasions when patients were identified and deemed ready to discuss ACP by the palliative care team, but who later on expressed their non-readiness to discuss the matter. In such an event, the palliative care team will respect their wishes and continue to provide support to the patients until the time comes when they are undoubtedly ready to discuss ACP.

Though it is a sensitive aspect of care, ACP remains the gold standard for palliative care practitioners to institute because studies have shown that people with advanced care planning experience better end of life quality of care (National Institute of Clinical Excellence, 2021). ACP requires the palliative care practitioners to discuss the advantages and challenges of making a plan about the type of treatments the patients wish to have when they no longer have the capacity to decide on their own (National Institute of Clinical Excellence, 2021). During normal circumstances, facilitating advanced care planning is already challenged by barriers such as a lack of

time during patient visits, patients' discomfort, and the lack of resources (Bender, Huang, and Raetz 2021). Now, communication challenges such as not being able to talk in person and to engage with patients and their families due to the COVID-19 restrictive measures further hinder this critical discussion from being carried out, thereby risking the quality of care in patients at the end of life.

The use of technology

The COVID-19 pandemic certainly has created many restrictions to communication-in-practice. Effective and empathic communication is challenged by the limited engagements medical practitioners have with the patients and their families. The palliative care team has no other choice but to embrace technology as a means of communication, particularly the use of telephone calls and video conferencing facilities with the patients' family members. Several systematic reviews have examined home-based telehealth in palliative care settings and have reported improved quality of life or symptom management (Steindal et al. 2020). Kidd et al. (2010) found that telehealth applications, including the use of videoconferencing in consultations, symptom assessments, and providing advice for patients, relatives, and health care professionals, were deemed usable and acceptable for patients and health care professionals.

In light of the pandemic, it is clear that quick adaptation and utilisation of technologies such as e-platform are vital for the efficacious delivery of palliative care. As the COVID-19 pandemic looms, no doubt it is high time to further amplify the deliveries of palliative care services through telehealth. Some healthcare workers are of thinking that empathic communication cannot be achieved through the telehealth approach because of its limitation in enabling one to express the correct body language, facial expression and tone of voice when speaking. These nonverbal communication skills are essential in breaking bad news and updating patients' progress.

Though rigorous studies in the use of videoconferencing for clinical purposes are limited to draw a generalised conclusion about its effectiveness, a review on psychotherapy using videoconferencing carried out by Simpson (2009) found that its use is generally acceptable by both patients and clinicians. However, the findings of studies on patients' and clinicians' satisfaction with the use of videoconference lack clarity due to multiple aspects of the technology that contributes to users' satisfaction (Orlando, Beard, and Kumar, 2019). Some patients preferred videoconferencing to face-to-face treatment due to the sense of being in control of their session. This may be partly because videoconferencing was carried out in their own space and comfort (Allen, Roman, and Cardwell 1996). On the other hand, those who were unfamiliar with technology were subject to anxiety and confusion (Omodei and McClennan, 1998).

The novel use of technology is necessary to facilitate communication with the patients and their families and for consultation and assessment. However, we realised that many health care providers and patients have little experience in using technology, particularly videoconferencing. Such inexperience has raised some concerns on the

effectiveness of communication, especially when dealing with complex psychosocial and clinical issues. It is essential to acknowledge these concerns and to continuously upskill healthcare workers while educating the patients and their family members on its usage (McConnochie, 2019).

Other barriers for effective telehealth and technology usage involve security measures to protect patient's confidential data and internet access connections, especially when almost all sectors of life, such as education and businesses, will continue to rely on the same technology even more now (Okereafor and Manny, 2020). Nonetheless, some locations in the rural areas have no adequate access to the resources that enable telehealth technology to be carried out. All stakeholders must tackle these challenges hand-in-hand, including the government and the telecommunication service providers.

Communication with a non-palliative care specialist

Due to the measures taken to limit movements between healthcare professionals and patients in the hospital setting (described above), some of the palliative inpatients' care is managed by a non-palliative care speciality team. The '*Muleh Care Bundle*' was introduced to guide non-palliative care specialists in providing palliative patients with appropriate care. However, the palliative care team found that some non-palliative care specialists are not comfortable with specific palliative care interventions, for example, the prescribing of opioids. Dzierzanowski and Kozlowski (2021) found that insufficient experience and vexatious opioid prescribing regulations are some of the reasons why non-palliative care physicians discourage prescribing opioids. Similarly, (Gardiner et al., 2012) found that many generalists expressed serious concerns about giving high doses of, and having insufficient training in opioids.

It is fundamental to build palliative care capacity among non-palliative healthcare specialists to provide more responsive and sustainable palliative care in the long run. However, embedding palliative care principles early in the patients' disease trajectories is often challenging. Evidence on the experiences of those providing non-specialist palliative care in hospitals is limited. The organisation of acute care, clinicians' attitudes, poor communication structures, and the lack of education and training in palliative care principles exacerbates the poor implementation of this care earlier for patients in hospitals and has been cited as among the challenges faced by the palliative care team in Brunei (Nevin, Hynes and Smith, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has called attention to the need of providing continuous professional training on the discipline of palliative care and has also shed some light on the importance of working in collaboration between the generalists and palliative care specialists. The palliative care team currently encourages non-palliative physicians to communicate with the palliative team members to ensure clarity without compromising patients' care. Nonetheless, it is high time that educational opportunities for generalists be enhanced and for effective interprofessional working models to be developed so that palliative care delivery can be optimised.

Well-being of human resources

Finally, as COVID-19 continues to evolve, it poses a heightened risk to personal safety and increasing workloads to healthcare workers. Deployed staff working outside their 'comfort zone' were observed to experience isolation, anxiety and stress. A review carried out by Braquehais et al. (2020) on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of healthcare professionals showed a high prevalence of anxiety and depressive symptoms, most of which were associated with epidemiological issues, human and material resources, and also personal factors. The deployment of hospital staff members to the isolation centres also resulted in an increased workload for those who remain in the hospital setting, leading to burnout and physical exhaustion, two factors which been known to reduce the quality of care. A high prevalence of burnout was recorded among physicians with high emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and low personal accomplishment reported as burnout symptoms in a study carried out by Elghazally et al., 2021. A self-reported study on nurses carried out by Kakemam et al. (2021) found that the nurses admitted to providing poor care quality in an Accident and Emergency department during the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of feeling burnout.

The urgent need to contain and manage the pandemic also means healthcare professionals' annual leave is subject to restriction and cancellations. Stress, anxiety and depression-related disorders may be considered normal emotional reactions to a pandemic; however, it is necessary to understand burnout syndrome as a potential problem among healthcare professionals (Dimitriu et al., 2020). Ensuring proper mental health care of the healthcare workers is important as their mental well-being have direct bearing towards the care provided to the patients. To alleviate distress and fatigue, it is necessary to offer opportunities for reflection, advice and reprieve through increased access to in-house counsellors as well as scheduling regular team meetings.

Discussions

Palliative care is a specialty that looks into the needs of terminally ill patients and their families, which also utilises a holistic approach. It requires an in-depth assessment of the patients' and their families' health needs from various life dimensions to maintain the patients' quality of life. Effective communication is at the heart of the palliative care discipline (Liao and Arnold 2007).

Communication with patients and families ensures understanding of the care plan when the patients are at home and ensures their needs are dealt with as their illness continues to progress. Each level of progression of incurable illness brings the patients closer to the inevitable death. The role of the palliative care team in this instance is to support the concerned patients and their families throughout the dying and death process. Often patients and families are confronted with bad and challenging news regarding the progress of the illness. This is referred to as 'breaking bad news' in the healthcare realm. From the palliative care perspective, breaking bad news is not a one-

off procedure. It is a continuous process of reinforming and reexplaining the patient's condition and situation until they reach a level of acceptance and throughout the process of grief of loss (Miller, Porter, and Barbagallo, 2021). Effective communication serves the purpose of informing and educating the patients and their families about their illness and condition but is also an approach to support the patients in articulating the changes they are facing. Effective communication also plays a vital role in supporting the family carers by confronting the complexity of caring for their loved ones and helping them understand the emotions that come with living with and losing their loved ones at the same time.

The essence of communication in palliative care is to communicate with individuals with empathy, which involves deep human engagement over time (Sinclair et al., 2017). Empathy in palliative care is a response given to patients by acknowledging their experience of suffering and trying to understand them from their point of view or by "feeling with" the patient (Hein and Singer 2008: p. XX). Palliative care professionals praise themselves with this skill because the only way to understand patients' care needs and concerns is with a trusting therapeutic relationship. A therapeutic relationship allows the patients, their families and the healthcare professionals to discuss an individual care plan when all the three parties meet. Reaching this point requires a long-term development of trust between them, and the single most effective way is through therapeutic communication and empathy.

Conclusion

The widespread COVID-19 pandemic has posed new challenges in all areas of healthcare. In palliative care, communication issues and palliative care management by non-palliative care specialists, for example, their hesitancy in the use of opioids for pain management, appear to be among the substantial challenges that need to be overcome by the team. However, the team also learnt that the current crisis also opens doors to several professional development opportunities and innovative approaches to treatment and care. The palliative care team is currently adapting to the utilisation of technology in optimising care. The team was also given the opportunity to raise awareness through encouragements of the non-palliative care specialists to adapt some of the principles of palliative in their day-to-day care and treatment. Evaluative studies need to be carried out on the viewpoints and level of satisfaction of the patients, their families and the non-palliative care specialists with the changes made on the palliative care service during the pandemic. The findings could then be adapted to develop a systematic guideline on the continuous provision of palliative care during crisis.

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COVID-19 in South and South East Asia

Accelerating or decelerating Sustainable Development?

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Abstract

COVID-19 has been a major challenge to global governance, highlighting the necessity for stepping up innovative governance. Beginning in 2020, governments have been trying to adjust in dealing with the massive challenges of COVID-19, implying that attention has been diverted from attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to handling the pandemic. COVID-19 poses a genuine threat to economic progress, food safety, health, and educational parity in developing countries. The article examines the pandemic's impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through a comparative lens of Bangladesh and the Philippines.

Keywords: COVID-19, SDG, Development, Poverty, South and South East Asia.

Introduction

The governments in South and South East Asia have made efforts in incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their national development programmes (Teoh & Kwan, 2017; Allen et al., 2016). Seventeen (17) goals have been identified under the SDG (Figure 1). There is no doubt that SDGs will have substantial implications for national development planning, and the global megatrends will have an impact on the SDG objectives. The impact of COVID-19 on the public health systems impedes the ability to meet SDG-3 (good health and well-being) (Khalid, 2021). When a country's demographics shift, the elderly may become more reliant on the social safety nets, putting further strain on SDG 1 (no poverty). Regardless of the country, SDG-2 is affected by population increase, rising food demands, and the consequences of climate change (zero hunger).

Because of the pandemic, the digital divide has become clear to us all and that the lack of access to education (Ullah et al., 2021) has become obvious, which implies that SDG 4 is jeopardised (quality education) (Khalid, 2021). According to the United Nations (UN) (2020), 44 million more people will be living in extreme poverty by 2030 as a result of the epidemic, and it is possible that the epidemic might cause 251 million people to fall into extreme poverty, raising the total to one billion by 2030. This implies that achieving SDG-1 might be far from possible.

The global communities have been hurt by the shutdowns imposed by many of the world's governments in their bid to curtail COVID-19's transmission, and these moves have the potential to push the hard-hit communities back into poverty (Paul,

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2021). After overcoming the pandemic crisis, it could grow to be a deep-rooted human crisis, disrupting the state's progress and the SDGs. Constant Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth has not given rise to decreasing income inequality. Once restrictions were loosened, compelled by a decline in COVID-19 cases, the government of Bangladesh has needed to assess the critical issues, including the pandemic's influence on the vulnerable segment of society and the condition of SDGs implementation (Shammi et al., 2021). Financial crises are known to adversely impact the weak section of the society, and the current situation stemming from the pandemic is no exception. All walks of life feel the impact of the lockdown and the pandemic, but most notably by the poor. On the upside, there have been some achievements in the health sector, even though it has been a challenge to provide widespread health coverage. The pandemic has shown fundamental global governance flaws and highlights the world's grave insecurity today (UN, 2020). It reveals that there has been an under-investment in people's health and well-being, and an over-exploitation of the earth's natural resources (WHO, 2015).

According to Abidoye, Felix, Kapto, and Patterson (2021), by 2030, the pandemic might result in 41 to 169 million people living in extreme poverty in countries with low and medium human development, including 20 to 83 million women and girls. According to a 'COVID Baseline' scenario, between 626 and 753 million people in low and medium human development countries will be living in extreme poverty, with 24 to 86 million of those coming from counties identified as low-human development. By 2030, COVID-19 may have increased the number of malnourished individuals in these nations by 12.8 million above a "No COVID" future. By 2030, the number of malnourished children is predicted to climb by 1.6 million to 57.5 million and to 60.5 million under a "High Damage" scenario (Abidoye et al., 2021).

In this article, I look at how COVID-19 could affect the SDGs in three different ways and how the pandemic could affect extreme poverty in the years to come. For comparison, I have chosen two near-identical economies: Bangladesh and the Philippines from South and South East Asia, respectively. The paper is based on secondary literature, including books, journal articles, newspapers and websites of reputable organisations.

SDG: A Conceptual Focus

Sustainable development meets present needs without endangering future generations' ability to satisfy their own needs (United Nations, 1987). Sustainable development is established on three pillars: economic, social, and environmental (Ahmed, 2021). Achieving long-term sustainability integrates financial, environmental, and social goals across sectors, areas, and generations (Elliott, 2013; Emas, 2015). The United Nations developed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, in 2015 as a universal call to action to eradicate poverty, safeguard the planet, and ensure that by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity (UN, 2020). The SDGs comprise 17 interconnected global goals that serve as a "roadmap to a more egalitarian and sustainable future for all (Hák et al., 2016), recognizing that activities in one area affect outcomes in

others and that development can strike a balance between social, economic, and environmental preservation (Omer & Noguchi, 2020). In short, SDG is a global framework for ending poverty, protecting the environment, and ensuring prosperity.

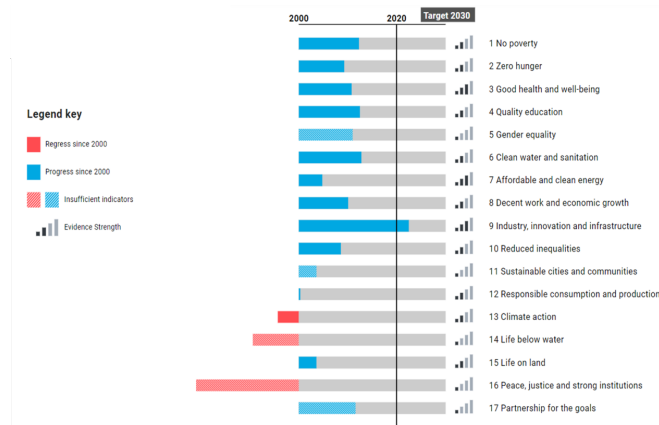


Figure 1 SDGs. Source: Khalid, 2021

The term "development" has acquired a plethora of connotations (Ahmed, 2019; Mensah, 2019). Todaro and Smith (2006) define advancement as a term with a broad connotation that covers fundamental changes in social norms, attitudes, institutions, and

economic development, reduced inequality, and poverty reduction. Stoddart (2011) defines sustainability as the efficient and equitable allocation of resources through generations, as well as the operation of socio-economic systems within the restrictions of an ecosystem. The concept was organised around the phrase "sustainable development." Just as the two concepts that make up the example of sustainability, "sustainable" and "development," have been defined in a variety of ways, so has the notion of sustainable development itself, thus resulting in a multiplicity of definitions (Mensah, 2019; Mohieldin, 2017). Sustainable development is not a goal in and of itself but a benchmark by which our leaders and we can measure ourselves in order to guarantee that no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of real, sustainable development (Khalid, 2021).

The pandemic, SDGs and South and Southeast Asia

Pandemics, in reality, do not discriminate between countries based on their military might, health capability, or financial strength. The United States of America is one of the best examples of an economic giant that possesses enviable military strength and world-class healthcare infrastructure, but which has been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Ullah & Ferdous, 2022). However, financial strength and sound public governance are contingent on any country making a post-pandemic recovery. Nevertheless, there will be certain segments of the society that will feel more of the burden of the recovery process, notably the unemployed, the disabled, the elderly, and the migrant communities.

South East Asia is a heterogeneous region (Acharya, 1999) in terms of culture, ethnicity, economy, governance, politics, and religious belief. Singapore is the most advanced country, with Malaysia and Thailand following close behind. However,

other countries in the region are catching up, placing heavy emphasis on development even if, in reality, they cannot afford to massively invest in this field. Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia and Vietnam have identified agriculture as a priority in their rural development plans (Ullah & Kumpoh, 2018). South Asia is a more or less homogenous region in terms of economy, politics, culture and religious belief. Nevertheless, despite the homogeneity, the onslaught of the pandemic has affected the countries in the region in different ways. For example, whilst its robust economy means India has the financial capacity to handle the COVID-19 mayhem, the country's huge population size proved to be a stumbling block in their efficacy in handling the pandemic. On the other hand, Bhutan has a limited monetary capacity, but its small population size enables it to efficiently contain the virus.

Of course, different countries have chosen different measures to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and reduce its effects on health, education, and socioeconomic disadvantages for vulnerable populations and enterprises (Sakamoto et al., 2020). The severe outbreak of COVID-19 has struck South Asian countries. More than half of the world's new illnesses originate in the region, which has a population of more than 2 billion people. As many as three new cases are being reported every second (UNICEF, 2021). As a result, death rates are also rising. The virus kills three individuals a minute in the area. According to UNICEF (2021), scarcity of oxygen and other life-saving medical supplies has put hospitals on the verge of collapse, and frail healthcare systems are on the brink of collapse. In the worst-hit places, the virus is wiping out entire families. The health systems in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Afghanistan and the Maldives are feeling the strain of an epidemic of unprecedented speed.

Table 1. COVID-19 cases in South Asia 2021 (October 2021)

Countries	Confirmed cases	Active cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Total tests	Tests per million population
India	31,440,483	405,131	30,613,938	421,414	459,164,121	329,278
Bangladesh	1,083,922	76,026	914,343	17,465	7,186,365	43,189
Pakistan	1,011,708	59,899	928,722	23,087	15,766,473	69,933
Nepal	818,035	7,636	798,916	11,483	4,530,686	161,259
Afghanistan	145,008	44,852	93,641	6,515	693,751	17,405
Maldives	12,384	927	11,405	45	150,743	277,260
Sri Lanka	135,796	28,371	108,802	892	3,017,567	138,401
Bhutan	378	21	357	1	173,785	224,401

Source: Ullah et al., 2020; UN, 2021

The COVID-19 outbreak that is presently ravaging Southeast Asia is one of the worst on record. In the initial year, South East Asia was largely immune to COVID-19, and the countries performed admirably. Caseloads in Singapore,

Thailand, Vietnam, and even underdeveloped Myanmar were rather low despite the large epidemics in Indonesia and the Philippines. The leaders of Thailand and Vietnam implemented exceptional regulations on mask use, contact tracking, border closure, and quarantine (Kurlantzick, 2021). Since COVID-19 was initially managed through border closures and other centrally controlled measures while also avoiding public outrage by prohibiting large gatherings, the threat has shifted with the more contagious Delta and then Omicron variant and increased vaccine availability. As a result of the absence of oxygen, therapy, and immunizations, COVID-19 patients are dying at home in Myanmar. Compared to other countries, Malaysia has the largest number of COVID-19 cases per capita in the world per day. Thailand records over 11,000 new cases every day (Kurlantzick, 2021).

Table 2. COVID-19 cases in South East Asia 2021 (November 2021)

Country	Cases	Deaths	Percent Fully Vaccinated	Cases per Million
World	263,070,422	5,220,373	44.0	33,727
China	111,353	4,849	77.2	77
USA	48,577,181	780,443	59.1	146,758
Indonesia	4,256,687	143,840	35.2	15,883
Philippines	2,833,038	48,712	34.7	27,007
Vietnam	1,252,590	25,448	53.3	13,111
Thailand	2,120,758	20,814	59.2	30,558
Myanmar	522,825	19,111	19.6	9,796
Malaysia	2,632,782	30,425	81.4	84,384
Cambodia	120,160	2,944	83.4	7,505
Laos	75,163	178	42.1	10,206
Singapore	264,725	718	89.3	47,171
Timor Leste	19,823	122	32.2	14,795
Brunei	15,111	97	80.5	35,256

Source: CSIS, 2021

In the context of SDGs, a lack of governmental competency and fiscal commitment could hinder South Asia's ability to accomplish the SDG's goals. A slowing of the region's macroeconomic growth necessitates an increase in social investment and better public-goods delivery networks (Asadullah et al., 2020). In the previous two decades, South Asian countries have made substantial progress in terms of human development. In the areas of food security, primary school enrolment, gender balance in primary and secondary education, newborn and under-five mortality ratio, vaccination coverage, and alleviating poverty, most of the South Asian countries performed poorly. This is despite the claims of Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka (Gani et al., 2021) to have met the majority of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Mahmud et al., 2013).

The SEA region is making moderate progress toward the SDGs, with the exception of Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), which is

surprising considering the region's consistent GDP growth over the last decades (UN, 2020). The region has made significant progress toward Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 17 since 2000, but it could have progressed more quickly than it has. Before the arrival of COVID-19 in 2020, it was evident that the progress made on the 2030 Agenda was achieved in a timely manner.

Bangladesh and the Philippines

Bangladesh and the Philippines responded differently to and dealt with the pandemic, and hence the extent of influence on achieving the SDGs is expected to vary.

Bangladesh: The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on Bangladesh (GoB, 2020b) primarily because of poor governance and misinformation (Ullah et al., 2021). GDP growth stagnated, and poverty levels grew, remittances declined, millions of jobs vanished, in addition to the detrimental effects on the health system. The reduced female labour participation rate, education losses, and banking sector vulnerabilities may all have long-term economic effects (World Bank, 2021). Moreover, it has impacted the economy on both the supply and demand sides in Bangladesh (Islam & Hussain, 2021).

Bangladesh is dedicated to achieving sustainable development goals (Ahmed, 2021). The SDGs require a substantial amount of money to implement. Traditional financial sources are insufficient to achieve the SDGs. Now the pressing question is how Bangladesh will achieve the SDGs despite the fact that the economic downturn in Bangladesh is ensuing. Localizing SDGs under existing development goals via non-governmental and local government groups has proven challenging (Islam, 2020).

There are numerous linkages between Bangladesh's issues and its potential that the government takes into account when attempting to meet SDG 1. Inequality escalates poverty and inhibits economic growth in the country (GoB, 2020a). Though it is claimed that poverty has steadily decreased over time, from 31.5 percent to 24.3 percent, as measured by the percentage of the population living in poverty. Social safety net operations may be the best ones to work in reducing poverty during COVID-19 (Paul, 2021). When it comes to monitoring the progress toward its goals, SDG 3 has the most up-to-date metrics. One of the biggest challenges of COVID-19 implementation is coordinating efforts across several ministries and development partners (GoB, 2020b).

There has been a complete shutdown of all public and private educational institutions, from elementary schools to universities, since March 17, 2020. This implies that the pandemic would severely impact goal 4 (quality education). More and more people are remaining at home because of the effects of COVID-19, which implies that the SDG-4 is another target that has had a detrimental impact.

The country's largest export sector is ready-made garments (RMG), and women make up the majority of the workforce. The RMG factories were shut down during the coronavirus's early phase (Paul, 2021). As a result, the impact on growth may be felt shortly. Bangladesh is ranked 50th out of 153 nations in the World Gender Gap Report (GoB, 2020a), implying that Bangladesh lags behind in terms of attaining the SDG-5. Economic involvement and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment have all made significant advances toward gender equality in many nations. However, gender parity fell since 2006, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF) (Sili, 2018). This means that the global gender gap can be closed in 100 years. Access to economic resources and opportunities for women is still one of the most significant gender inequalities. Pay equality, seniority, and workforce participation are all indicators of gender parity in economics. It will take another 217 years to close the gender gap due to a wide range of obstacles to women's economic empowerment (Sili, 2018).

The Philippines: With regard to its national development goals and the 2030 Agenda (17 SDGs), the Philippines government sees the UN as a close ally. The Philippine Development Plan enshrines three important factors: Prosperity, the Planet, and Peace in the long-term vision (UN, 2020). However, in the Philippines, like elsewhere in the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reversed development gains, created new hurdles, and worsened existing vulnerabilities, providing unique challenges in preventing the virus's transmission and coping with its socioeconomic consequences.

The pandemic continues to weaken the economy of the Philippines and hence the ability to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as more people fall into poverty (Simeon, 2021). The year 2020 was intended to be the start of a decade-long campaign to accelerate SDG attainment, but the pandemic has derailed that plan. As a result, the Philippines was ranked 99th out of 166 countries, with a score of 65.5 on the Sustainable Development Goals index (Simeon, 2021). Although progress has been made in a number of areas of the SDGs, major challenges remain in five areas: hunger, good health, well-being, innovation, and inequality. Hunger and health, and education were two areas where the region's growth came to a halt (Simeon, 2021; World Bank, 2020a).

Before the outbreak, the macroeconomic metrics of the Philippines' socioeconomic progress were sound. Lockdowns in the second half of 2020 reduced GDP by 16.9 percent, while unemployment rose to 17.7 percent (World Bank, 2020b). Even if economic forces were strong before the epidemic, the government actively promoted economic growth by increasing public spending, primarily in the form of transfer payments, as well as accommodating monetary and other legislative constraints. Joblessness and homelessness are still widespread, despite an uptick in the labour market. And as a result, poverty reduction has been slowed down by the recent economic crisis and income losses (World Bank, 2020b). Poverty levels are projected to rise in the near future as a result of lower consumer spending, higher government expenditures, and an overall economic recovery situation. In the Philippines, the COVID-19 outbreak has required decades of operational adaptations

because of the country's strong foundations. In 2022, the GDP is expected to grow by more than 7% (Asian Development Bank, 2021). In the run-up to the 2022 general elections, boosting economic activity may contribute to economic growth.

Various measures have been taken to minimize the economic impact of COVID-19. Since its inception, it has worked closely with the WHO. First, in SEA, the government instituted a national community quarantine. A health response package of 35.8 billion pesos (\$0.7 billion) has been created, including social assistance, aid for small businesses, disadvantaged farmers, and local governments (World Bank, 2020c). However, personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies have been rapidly depleted due to rising awareness of the dangers. Health care workers caring for patients who are not infected with COVID-19 have an adverse effect on their performance and increase their chance of infection (Asian Development Bank, 2020).

COVID-19 had a significant impact on low-income individuals and enterprises. Thus, the government focused on social welfare and health. The budget deficit reached its highest level in nearly a decade. The base effect will begin to play a larger role in early 2020 as a result of the massive recession in 2020 and 2021 (World Bank, 2020b). Vaccines are only effective if enough individuals receive them. State governments are working together to ensure that everyone, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, has access to health care while simultaneously ensuring that no province is left behind. The Philippines has reiterated its support for the WHO's call for universal immunization access. The continued support for global programmes focused on ensuring universal access to vaccines is a top commitment (UN, 2021).

Discussions

COVID-19 posed a significant challenge for both countries in achieving the SDGs and demonstrating the importance of accumulating funds to prepare for disasters. Despite the fact that the outbreak is a serious impediment, it has presented a critical opportunity for governments to incorporate SDGs into their contingency plans. Additionally, the epidemic has worsened a number of other issues, including a lack of access to education, insufficient access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and a lack of food security.

After COVID-19, it will be necessary to review progress toward attaining the Sustainable Development Goals for long-term growth, resource conservation, and climate change mitigation (Asian Development Bank, 2021a). On the other hand, the recovery process may accelerate if the leaderships in Bangladesh and the Philippines collaborate and revisit the 17 SDGs, focusing their attention and resources on fixing the situation. COVID-19 has the potential to rapidly sweep throughout Bangladesh and the Philippines, potentially outpacing government interventions. The expansion of the community quarantine resulted in increased unemployment and lower wages. As a result, poverty is likely to worsen significantly for people already at risk in both countries. The epidemic affects everyone, regardless of gender identification.

Women may be disproportionately affected, but this is because women are more likely to be the primary caregivers for sick people, putting them at risk of viral infection. This may result in them becoming more vulnerable to gender-based violence. Technical shortcomings impair the capacity of the government machinery to respond appropriately to the COVID-19 pandemic (Asian Development Bank, 2020). Economic recovery could be enhanced by adopting proper policies and fast action (World Bank, 2021). The accumulated economic disadvantages disproportionately affect young girls and women, who earn less, save less, engage in dangerous professions, and are more likely to be poor as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. Despite the limits presented by the current scenario, nations are nevertheless attempting to achieve the SDGs. Financial and technological help, as well as capacity-building assistance, are required due to resource scarcity.

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Penggunaan Bahasa Retorik Dalam Pewahanaan Informasi COVID-19 Di Negara Brunei Darussalam

[The Use of Rhetorical Language in The Spread Of COVID-19 Information in Brunei Darussalam]

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Abstrak

Keberkesanan penyampaian sesuatu maklumat memerlukan individu, alat mahupun saluran yang unggul dan bersesuaian. Usaha ini haruslah dirancang dan dipertimbangkan dengan teliti oleh pihak tertentu agar setiap apa yang ingin disampaikan dan dilaksanakan itu dapat diberigakan dengan mudah dan berkesan. Dari itu, penggunaan bahasa retorik dilihat sebagai batu loncatan yang memberikan keyakinan dan tahap keberkesanan yang tinggi bagi sesebuah wacana yang disampaikan tersebut. Kewibawaan retorik sebagai seni yang mempengaruhi bukan sahaja berperanan untuk memperkukuhkan kekuasaan mahupun mempengaruhi fikiran dan emosi orang lain namun sebaliknya mampu menstimulasikan keseimbangan hubungan sosial yang terbentuk melalui sistem pemerintahan sesebuah negara. Melalui penyelidikan ini, setiap ciri khas retorik dapat diketengahkan dengan menghuraikan peranan dan fungsi-fungsi yang dimainkan oleh jenis-jenis retorik dalam penulisan sesebuah wacana. Hal ini khusus bagi mengilustrasikan idea, gagasan mahupun suatu fakta terhadap sesuatu pendekatan dengan cara yang kreatif dan terbaik. Di samping itu, keutamaan bagi penerapan bahasa retorik dalam perutusan kerajaan seharusnya dapat diperkasakan sewajarnya dengan menjadikannya sebagai anjakan paradigma ke arah perpaduan dan nilai kesaksamaan dalam masyarakat. Justeru, kajian ini memanfaatkan Teori Retorik Moden oleh Enos dan Brown (1993) sebagai landasan utama dalam menganalisis sejumlah 20 perutusan rasmi berkaitan jangkitan covid-19 di Negara Brunei Darussalam. Berdasarkan pemerhatian dan penganalisan yang dijalankan, hanya empat jenis retorik yang diaplikasikan dalam wacana tersebut. Kesimpulan statistik merangkumi 34% teknik pendedahan, 30% teknik penerangan, 33% teknik pemujukan dan hanya 3% bagi teknik penghujahan. Dapatan penyelidikan ini membuktikan bahawa penggunaan bahasa retorik dalam perutusan rasmi kerajaan adalah amat penting dalam memperkukuhkan sistem pemerintahan negara serta mampu melestarikan cara hidup yang relevan dan berkualiti.

Kata Kunci: Retorik, Covid-19, Perutusan Kerajaan, Interaksi Sosial, Kolaborasi.

Abstract

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The effectiveness of delivering information requires individuals, tools or channels that are superior and appropriate. This effort must be planned and considered carefully so that everything that is to be conveyed and implemented can be conveyed easily and effectively. Therefore, the use of rhetorical language is regarded as a stepping stone that provides confidence and a higher level of effectiveness. 'Rhetoric as an influential art not only plays a role in strengthening power or influencing the thoughts and emotions of others but also stimulate the balance of social relations. Through this research, each rhetorical feature is highlighted to discuss its role and functions in the discourse. Using Enos and Brown's Modern Rhetorical Theory (1993), a total of 20 official conferences on the latest developments of the spread of covid-19 infection were discussed. Findings have shown that there were four main types of rhetoric, i.e. Statistical conclusions which include 34% of expository techniques, 30% of descriptive, 33% of persuasion and only 3% for argumentation techniques. This also implies that rhetoric language is very important in ensuring the dissemination of knowledge among the institution and people is effective and and transparent.

Keywords: *Rhetoric, Covid-19, Government Conference, Social Interaction, Collaboration.*

Pengenalan

Perkembangan komunikasi massa telah banyak memberikan impak terhadap cara manusia berfikir dan berinteraksi (Hashim, 2001:17). Hal ini merangkumi pelbagai kemajuan dalam proses berkomunikasi sama ada daripada sumber, saluran, mesej mahupun penerima. Komunikasi massa bermaksud sesuatu proses berkomunikasi antara individu yang menjadikan media sebagai saluran atau perantara utama bagi menyampaikan dan penerimaan mesej atau maklumat (Khomsahrial, 2016:1-2). Media yang ditumpukan adalah media cetak dan media elektronik (Abdullah & Ainon, 1997:3). Justeru, konsep media massa difahami sebagai penglibatan pelbagai saluran yang dimanfaatkan oleh sesuatu organisasi tertentu bagi menyebarkan maklumat secara massa ataupun meluas kepada khalayak umum (Eko, 2013:478). Terdapat lima ciri utama bagi mengidentifikasi penggunaan media massa, iaitu; jumlah audiens yang besar ataupun ramai; khalayak pelbagai ragam; sasaran secara rawak dan berselerak atau tidak tentu; sumber dan penerima mesej saling tidak mengenali; dan, tujuan penyebaran maklumat yang telah ditentukan ataupun sumber yang memiliki motif tersendiri (Rijal, 2019:3).

Dalam pada itu, pihak kerajaan merupakan salah satu organisasi utama yang bertanggungjawab dalam memainkan peranan dan fungsi media massa bagi mewujudkan kesejahteraan sistem pentadbiran negara dan kehidupan masyarakat keseluruhannya. Setiap hubungan interaksi yang dijalin melalui media massa perlulah diselenggarakan dengan tepat dan teliti. Perkara ini termasuklah kepentingan bagi penerapan retorik agar proses interaksi yang dilangsungkan tersebut tidak menimbulkan apa-apa keraguan, kesalahfahaman dan hal-hal negatif lainnya (Mazlan & Zaitul, 2016:11). Oleh itu,

penyelidikan ini memfokuskan pada pengaplikasian bahasa retorik terhadap teks-teks keputusan rasmi kerajaan berkaitan perkembangan terkini isu penularan *covid-19* di Negara Brunei Darussalam dengan bersandarkan teori retorik moden yang dikemukakan oleh Enos dan Brown (1993).

Latar Belakang

Menurut Noor Latifah *et. al* (2021:2), *Acute Respiratory Disease Syndrome* pertama kali dilaporkan pada bulan Disember 2019 di Wuhan, wilayah Huebei, Republik Cina. Kes jangkitan didapati meningkat secara drastik pada awal bulan Januari 2020. Peningkatan tersebut menyebabkan berlakunya penyebaran ke beberapa buah negara seperti di Korea Selatan sehinggalah ke Singapura (Hidzani dan Izzudin, 2021:245). Pada mulanya, penyakit ini dikenali sebagai *2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)* dan turut diisytiharkan sebagai pandemik. Hal ini disebabkan oleh penularan jangkitan yang melibatkan sejumlah besar penduduk dunia. Kini, penyakit tersebut dikenali sebagai *Virus Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2)* (Elmy dan Exzayrani, 2020:60).

Menurut Justin *et. al* (2020), kes pertama yang dilaporkan di Negara Brunei Darussalam direkodkan pada 09hb Mac 2020. Manakala sehingga bulan April 2020, negara ini telah merekodkan sebanyak 138 kes jangkitan. Menurut Sidang Media Kementerian Kesihatan yang dikeluarkan pada hari Sabtu, 07hb Ogos 2021, terdapat penularan jangkitan tempatan *covid-19* yang disahkan di Negara Brunei Darussalam. Ini bererti berlakunya penularan gelombang kedua selepas 457 hari sejak kes terakhir dilaporkan pada 06 Mei 2020 yang lalu (Nuzuluddin, 2021). Perkara ini tentunya boleh diramal dan tidaklah dianggap teruk sepertimana yang dijangkakan kerana perihai sedemikian turut berlaku di negara-negara lain. Malahan, terdapat beberapa buah negara yang sudah mengalami penularan jangkitan bagi gelombang ketiga dan keempat. Meskipun perkara ini bukanlah sesuatu yang mengejutkan, namun ia membimbangkan pihak yang berkepentingan kerana penularan ini boleh terjadi pada bila-bila masa sahaja sepertimana yang melanda negara-negara lain pada masa ini.

Selain itu, penularan jangkitan ini turut berkesinambungan dengan penyebaran varian delta *covid-19*. Beberapa penelitian tertentu telah mendapati bahawa penularan bagi varian delta ini lebih pantas merebak berbanding jangkitan *covid-19* sebelum ini. Gejala-gejala yang dialami oleh penghidap penyakit *covid-19* lazimnya mengalami demam sehingga mencapai 38 darjah celsius, batuk kering dan berasa penat. Manakala, varian delta pula menyebabkan gejala yang lebih serius, seperti demam parah, sakit perut, muntah, gangguan pendengaran dan hilang selera makan (Noor Latifah *et. al*, 2021:2-3). Namun begitu, penularan ini masih boleh dikawal menggunakan pengambilan vaksin *covid-19*. Akan tetapi, menurut Organisasi Kesehatan Dunia (WHO), penyakit atau virus *covid-19* ini dikatakan berkemungkinan tidak akan hilang dan akan terus berpanjangan sehingga ke suatu masa yang tidak dapat dipastikan (BBC NEWS, 2020).

Permasalahan Kajian

Konsep solidariti mendukung kesatuan integriti dalam jalinan interaksi yang erat antara sesebuah masyarakat dan sistem pentadbirannya (Abdul Halim Ali, 2005:2). Perkara ini memainkan peranan penting bagi menjamin keutuhan dan kesejahteraan hidup sesuatu bangsa terutama dalam menempuh kemajuan dan cabaran era baharu. Dengan kemelut penularan *covid-19* di seluruh dunia, media massa dilihat sebagai agen utama dalam memperkasa ketelusan sistem pemerintahan di samping mewujudkan pertalian timbal balik (*reciprocity*) antara? dan? serta menjadikan bahasa selaku pemangkinnya. Melalui inisiatif tersebut, secara tidak langsung penggunaan bahasa retorik bukan sahaja disimbolikan sebagai suatu seni malah membentuk fikiran dan cara hidup masyarakat yang produktif bagi melestarikan keharmonian hidup yang berterusan. Oleh itu, ketekunan dalam memelihara keyakinan dan nilai saksama bernegara perlulah dipertahankan bagi mewujudkan sebuah masyarakat yang sentiasa peka dalam melaksanakan tanggungjawab dan peranan masing-masing.

Objektif Kajian

1. Menghuraikan kepelbagaian ciri dan peranan khusus bahasa retorik dalam perutusan rasmi kerajaan.
2. Meneliti penanda-penanda dan fungsi bahasa retorik yang diterapkan dalam wacana Kementerian Kesihatan berkenaan status penularan jangkitan *covid-19* di Negara Brunei Darussalam berpandukan Teori Retorik Moden Enos dan Brown (1993).

Kajian Lepas

Penularan jangkitan *covid-19* di seluruh dunia telah banyak memberikan impak negatif terhadap sistem kehidupan manusia serta telah meragut banyak nyawa. Hal ini telah memberikan ruang sepenuhnya kepada pihak kerajaan untuk mencari solusi dan cara untuk menghentikannya. Meskipun pelbagai usaha telah dilaksanakan demi mencapai tujuan tersebut, penglibatan semua pihak amatlah diperlukan bagi sama-sama memainkan peranan agar setiap inisiatif kerajaan itu dapat dicapai dengan jayanya. Dalam hal ini, terdapat beberapa kajian yang telah dijalankan bagi menggambarkan situasi ini termasuk menerusi penggunaan memperkukuhkan bahasa retorik dalam pewahanaan informasi berkaitan pandemik *covid-19*. Antaranya termasuk kajian yang menghubungkan situasi sosial ini dengan analisis lakuan ujaran, neologisme dan wacana kritis seperti yang dilaksanakan oleh Shahrolnizam & Rohaidah (2021); Dimas & Irwansyah (2021); Sara Beden (2020), Aminnudin *et. al* (2021); Mukhlis *et. al* (2020) serta Mohamad Elmy & Exzayrani (2020).

Dalam kajian yang dilakukan oleh Shahrolnizam & Rohaidah (2021), aspek daya ujaran dibincangkan sebagai unsur penting dalam penyampaian sesebuah wacana yang berkesan. Ia juga merupakan unsur tekstual yang menyumbang kepada kewibawaan sebuah wacana itu dengan lebih luas dan menyeluruh. Kajian yang telah dijalankan terhadap ucapan Perdana Menteri Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin pada 04 Februari 2021, telah membuktikan bahawa penglibatan bahasa retorik di dalam perutusan khas seseorang pemerintah memainkan peranan penting. Penggunaan ini juga mendukung pelbagai fungsi bagi menjayakan setiap usaha yang dilaksanakan. Dengan menerapkan pendekatan daya ujaran Fairclough (1989), kajian ini mendapati lima bentuk daya ujaran yang telah digunakan penutur, iaitu daya ujaran doa, peringatan (amaran), suruhan, pernyataan dan ajakan bagi memastikan maklumat mengenai *covid-19* disampaikan kepada seluruh masyarakat Malaysia dengan berkesan. Menurut Dimas & Irwansyah (2021), bahasa retorik memainkan peranan penting dalam menjamin kemudahan dan kejelasan setiap maklumat yang disampaikan serta menjadi pengukur bagi mengesan tahap kefahaman para pendengar. Daripada kajian yang dilakukan terhadap retorik juru bicara satgas *covid-19* melalui saluran You Tube, unsur retorik dipraktikkan juru bicara khusus bagi mempengaruhi fikiran dan tindakan orang lain agar tidak timbul sebarang masalah yang boleh menggugat kesejahteraan dan kedamaian negara. Dalam hal ini, kelima-lima unsur retorik yang digariskan Aristotle (1991), iaitu *invention*, *arrangement*, *style*, *delivery* dan *memory* ditekankan pemanfaatannya dalam mencapai objektif yang ingin dicapai.

Selain itu, Sara Beden (2020) pula menegaskan bahawa aspek kesantunan dalam berbahasa itu amatlah dituntut bagi memelihara nilai integriti kebangsaan yang dimiliki masyarakat Malaysia. Setelah Malaysia dikejutkan dengan penularan pandemik yang berbahaya, Perdana Menteri selaku pemimpin dilihat sebagai seseorang yang bertanggungjawab dalam menjaga dan mempertahankan kesejahteraan rakyat dan negara melalui inisiatif yang dilaksanakan dengan mengutarakannya kepada seluruh masyarakat secara santun dan berkesan. Daripada penelitian yang dilakukan terhadap perutusan Perdana Menteri bagi pakej rangsangan prihatin rakyat yang diumumkan pada 27 Mac 2020 dan 6 April 2020, kedua-dua perutusan menunjukkan kesejajaran yang signifikan dengan lima maksim Kesopanan Leech (1983), iaitu kebijaksanaan, kedermawanan, sokongan, persetujuan dan simpati. Selain itu, penyelidikan yang dilakukan Aminnudin *et. al* (2021) dan Mukhlis *et. al* (2020) menerapkan pendekatan yang berlainan, iaitu dengan menggabungkan teori lakuan ujaran dan wacana kritis. Menurut Aminnudin *et. al* (2021), penyampaian sesebuah wacana itu adalah gabungan fikiran dan ideologi yang memanfaatkan bahasa selaku pemangkinnya dan keberkesanannya boleh diteliti melalui pengaplikasian teori lakuan ujaran yang berpotensi meyakinkan pendengar. Kajian kualitatif yang dilakukan terhadap empat teks perutusan Perdana Menteri Malaysia bagi pengisytiharan Perintah Kawalan Pegerakan (PKP) mendapati bahawa setiap kategori lakuan bahasa arahan Bach & Harnish (1979), iaitu permintaan, keperluan, pertanyaan, larangan, nasihat dan permisif telah diaplikasikan oleh penutur. Ujaran yang terbanyak ialah arahan berbentuk keperluan sebanyak 21 kali. I diikuti pula dengan arahan berbentuk nasihat sebanyak 15 kali, arahan permintaan 10 kali, arahan larangan 7 kali dan bagi

arahan pertanyaan dan permisif masing-masing hanya sekali. Para pengkaji mendapati bahawa ucapan Perdana Menteri mengandungi lakuan bahasa arahan yang menunjukkan kekuasaan yang ada pada dirinya untuk memerintah dan membentuk persepsi rakyat sebagaimana yang dihasratkan.

Manakala, kajian Mukhlis *et. al* (2020) memanfaatkan kerangka tiga dimensi van Dijk (?) iaitu pada tahapan makro, mikro dan superstruktur untuk melihat unsur wacana dalam penulisan akhbar mengenai pembelajaran jarak jauh. Dapatan kajian ini menemui bahawa dimensi superstruktur menjelaskan tentang koheren dan skematik teks. Struktur makro pula mengupas mengenai tematik (topik yang dibahas dalam wacana), iaitu menghuraikan evaluasi penerapan kebijakan pembelajaran jarak jauh (PJJ) diikuti analisis terhadap elemen pada struktur mikro yang terdiri daripada latar, detil, maksud, praanggapan, bentuk kalimat (kalimat pasif dan aktif), koherensi (koherensi aditif/penambahan, koherensi sebab akibat, dan koherensi kontras), kata ganti (pronomina mereka dan kita), leksikon, grafis, dan metafora (majas).

Selain itu, kajian terhadap istilah-istilah neologisme yang wujud seiringan dengan fenomena *covid-19* di negara ini juga telah menarik perhatian Mohamad Elmy & Exzayrani (2020) untuk meneliti jenis-jenis pembentukan neologisme berdasarkan penanda-penanda leksikal yang ada. Kajian ini turut menegaskan bahawa penularan *covid-19* telah banyak memberikan kesan terhadap sistem kehidupan masyarakat merangkumi aspek kesihatan, pendidikan, perekonomian, bahasa dan sebagainya. Perkembangan terhadap penggunaan istilah-istilah tertentu merupakan pemangkin utama dalam menyebarkan pelbagai maklumat kepada masyarakat agar perkara yang ingin disampaikan dapat difahami dengan mudah. Di samping itu, segala arahan dan saranan daripada pihak kerajaan juga dapat dipatuhi dengan hati yang terbuka. Kajian ini tertumpu pada artikel dalam akhbar tempatan yang mengandungi istilah-istilah neologisme seperti kuarantin, pengesanan kontak, penjarakan sosial, isolasi, barisan hadapan dan lain-lain. Dengan memanfaatkan teori Krishnamurthy (2010), sejumlah 86 istilah neologisme telah dikumpulkan dan dianalisis berpandukan tiga elemen utama dalam teori berkenaan, iaitu pembentukan kata, peminjaman dan penyimpangan kata. Penelitian ini mendapati ketiga-tiga proses pembentukan tersebut dipraktikkan bagi menepati maksud dan konteks yang dikemukakan.

Berdasarkan penelitian terhadap beberapa kajian tersebut, dapatlah disimpulkan bahawa penerapan bahasa retorik merupakan unsur penting yang berpotensi dalam membentuk sesebuah wacana khususnya untuk mengekalkan keharmonian dan perpaduan dalam masyarakat. Walaupun teori dan pendekatan yang diterapkan berbeza dengan teori yang digunakan, seperti pendekatan daya ujaran (Fairclough, 1989), teori retorik (Aristotle, 1991), teori kesopanan (Leech, 1983), teori lakuan ujaran (Bach & Harnish, 1979), pendekatan tiga dimensi dan teori neologisme (Krishnamurthy, 2010). Akan tetapi, kewibawaan para sarjana dalam memanfaatkan teori-teori tersebut memberikan cetusan pandangan yang lebih jelas bagi mengaplikasikan kaedah yang tepat dan telus. Perkara ini

sekaligus dapat memberikan panduan bagi melahirkan penganalisan dan perbincangan yang lebih menarik, tuntas dan terperinci.

Meskipun Dimas dan Irwansyah (2021) turut menggunakan teori retorik namun penyelidikan tersebut lebih tertumpu pada penggunaan teori retorik klasik yang diasaskan oleh Aristotle (1991). Dalam pada itu, penyelidikan ini merupakan suatu lanjutan bagi penerapan teori retorik khususnya teori retorik moden oleh Enos dan Brown (1993) terhadap wacana perutusan pihak kerajaan berkaitan wacana *covid-19*. Walaupun terdapat beberapa kajian turut menggunakan wacana covid-19 yang disampaikan oleh individu-individu yang berpengaruh, seperti wacana Perdana Menteri Malaysia (Shahrolnizam & Rohaidah, 2021; Sara Beden, 2020; Aminuddin et. al, 2021) namun pendekatan yang digunakan setentunya berlainan dengan kajian yang diungkayahkan. Perkara ini setentunya memberikan peluang dan ruang yang cukup luas untuk menjalankan penyelidikan berkaitan wacana covid-19 melalui perutusan rasmi yang disampaikan oleh Menteri Kesihatan, Brunei dengan memanfaatkan teori retorik moden oleh Enos dan Brown (1993). Penyelidikan ini memanfaatkan kaedah analisis teks dengan menumpukan pada kelima-lima pengkategorian teori retorik moden, iaitu pendedahan, penerangan, pemujukan, penceritaan dan penghujahan. Kajian ini bukan sahaja memfokuskan pada pengkategorian retorik, namun turut menampilkan peranan dan fungsi-fungsi yang dimainkan oleh setiap jenis retorik yang digunakan. Perihal ini dilakukan agar setiap usaha yang didasari dengan unsur-unsur retorik itu dapat diperjelaskan dan dibuktikan.

Metodologi Kajian

Pengutipan data bagi penyelidikan ini sepenuhnya tertumpu pada sumber yang berbentuk sekunder, iaitu dengan menelaah sejumlah kajian dan pandangan para sarjana melalui artikel, buku dan sebagainya. Di samping itu, proses penganalisan teks melalui kaedah pentranskripsian turut dilakukan bagi menyempurnakan kajian ini dengan mengaplikasikan teori retorik moden oleh Enos dan Brown (1993). Melalui pendekatan ini, setiap penanda leksikal dapat diteliti dan seterusnya dikategorikan berdasarkan jenis-jenis retorik yang digariskan di dalam teori berkenaan iaitu pendedahan, penerangan, pemujukan dan penghujahan. Dengan mengetengahkan beberapa contoh petikan mengikut jenis retorik yang telah dikelompokkan tersebut, setiap peranan dan fungsi bagi penanda-penanda retorik itu dapat diuraikan dan diperbincangkan secara terperinci. Hal ini merangkumi keutamaan sifat, tugas dan kesan yang dapat menjamin keberkesanan penggunaannya dalam sesebuah wacana. Dapatan daripada penyelidikan ini setentunya dapat memberikan gambaran yang jelas terhadap keberkesanan penggunaan bahasa retorik dalam perutusan rasmi kerajaan. Selain itu, perkara ini juga dapat membuktikan kredibiliti retorik yang mampu menjamin kesejahteraan hidup bermasyarakat dan bernegara. Sejumlah 20 buah video siaran media Kementerian Kesihatan, Brunei telah dikenal pasti dan ditranskripsi selaras dengan objektif kajian. Kesemua siaran media yang diperolehi itu merupakan siaran secara langsung yang melaporkan situasi terkini

penularan jangkitan *covid-19* di Negara Brunei Darussalam dan disampaikan secara rasmi oleh Yang Berhormat Menteri Kesihatan.

Reka Bentuk Kajian

Penganalisan teks dalam kajian ini hanya tertumpu pada penggunaan bahasa retorik berpandukan Teori Retorik Moden oleh Enos dan Brown (1993) dengan menghuraikan secara tuntas setiap pengkategorian yang digariskan di dalamnya. Oleh itu, langkah-langkah bagi menyelenggarakan kajian ini adalah seperti berikut;

Pengutipan dan pentranskripsian data

Keperluan penyelidikan yang merangkumi video-video siaran media rasmi daripada Kementerian Kesihatan mengenai situasi terkini penularan jangkitan *covid-19* di Negara Brunei Darussalam yang bermula pada 07 Ogos 2021 sehingga 26 Ogos 2021 (20 buah video). Hal ini telah membuka ruang yang luas bagi usaha-usaha dilakukan untuk memperolehi kesemua siaran media tersebut melalui aplikasi RTB-Go dengan menyimpan kesemua pautan yang berkaitan dan mengenal pasti setiap variasi retorik yang dimanfaatkan di setiap siaran secara langsung tersebut. Setelah dikenal pasti, proses memperolehi data ini diteruskan dengan proses pentranskripsian keseluruhan teks yang diucapkan oleh Yang Berhormat Menteri Kesihatan, Brunei agar mempermudah lagi proses tersebut. Biarpun teks-teks bagi artikel yang dibacakan berkenaan turut disediakan di dalam aplikasi BruHealth Brunei namun artikel-artikel tersebut tidaklah bersifat lengkap dan hanya berupa ringkasan bagi keseluruhan siaran media yang dimaksudkan.

Pengkategorian dan penganalisan data

Data yang ditranskripsi akan melalui proses pengkategorian dan penganalisan mengikut jenis-jenis retorik yang digariskan di dalam Teori Retorik Moden (1993), iaitu pendedahan, penerangan, pemujukan, penghujahan dan penceritaan. Setiap jenis retorik yang dikategorikan akan dianalisis mengikut pendekatan yang bersesuaian dan selari dengan teori yang digunakan. Pengkategorian tersebut dibuat berdasarkan penanda linguistik berupa golongan kata, frasa, partikel dan selainnya selaras dengan definisi yang dibawa oleh setiap jenis retorik tersebut. Misalnya, retorik pemujukan digunakan untuk mempengaruhi atau memujuk seseorang untuk bersetuju dengan pendapat atau gagasan yang dibangkitkan penutur sehingga menyebabkan pendengar berubah persepsi sebagaimana yang dihasratkan penutur. Melalui definisi retorik pemujukan ini, setiap penggunaan bahasa perlulah memiliki unsur-unsur yang boleh memberikan penekanan atau penegasan tertentu, seperti penggunaan kata larangan yang bertujuan untuk menegah seseorang melakukan sesuatu. Selain itu, penganalisan yang dilakukan ini turut mengambil kira unsur linguistik yang berkaitan agar dapat mencapai objektif kajian yang ketiga, iaitu untuk mengetahui peranan dan fungsi setiap pemanfaatan bahasa retorik yang diterapkan.

Perbincangan dan kesimpulan

Data yang telah dianalisis akan diperbincangkan secara teliti dengan mengutamakan dapatan yang berpotensi bagi menyempurnakan objektif dan kepentingan kajian.

Kerangka Teori

Teori Retorik Modern yang diperkenalkan oleh Enos dan Brown (1993) merupakan perkembangan daripada teori retorik klasik yang diasaskan oleh Aristotle ketika zaman Yunani-Rom dahulu (Nor Azuwan *et. al.*, 2018:4). Secara umumnya, retorik merupakan sebahagian daripada bidang linguistik yang mampu membantu penggunaannya menampilkan penggunaan bahasa yang berestetika, indah dan efektif sama ada dalam bentuk lisan mahupun penulisan (Azrul Azuan & Hajah Nor Azuwan, 2015). Retorik memiliki dua pecahan utama, iaitu retorik pengucapan dan retorik penulisan. Retorik pengucapan lebih memfokuskan kepada kemahiran komunikasi secara lisan seperti pengucapan awam. Manakala, retorik penulisan pula lebih cenderung kepada melahirkan keyakinan yang setentunya mampu mempengaruhi pendengarnya (Tasmara, 1987). Di samping itu, retorik turut dikatakan sebagai suatu bahasa yang mampu memberikan tindakan dan mempengaruhi emosi khususnya dalam setiap perancangan pembangunan sosio-ekonomi yang dilaksanakan sesebuah negara (Muhammad Mazlan & Zaitul Azma, 2016). Selain itu, Asmah (1988) menanggapi bahasa retorik sebagai bahasa yang berpengaruh kerana peranan bahasa retorik sangat menyerlah terutamanya dalam komunikasi periklanan sama ada dalam bentuk lisan mahupun penulisan. Berdasarkan penelitian beliau, penggunaan bahasa retorik bukan sekadar bahasa yang menarik ataupun indah, tetapi turut mampu memberikan kesan yang cukup positif terhadap usaha penjualan suatu perniagaan sehingga mencapai keuntungan yang cukup lumayan. Dalam pada itu, penggunaan bahasa retorik ini telah memfokuskan pada lima jenis retorik, iaitu pendedahan, penceritaan, pemujukan, penghujahan dan penerangan.

Menurut Muhammad Mazlan & Zaitul Azma (2016:7) teori Retorik moden mempunyai beberapa prinsip tertentu, iaitu;

- i. Retorik memiliki variasi bentuk bahasa, iaitu tidak berbentuk terang-terangan atau langsung. Sebaliknya, bahasa retorik itu bersifat estetik dan menarik.
- ii. Retorik mempunyai kepelbagaian dari sudut makna. Gaya retorik lazimnya tidak mengungkapkan makna secara langsung atau makna yang literal. Namun, ia lebih menjurus kepada makna berunsurkan tersirat atau makna sebenar sesuatu ujaran yang difahami berdasarkan rantaian ayat-ayat, konteks dan kontekstual.
- iii. Retorik bertujuan untuk memberikan kesan tertentu. Penggunaan retorik dalam sesuatu ujaran atau penulisan itu memiliki objektif yang terperinci yang ingin dicapai oleh penutur atau penulis seperti dalam usaha bagi memperjelaskan sesuatu dengan teliti, mewujudkan emosi tertentu, dan berpotensi dalam memberikan pengaruh kepada minda khalayak.

- iv. Retorik mementingkan unsur keindahan dalam pemilihan kata dan penyusunan ayat. Ia lebih cenderung kepada penggunaan dan pemilihan kata yang mempunyai nilai-nilai seni yang memiliki kehalusan makna dan memperlihatkan elemen kebijaksanaan, kejelasan, keanggunan, kefasihan (kelancaran), dan keadilan (keyakinan).
- v. Selain itu, setiap ungkapan retorik yang cuba untuk difahami atau diinterpretasikan oleh pendengar atau pembaca itu setentunya memerlukan keupayaan kognitif, psikologi, pemahaman sosial dan persekitaran bahasa yang tertentu. Jelasnya, bagi memahami dan menginterpretasi makna sesuatu ungkapan retorik, pemahaman terhadap sejumlah konteks atau semua unsur yang mempengaruhi sesuatu ungkapan atau ujaran diperlukan kerana titik kebenaran semantik tidak akan diperolehi jika makna yang difahami itu hanyalah berbentuk makna logik semata-mata.

Analisis Dan Perbincangan

A. Retorik Pendedahan

Retorik pendedahan turut dikenali sebagai *exposition* yang membawa maksud mendedahkan, menghuraikan, menyingkap mahupun menunjukkan sesuatu perkara agar pihak yang mendengarnya mengetahui dan dapat memahami dengan jelas (Mohd Sidin, 1999:3). Dalam erti kata yang lain, retorik pendedahan ini merupakan pemindahan suatu konsep atau idea daripada fikiran penutur kepada pihak pendengar mahupun pembaca. Retorik pendedahan ini lazimnya menggunakan beberapa cara yang mudah dalam menyampaikan atau memberitahu sesuatu perkara kepada pihak lain. Ini merangkumi unsur pendefinisian, pengkategorian, pernyataan secara bersistematik, perbandingan dan seumpamanya (Mohd Sidin, 1999:5). Kesemua unsur ini memiliki fitur-fitur tertentu yang dapat dikenal pasti. Dalam pada itu, perkara ini boleh diperhatikan melalui contoh-contoh yang dikemukakan berikut;

1. Pendedahan menggunakan penanda **ialah/ adalah/ merupakan**.

Teknik pendedahan menggunakan kata tugas pemerian atau penerangan bagi sesuatu perkara yang terdiri daripada kata nama atau frasa nama. Kata pemerian bagi **ialah** dan **adalah** memiliki fungsi untuk menerangkan atau menghuraikan suatu pengertian, istilah, kata nama, frasa nama, frasa adjektif dan sebagainya (Nik Safiah *et. al*, 1993:250). Dalam contoh (1a) jelas menunjukkan bahawa kata pemerian **ialah** diletakkan selepas frasa nama 'kes 340' bagi memberikan keterangan lanjut mengenai frasa nama tersebut dengan lebih tuntas. Manakala, dalam (1b), kata pemerian **adalah** digunakan untuk memberikan keterangan yang lebih jelas kepada masyarakat umum mengenai amalan tanggungjawab sosial yang perlu dipraktikkan. Dalam contoh kedua ini, penggunaan kata pemerian **adalah** diletakkan selepas frasa nama 'orang ramai'.

- a. Kes 340 **ialah** seorang perempuan berumur 37 tahun yang telah mula mengalami tanda-tanda jangkitan ringan pada 03 Ogos 2021. (Data 07 Ogos 2021, No.6)
 - b. Orang ramai **adalah** dinasihatkan untuk mengamalkan tanggungjawab sosial masing-masing dengan mengamalkan kebersihan diri, etika bersin yang betul, penjarakan fizikal dan jika merasa kurang sihat, tidak menghadiri ke tempat-tempat awam dan majlis-majlis. (Data 07 Ogos 2021, No.37)
2. Pendedahan menggunakan penanda **seperti/ seperti berikut**.
Teknik pendedahan menggunakan kata-kata sendi nama ‘seperti berikut’ dan ‘seperti’. Kedua-dua kata sendi nama ini sering digunakan untuk memberikan beberapa contoh, langkah-langkah mahupun panduan tertentu yang terdiri daripada kata nama atau frasa nama (Nik Safiah *et. al*, 1993:265). Hal ini dilakukan bagi memberikan maklumat tambahan mahupun pengukuhan tertentu bagi pendedahan dan penghuraian yang dikemukakan sebelumnya. Dalam (2a) **seperti berikut** digunakan bagi menghuraikan perkara yang hendak ditekankan, iaitu bagi frasa *swabbing centre*. Manakala, contoh (2b) pula menggunakan penanda **seperti** bagi menjelaskan contoh-contoh tempat bagi para petugas barisan hadapan menjalankan tugas. Dalam pada itu, penggunaan kata sendi nama seperti yang diterangkan ini setentunya memiliki kepentingannya yang tersendiri dalam mendedahkan ataupun menghuraikan penekanan-penekanan tertentu yang ingin disampaikan oleh penutur.
- a. Berikutan dengan peningkatan kes-kes jangkitan *covid-19* ini, Kementerian Kesihatan ingin menasihatkan orang ramai yang mempunyai tanda-tanda jangkitan khususnya mereka yang berkemungkinan terdedah kepada mana-mana kluster untuk segera mendapatkan rawatan dan melakukan saringan ujian SARS-CoV-2 di *swabbing centre* **seperti berikut**;
 - Kompleks Sukan Hospital Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha
 - Pusat Saring Hospital Suri Seri Begawan
 - Pusat Kesihatan Berakas
 - Pusat Kesihatan Pengkalan Batu
 - Pusat Kesihatan Setia.
 (Data 08 Ogos 2021, No.40)
 - b. Orang ramai diminta untuk bertutur dengan sopan, bertimbang rasa dan berhemah dengan petugas-petugas kesihatan dan barisan hadapan yang lain **seperti** talian nasihat kesihatan 148, hospital dan pusat kesihatan, pusat vaksinasi dan pusat swabbing. (Data 09 Ogos 2021, No.18)
3. Pendedahan menggunakan penanda **dengan/ mengenai**.
Meskipun kata sendi nama dan kata terbitan mempunyai bentuk yang berbeza, kedua-duanya memainkan fungsi yang serupa, sama ada sebagai keterangan

ataupun penegasan bagi perkara yang ingin didedahkan terutamanya kata nama atau frasa nama, kata kerja dan kata sifat (Nik Safiah *et. al*, 1993:252). Contoh (3a) telah menggunakan kata **dengan** untuk memberikan penegasan terhadap isu peningkatan kes-kes tempatan. Manakala contoh (3b) pula menggunakan kata **mengenai** untuk merujuk sesuatu yang ingin dibicarakan atau untuk menerangkan sesuatu, iaitu dalam konteks petikan di atas merujuk kepada keberkesanan vaksinasi di Negara Brunei Darussalam yang diikuti dengan huraian lanjut mengenainya (Nik Safiah *et. al*, 1993:264).

- a. **Dengan** negara sekarang berdepan dengan peningkatan kes-kes tempatan ataupun *community transmission*, vaksinasi *covid-19* ditambah dengan langkah-langkah penjarakan fizikal dan pemakaian sungkup muka kekal menjadi langkah yang efektif untuk membantu Negara Brunei Darussalam mengawal wabak ini. (Data 10 Ogos 2021, No.15)
 - b. Analisa awal **mengenai** keberkesanan vaksinasi di Negara Brunei Darussalam menunjukkan pengambilan vaksin 2 dos suntikan *covid-19* adalah lebih daripada 70% berkesan dalam mengurangkan jangkitan termasuk jangkitan tanpa tanda-tanda penyakit. (Data 10 Ogos 2021, No.19)
4. Pendedahan menggunakan penanda ayat penyata.
- Teknik pendedahan juga boleh hadir dalam bentuk ayat penyata, iaitu frasa yang digunakan untuk mengungkapkan secara langsung diikuti huraian yang terperinci mengenainya. Sebagai contoh, **54 kes baru jangkitan covid-19** pada (4a) jelas menggambarkan ayat penyata mengenai jumlah kes baru jangkitan *covid-19* yang direkodkan di Negara Brunei Darussalam pada tarikh yang diumumkan. Petikan ini turut diikuti dengan huraian lanjut mengenai 54 kes baru tersebut sepertimana yang terdapat dalam Data 11 Ogos 2021 bermula no. 3 sehingga no. 8. Manakala, contoh (4b) pula menggunakan ayat penyata **dikenali sebagai** yang diikuti huraian secara langsung bagi kluster tersebut, iaitu kluster imigresen. Dengan huraian yang diberikan selepas kedua-dua frasa tersebut, pendengar didedahkan dengan kenyataan tertentu yang ingin ditimbulkan atau disampaikan oleh penutur kepada pihak pendengar. Melalui cara sedemikian, bukan sahaja dapat memberikan pengetahuan baru dalam minda pendengar malah turut memberikan potensi tertentu dalam menggerakkan fikiran mereka untuk menghayati suatu perkara yang telah dikemukakan oleh penutur.
- a. Kementerian Kesihatan ingin memaklumkan kepada orang ramai bahawa pada hari ini, Rabu, 2 Muharam 1443H bersamaan dengan 11 Ogos 2021, **54 kes baru jangkitan covid-19** telah disahkan di negara ini yang membawa jumlah keseluruhan kes jangkitan *covid-19* di negara ini kepada 494 orang. (Data 11 Ogos 2021, No.2)
 - b. Kluster ini sekarang **dikenali sebagai** kluster imigresen. (Data 11 Ogos 2021, No.5)

5. Pendedahan menggunakan penanda kata bilangan.

Selain menggunakan penanda-penanda yang telah diuraikan di atas, retorik pendedahan juga menggunakan kata bilangan bagi mengurai atau mendedahkan sesuatu. Kata bilangan yang sering digunakan dalam teks-teks keputusan rasmi kerajaan ini adalah seperti keseluruhan, sebanyak dan seramai. Kata bilangan ini bukanlah semata-mata untuk memberikan jumlah dan nombor tentang sesuatu yang ingin disampaikan malah penggunaannya turut berfungsi dalam memberikan pendedahan langsung mengenai statistik atau fakta yang tidak dapat dihitung oleh akal manusia (Nik Safiah *et. al*, 1993:272). Perkara ini jelas dengan meneliti penggunaan kata ‘sebanyak’ dan ‘keseluruhan’ yang tentunya memiliki peranannya yang tersendiri, iaitu untuk menyatakan bilangan yang tidak dapat dikira dan bilangan yang boleh dinyatakan dengan jumlah tertentu. Melalui pendedahan yang diberikan, kata bilangan sedemikian berfungsi untuk mengingatkan mahupun memberikan penekanan tentang suatu perkara yang dirujuk. Misalnya dalam contoh (5a), penggunaan **sebanyak** secara tidak langsung memberikan peringatan bahawa telah banyak ujian yang dilakukan bagi virus SARS-Cov-2. Di samping itu, kata **keseluruhan** pada ayat yang sama pula memberikan penekanan pada jumlah ujian makmal secara menyeluruh.

- a. Dalam tempoh 24 jam yang lalu, **sebanyak** 2,353 sampel telah diuji bagi virus SARS-CoV-2 yang membawa jumlah **keseluruhan** ujian makmal yang dijalankan sejak Januari 2020 kepada 162,599 ujian. (Data 11 Ogos 2021, No.14)

Dengan memanfaatkan beberapa teknik pendedahan ini, topik atau subjek yang ingin disampaikan akan menjadi lebih menarik dan bermanfaat kepada pendengar. Secara tidak langsung, maklumat yang dikongsikan atau didedahkan akan memberikan impak atau kesedaran yang berpanjangan kepada diri mereka (pendengar) (Muhammad Mazlan & Zaitul Azma, 2016:11). Perihal ini selari dengan prinsip asas retorik sebagaimana yang dikemukakan oleh Muhammad Mazlan dan Zaitul Azma (2016:7) yang menyatakan bahawa retorik memiliki tujuan untuk memberikan kesan tertentu terutama dalam mempengaruhi minda dan emosi khalayak.

B. Retorik Penerangan

Retorik penerangan lebih tertumpu kepada gambaran sesuatu perkara yang ingin dibicarakan. Hal ini termasuk gambaran tentang suatu imej, perasaan mahupun keadaan tentang sesuatu yang melibatkan seseorang individu ataupun sesuatu yang tidak bernyawa (Amida, 2015:85). Penjelasan ini berasal daripada perkataan Latin *describere* yang membawa maksud untuk menulis atau mengilustrasikan sesuatu dengan lanjut dan terperinci (Mohd Sidin, 1999:8). Selain itu, penggunaan retorik penerangan lebih

difokuskan pada huraian tentang gambaran sesuatu perkara yang dilakukan secara terperinci sehingga dapat memberikan imej yang lebih jelas dan tepat dan boleh dibayangkan pendengar (Nor Azuwan, Zaitul Azma & rakan-rakan, 2018:10). Dalam erti kata lain, pendengar akan mudah terpengaruh dengan apa yang disampaikan oleh penutur kerana setiap penerangan yang diberikan akan membawa fikiran atau perasaan pendengar seolah-olah melihat, mendengar atau mengalaminya sendiri. Lazimnya, retorik penerangan ini dikaitkan dengan jawapan bagi kata tanya seperti apa, mengapa, di mana, siapa, bila dan sebagainya. Perihal ini turut selari dengan definisi yang dikemukakan dalam Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat (2016:1605) yang mengertikan kata ‘tanya’ sebagai permintaan keterangan ataupun penjelasan. Oleh itu, contoh-contoh penggunaan teknik penerangan ini bolehlah diperhatikan seperti berikut;

6. Penerangan menggunakan ayat tanya **bagaimana/ siapa/ bila/ di mana**.

Teknik penerangan menerusi pertanyaan ‘siapa’ merujuk kepada manusia yang memainkan watak atau peranan utama dalam suatu situasi yang dimaksudkan (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2016:1485). Contoh (6a) menunjukkan bahawa kes-kes dalam kluster-kluster aktif yang dimaksudkan adalah **mereka yang sedang menjalani kuarantin**. Meskipun petikan ini tidak menggunakan ayat tanya secara langsung namun kenyataan yang diberikan merujuk kepada jawapan bagi kata tanya ‘siapa’ atau watak utama yang dimaksudkan bagi petikan berkenaan. Frasa ini juga merupakan jawapan kepada soalan “Siapakah kes-kes yang berada dalam kluster-kluster aktif itu?”

- a. Kes-kes dalam kluster-kluster aktif ini adalah **mereka yang sedang menjalani kuarantin** setelah didapati mempunyai kontak dengan beberapa kes positif sebelumnya. (Data 12 Ogos 2021, No.10)

Manakala contoh (6b) pula merujuk kepada jumlah bilangan bagi sesuatu yang dimaksudkan. Dalam hal ini, ia memberikan huraian lanjut mengenai jawapan bagi kata tanya ‘berapa’ yang diajukan berkenaan jumlah sesuatu (bilangan) (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2016:167). Frasa **218 kes aktif** pada contoh (6b) merupakan jawapan kepada pertanyaan berikut “Berapakah jumlah kes aktif yang telah direkodkan di Negara Brunei Darussalam?”

- b. Ini bermakna terdapat **218 kes aktif** telah direkodkan di Negara Brunei Darussalam. (Data 12 Ogos 2021, No.14)

Beberapa contoh yang dikemukakan ini telah memperlihatkan dengan jelas mengenai setiap perkara yang ingin diterangkan kepada pendengar. Ini menjadikan setiap penerangan yang disampaikan penutur boleh difahami dengan lebih efisien dan teratur. Di samping itu, retorik penerangan ini juga mampu memberikan gambaran terperinci dalam membantu pendengarnya memahami maksud yang cuba diperjelaskan. Hal ini turut memperlihatkan bahawa penerapan unsur-unsur yang terdapat dalam retorik penerangan ini akan memberikan pengaruh yang besar dalam

memberikan kefahaman kepada pendengar. Penggunaan unsur-unsur sedemikian juga telah menjadikan setiap penggunaan bahasa lebih bervariasi dan tampak menarik selaras dengan prinsip asas retorik moden yang menetengahkan elemen estetik dan kepelbagaian (Muhammad Mazlan & Zaitul Azma, 2016:7).

C. Retorik Pemujukan

Retorik pemujukan merupakan kaedah yang agak popular dalam kalangan ahli-ahli politik, bidang perniagaan, bidang periklanan dan sebagainya. Ini kerana setiap teknik dalam retorik pemujukan mampu membantu penuturnya mencapai tujuan mahupun objektif tertentu (Lim Kim Hui & Har Wai Mun, 2014:195). Dalam pada itu, retorik pemujukan bolehlah didefinisikan sebagai penggunaan bahasa yang mampu menarik minat pendengar agar sama-sama bersetuju dengan topik yang dibangkitkan oleh penutur diikuti dengan pertimbangan pihak pendengar sebagaimana yang diharapkan oleh penutur (Muhammad Mazlan & Zaitul Azma, 2016:7). Selain itu, teknik penggunaan bahasa yang terdapat dalam retorik pemujukan ini juga agak berbeza berbanding retorik yang lain. Hal ini kerana retorik pemujukan lebih terarah kepada bagaimana penutur mampu mengubah persepsi, emosi dan tingkah laku pendengar sehinggakan pendengar terus bertindak untuk melakukan perkara-perkara tertentu sebagaimana yang dihasratkan oleh penutur. Oleh yang demikian, retorik pemujukan dibahagikan kepada dua jenis, iaitu pemujukan rasional dan pemujukan tidak rasional (Azrul & Nor Azuwan, 2015:8). Pemujukan rasional lebih tertumpu kepada penyampaian hujah yang mampu mempengaruhi pendengar manakala pemujukan tidak rasional pula lebih mementingkan penyampaian yang boleh menyentuh emosi pendengar yang seterusnya akan mempengaruhi fikiran dan tindakan mereka selanjutnya. Berikut merupakan contoh-contoh bagi retorik pemujukan yang ditemui dalam teks-teks perutusan rasmi kerajaan;

7. Pemujukan melalui partikel ‘-lah’.

Dalam kedua-dua contoh (7a) dan (7b), penanda partikel ‘-lah’ digabungkan pada kata **bolehlah** dan **kesihatanlah**. Meskipun penggunaannya pada ayat (7a) dan (7b) tidak diletakkan di hadapan ayat, ia tetap mendukung fungsi yang sama iaitu untuk memberikan penekanan serta sebagai peringatan yang berterusan kepada pendengar. Ini bersesuaian dengan peranan partikel yang sering diletakkan di hadapan ayat iaitu sebagai penanda tertentu dalam hujah yang disampaikan (Nik Safiah et al, 1993:248), sama ada berupa penekanan, penegasan, pengukuhan mahupun pernyataan secara halus bagi sesuatu arahan yang berupa ajakan atau peringatan (Abdullah, 2013:191). Dalam hal ini, penekanan **bolehlah** pada ayat (7a) membawa maksud dapat atau diizinkan untuk menghubungi talian 7455109 bagi sesiapa yang ingin menjadi sukarelawan kesihatan. Manakala, frasa **pekerja-pekerja kesihatanlah** pada (6b) pula merupakan peringatan berupa pengkhususan kepada para petugas kesihatan.

- a. Bagi membantu Kementerian Kesihatan menangani keadaan wabak yang semakin meningkat pada masa sekarang, Kementerian Kesihatan mengalu-

alukan mana-mana pekerja kesihatan yang pada masa ini bekerja di klinik-klinik swasta atau yang sudah bersara dan mempunyai keupayaan serta berhasrat untuk menjadi sukarelawan kesihatan, **bolehlah** menghubungi talian ini, 7455109. (Data 12 Ogos 2021, No.17)

- b. So, ani dikhaskan untuk **pekerja-pekerja kesihatanlah** sahaja buat masa ini. (Data 12 Ogos 2021, No.18)

8. Pemujukan melalui kata pinjaman.

Dalam teknik pemujukan ini, pemilihan sesuatu kata di dalam sesebuah ayat perlulah diberikan perhatian yang selayaknya agar penggunaannya menjadi lebih tepat dan boleh memberikan kefahaman yang lebih jelas kepada pendengar. Berdasarkan kedua-dua contoh yang diberikan, terdapat beberapa kata pinjaman yang digunakan, iaitu *heat exhaustion* dan *work from home*. Jika dilihat penggunaan bagi kedua-dua frasa ini, pengaplikasiannya lebih mudah difahami dan lebih kerap digunakan berbanding penggunaannya di dalam istilah Bahasa Melayu. Bagi contoh (8a), istilah ***heat exhaustion*** merupakan kata pinjaman yang diambil daripada Bahasa Inggeris dalam bidang sains kesihatan. Ia merujuk kepada keadaan seseorang yang keletihan disebabkan haba atau panas yang berlebihan. Menurut King dan Barry (1962:452), *heat exhaustion* ini merupakan salah satu jenis penyakit yang turut dikategorikan sebagai penyakit haba (*heat illness*) selain daripada jenis yang lainnya seperti *heatstroke*, *heat hyperpyrexia*, *heat syncope*, *prickly heat* dan *heat oedema*. Manakala, istilah ***work from home*** pada contoh (8b) pula mula digunakan sejak isu penularan *covid-19* semakin merebak. Istilah tersebut semakin hangat digunakan bukan sahaja dalam kalangan masyarakat tempatan malah masyarakat global umumnya. Oleh yang demikian, jika istilah *work from home* ini dipindahkan ke dalam Bahasa Melayu, yang bermaksud 'bekerja dari rumah'. Perkara ini berkemungkinan menimbulkan kejanggalan dalam masyarakat kerana istilah sedemikian jarang atau tidak pernah digunakan sebelumnya.

- a. Beliau telah datang untuk mendapatkan rawatan di hospital berkenaan tetapi beliau terpaksa menunggu agak lama sehingga beliau menghadapi masalah keletihan haba atau ***heat exhaustion***. (Data 14 Ogos 2021, No.17)
- b. Teranah tah di rumah dan lakukan kaedah ***work-from-home*** bagi membantu Kerajaan mengurangkan penularan wabak *covid-19* di negara ini. (Data 14 Ogos 2021, No.26)

9. Pemujukan melalui kata perintah.

Selain daripada penggunaan partikel '-lah' dan kata pinjaman, teknik pemujukan juga cenderung menggunakan kata-kata yang berbentuk perintah sama ada bertujuan untuk mengarahkan, menegur, menyuruh, melarang, menyeru, memberi peringatan dan sebagainya (Abdullah, 2013:190). Perihal ini boleh diteliti melalui penanda-penanda tertentu seperti kata **diarahkan** pada contoh (9a) dan **tidak dibenarkan** pada contoh (9b). Kata perintah sedemikian bersifat langsung kerana kata

‘diarahkan’ yang bertujuan untuk mengarahkan ini bermaksud bahawa setiap individu yang dikenal pasti mempunyai kontak terdekat adalah dikehendaki untuk menjalani kuarantin mandatori dan ujian RT-PCR SARS-CoV-2. Manakala **tidak dibenarkan** pada contoh (9b) pula digunakan dalam konteks larangan bagi individu yang tidak boleh keluar daripada tempat kediaman mereka untuk mengasingkan diri daripada ahli keluarga dan mengambil ubat-ubatan yang perlu. Selain penggunaan kata-kata perintah yang dipaparkan, kajian ini juga turut menjumpai penggunaan kata perintah ‘hendaklah’, ‘dikehendaki’, ‘menasihatkan’, ‘menyeru’, ‘diminta’, ‘marilah’ dan yang seumpamanya bagi tujuan penegasan atau penekanan. Perkara ini juga menunjukkan bahawa setiap butiran yang dikongsikan adalah wajar digunakan demi menjaga kepentingan bersama.

- a. Semua kontak terdekat yang dikenal pasti akan **diarahkan** untuk menjalani kuarantin mandatori dan ujian RT-PCR SARS-CoV-2. (Data 15 Ogos 2021, No.12)
- b. Walau bagaimanapun, mereka **tidak dibenarkan** untuk keluar rumah bagi mendapatkan ubat-ubatan tersebut dan hendaklah mengasingkan diri dengan ahli keluarga. (Data 16 Ogos 2021, No.21)

10. Pemujukan melalui penegasan sifat.

Menerusi teknik pemujukan jenis ini, penekanan atau penegasan sifat dilakukan terhadap sesuatu sama ada pada manusia, peristiwa, situasi dan sebagainya. Dalam contoh (10a), teknik pemujukan ini dizahirkan melalui penggunaan frasa **mengurangkan risiko** dan **lebih berkesan**. Melalui teknik ini, penutur dengan mudah akan mempengaruhi fikiran pendengar kerana adanya ketinggian nilai maksud yang menjadikan maklumat yang disampaikan lebih serius. Dalam contoh (10a) risiko jangkitan tersebut boleh dikurangkan melalui keberkesanan penggunaan vaksin. Di samping itu, penggunaan teknik pemujukan melalui penegasan sifat ini juga mampu menarik perhatian dan penghayatan daripada pihak pendengar kerana penekanan yang diberikan akan menjadikan pendengar semakin cakna dan tertarik untuk mengetahuinya dengan lebih lanjut.

- a. Selain dari **mengurangkan risiko** jangkitan, vaksin juga didapati **lebih berkesan** dalam mengurangkan risiko penyakit yang teruk. (Data 10 Ogos 2021, No.20)

11. Pemujukan melalui istilah saintifik.

Penggunaan istilah saintifik sering digunakan dalam perutusan rasmi, sesuai dengan subjek utama yang dibincangkan. Dalam konteks ini, subjek utama berfokus kepada isu penularan virus *covid-19* atau istilah saintifiknya dikenali sebagai *severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2* (SARS-CoV-2) (Sambit *et. al*, 2020:2). Di samping itu, penggunaan istilah saintifik mampu menarik perhatian pendengar agar terus peka dengan isu yang dibangkitkan. Penggunaan istilah saintifik juga

menjadikan topik yang diperkatakan lebih serius sekaligus mampu mempengaruhi tindakan penutur agar menjadi lebih berwaspada mengenai isu penularan yang dijelaskan. Dalam contoh (11a), **RT-PCR SARS-CoV-2** merujuk kepada *reverse-transcriptase polymerase chain reaction* (RT-PCR) dan *severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2* (SARS-CoV-2) (Li *et. al*, 2020:1). Penggunaan istilah ini merujuk kepada ujian yang dijalankan bagi mengenal pasti sama ada seseorang itu telah dijangkiti virus tersebut ataupun tidak (Li *et. al*, 2020:1). Manakala, contoh (11b) pula menggunakan istilah **ECMO** yang bermaksud *extracorporeal membrane oxygenation* (Allen *et. al*, 2012:13). Istilah ini merujuk kepada mesin bantuan yang digunakan bagi menambah kadar oksigen yang diperlukan di dalam tubuh seseorang di samping membuang atau mengurangkan kadar karbon dioksida yang berlebihan. Penggunaan mesin ini juga boleh membantu pesakit bagi tempoh beberapa hari atau beberapa minggu (Allen *et. al*, 2012:13).

- a. Pengesanan kontak bagi kes-kes baru ini masih giat dijalankan dan semua kontak terdekat akan diarahkan untuk menjalani kuarantin mandatori dan ujian **RT PCR SARS-CoV-2**. (Data 18 Ogos 2021, No.8)
- b. Di kalangan kes-kes aktif tersebut, 3 kes masih dalam kritikal yang mana duanya memerlukan bantuan mesin pernafasan atau *artificial ventilation* dan 1 lagi kes memerlukan mesin tambahan *heart-lung machine* ataupun **ECMO**. (Data 20 Ogos 2021, No.18)

Ringkasnya, penggunaan retorik pemujukan menerusi penanda wacana yang telah dibincangkan mampu membantu penutur menyampaikan mesej dan makna yang tersirat sebagaimana yang dihasratkan. Penggunaan teknik pemujukan ini, walau bagaimanapun, tidak terhad kepada kelima-lima penanda yang telah disebutkan. Terdapat beberapa penanda yang tidak dinyatakan disebabkan skop kajian yang terhad seperti metonimi, bahasa figuratif, kata penguat dan simbol solidariti. Penggunaan teknik pemujukan ini juga mendukung elemen kebijaksanaan, kejelasan dan kefasihan pemberitaan maklumat selaras dengan prinsip asas teori retorik moden (Muhammad Mazlan & Zaitul Azma, 2016:7). Secara tidak langsung, perihal sedemikian menjadikan wacana perutusan rasmi menjadi lebih meyakinkan, sempurna serta memberikan kesan yang efektif.

D. Retorik Penghujahan

Retorik penghujahan didefinisikan sebagai suatu usaha yang berbentuk rayuan secara intelektual yang diikuti beberapa bentuk kenyataan atau pengukuhan berupa alasan-alasan konkrit (Mohd Sidin, 1999:28). Perkara ini turut disokong oleh Muhammad Mazlan dan Zaitul Azma (2016:10), yang menyatakan teknik penghujahan merupakan salah satu cara dalam memujuk pendengar agar mempercayai setiap penjelasan yang dikongsikan kepada mereka. Melalui teknik tersebut, pendengar akan lebih terpengaruh dan mula mempertimbangkan hujah-hujah yang telah didedahkan kepada mereka. Terdapat dua ciri

utama yang menggambarkan teknik penghujahan ini, iaitu wujudnya kenyataan atau gagasan yang perlu dihujahkan dan setiap penjelasan itu perlulah disertakan dengan bukti-bukti yang kukuh (Nor Azuwan *et. al*, 2018:11).

12. Tiga unsur retorik penghujahan

Menerusi retorik penghujahan, setiap pernyataan yang dikongsikan boleh hadir dalam bentuk andaian, penilaian, gagasan dan sebagainya. Setiap huraian pula perlu disokong dan dipertahankan agar mampu memberikan keyakinan pada pihak khalayak atau audiens yang mendengarnya. Dalam hal ini, Mohd Sidin (1999:36) telah menekankan tiga unsur utama dalam retorik penghujahan, iaitu i/ Kenyataan tesis atau idea pokok yang seharusnya diperkukuhkan; ii/ Alasan atau premis kenyataan, dan; iii/ Khalayak atau audiens yang perlu diyakinkan. Penggunaan retorik penghujahan ini bersesuaian dengan wacana perutusan rasmi memandangkan perlunya bukti yang kukuh agar pendengar lebih yakin dan tidak meragui fakta yang disampaikan. Dalam contoh (12a), penutur menekankan jumlah bilangan bagi virus SARS-CoV-2 menerusi fakta jumlah sampel yang diambil bagi tempoh 24 jam yang lalu, iaitu sebanyak 6,521. Kenyataan tersebut turut disertakan dengan jumlah keseluruhan ujian makmal yang telah dijalankan sejak bulan Januari 2020, iaitu sebanyak 195,607 ujian. Melalui penggunaan kata bilangan ini, kenyataan (tesis) mengenai ujian makmal dapat dibuktikan dan dijadikan sebagai hujah bagi meyakinkan pendengar. Hal ini disebabkan pembuktian (premis) dari sudut jumlah keseluruhan yang telah dihitung sejak bulan Januari 2020 lagi.

a. **TESIS:**

Ujian bagi virus SARS-CoV-2. (Data 21 Ogos 2021, No.16)

PREMIS:

Dalam tempoh 24 jam yang lalu, sebanyak 6,521 sampel bagi virus SARS-CoV-2 telah diuji yang membawa jumlah keseluruhan ujian makmal dijalankan sejak Januari 2020 kepada 195,607 ujian. (Data 21 Ogos 2021, No.16)

Manakala, dalam contoh (12b), penutur telah menghuraikan tentang lima kategori bagi kes-kes yang dirawat di Pusat Pengasingan Kebangsaan. Hal ini memerlukan pembuktian (premis) sama ada menggunakan statistik ataupun kata bilangan bagi setiap kategori yang dimaksudkan agar dapat memberikan keyakinan yang lebih mendalam pada pendengarnya. Atas sebab itu, penutur telah memberikan statistik menggunakan peratus bagi setiap kategori. Perkara ini bukan sahaja untuk mendapatkan keyakinan pada pihak pendengar malah sekaligus memberikan peringatan tentang bahaya yang dihadapi oleh individu jika mereka dijangkiti. Dengan cara ini, setiap tesis atau kenyataan yang dibangkitkan menjadi lebih jelas dan diyakini kesahihannya di samping memberikan peringatan mahupun pengajaran secara halus kepada pihak pendengar.

b. **TESIS:**

Kes-kes yang dirawat di Pusat Pengasingan Kebangsaan dan pusat-pusat pengasingan yang lain adalah dikategorikan kepada 5 kategori seperti berikut; kategori 1 adalah bagi kes-kes yang tidak mempunyai sebarang tanda-tanda jangkitan, kategori kedua adalah kes-kes yang mempunyai tanda-tanda jangkitan tetapi tidak mempunyai jangkitan paru-paru atau pneumonia, kategori 3 adalah kes-kes yang mempunyai tanda-tanda jangkitan dan jangkitan paru-paru atau pneumonia, kategori 4 adalah kes-kes yang mempunyai jangkitan paru-paru atau pneumonia dan memerlukan tambahan oksigen. Kes-kes ini biasanya memerlukan pemantauan rapi di Unit Rawatan Intensif. Manakala kategori kelima adalah kes-kes kritikal yang mana jangkitan covid-19 telah menyebabkan masalah pada beberapa organ dalam badan. Kes-kes ini biasanya memerlukan bantuan-bantuan mesin pernafasan ataupun artificial ventilation ataupun heart-lung machine or ECMO. (Data 26 Ogos 2021, No.23)

PREMIS:

Pada masa ini, terdapat 70.6 peratus dalam kategori 1, 17.7 peratus dalam kategori 2, 6 peratus dalam kategori 3, 5.1 peratus dalam kategori 4 dan 0.8 peratus dalam kategori 5. (Data 26 Ogos 2021, No.24)

Rumusan Analisis

Daripada keseluruhan analisis yang dijalankan, empat daripada lima jenis retorik moden Enos dan Brown (1993) telah diterapkan, iaitu retorik pendedahan, penerangan, pemujukan dan penghujahan. Dapatan ini selaras dengan tujuan penyampaian teks rasmi iaitu untuk memberikan maklumat, arahan, nasihat, teguran, peringatan dan sebagainya khususnya dalam menyampaikan hujah-hujah yang berkaitan dengan peraturan yang ditetapkan pihak Kerajaan. Daripada keseluruhan data tersebut, sejumlah 405 petikan (34%) menggunakan retorik pendedahan, diikuti dengan 397 petikan (33%) bagi retorik pemujukan, 351 petikan (30%) bagi retorik penerangan dan hanya 36 petikan (3%) bagi retorik penghujahan. Purata ini menjelaskan bahawa retorik pendedahan merupakan teknik yang dominan digunakan diikuti retorik pemujukan dan penerangan. Perkara ini bersesuaian dengan objektif perutusan rasmi itu sendiri yang berfungsi untuk memberikan maklumat yang baharu di samping butiran yang perlu ditekankan. Selain itu, wacana ini juga tidak perlu memanfaatkan teknik penghujahan secara berlebihan kerana penghasilan dan penyampaian telah memenuhi piawaian rasmi sesebuah risalah kerajaan. Keutamaan teknik pemujukan juga telah membuktikan bahawa dengan pengaplikasian kata-kata mahupun frasa yang berunsurkan pemujukan dapat memberikan pengaruh yang positif kepada masyarakat umum agar bertindak sebagaimana yang dihasratkan.

Sehubungan itu, dapatan ini telah membuktikan bahawa penggunaan bahasa retorik dalam pewahanaan rasmi kerajaan merupakan strategi persuasive yang paling berkesan dalam memupuk jalinan kesefahaman dan kerjasama di antara pihak kerajaan dengan masyarakat umum. Dengan memanfaatkan bahasa secara kreatif setentunya apa yang dihasratkan dan ingin disampaikan itu dapat dipenuhi dan diterima masyarakat dengan mudah. Retorik

juga menjanjikan kesinambungan yang positif bagi setiap perutusan yang mengandungi arahan, teguran, peringatan mahupun nasihat terutamanya dalam situasi genting dan membimbangkan. Hal ini bertepatan dengan ciri-ciri khas retorik yang memberikan keyakinan terhadap sesuatu serta dapat mempengaruhi tindakan yang akan dilakukan oleh pendengar selanjutnya (Roderick, 1997:7). Dari sudut yang lain pula, penggunaan bahasa retorik jelas dapat membentuk keperibadian dan pemikiran masyarakat yang berintegriti. Inisiatif tersebut merangkumi kerjasama bagi mengatasi gejala yang berlaku dan mengurangkan beban kerajaan demi mewujudkan sebuah masyarakat yang harmoni, bersatu-padu dan sentiasa peka dalam menjamin kesejahteraan hidup yang berterusan.

Kesimpulan

Media massa telah banyak memberi impak kepada kehidupan manusia. Hal ini terbukti dengan memandang keutamaan dan peranan yang dimainkan oleh media tersebut dalam memastikan setiap maklumat yang disebarkan dapat memenuhi keperluan masyarakat dan seterusnya menjayakan objektif pihak yang berkepentingan. Dari itu, kewibawaan pihak kerajaan dalam memanfaatkan kemudahan berkenaan setentunya dapat mewujudkan pertalian yang erat antara sistem pentadbiran dan masyarakat umum. Hal ini dikhususnya dalam menghadapi pelbagai konteks mahupun situasi sulit seperti penularan jangkitan *covid-19* yang cukup membimbangkan. Oleh itu, penerapan bahasa retorik dalam warta rasmi kerajaan merupakan langkah terbaik demi menjamin keberkesanan penyampaian maklumat berkenaan usaha yang giat dilaksanakan. Hal ini juga dapat memberikan pengaruh yang positif terhadap pemikiran dan tindakan masyarakat secara menyeluruh agar keharmonian hidup bermasyarakat dan bernegara dapat dibentuk dan dipertahankan melalui kesefahaman dan kerjasama yang padu daripada semua pihak.

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Diskriminasi Kaum Di Negara Brunei Darussalam Dalam Situasi Pandemi Gelombang Kedua COVID-19

[Racial Discrimination in Brunei Darussalam in The Second Wave of COVID-19 Pandemic Situation]

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Abstrak

Isu diskriminasi antara kaum telah tular di media sosial berikutan isu pemberian vaksin secara jumpa terus yang mula dibukakan di Pusat Vaksinasi Stadium Tertutup pada hari Jumaat, 24 September 2021. Jumlah orang ramai yang ingin mengambil vaksin telah melebihi jangkaan sehingga menyebabkan keadaan menjadi tidak terkawal dan berlakunya pelanggaran Prosedur Pengendalian Standard (SOP). Kajian ini dijalankan untuk membincangkan isu diskriminasi kaum yang berlaku semasa gelombang kedua pandemik COVID-19. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif secara deskriptif. Data yang diperolehi daripada komen-komen dalam halaman Brunei Dot Com, dan Facebook ini seterusnya dianalisis menggunakan model tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992). Hasil kajian mendapati kesemua komen telah menunjukkan sikap diskriminasi dalam kalangan masyarakat Brunei secara sedar ataupun tidak. Isu diskriminasi ini bukan sahaja dapat dilihat dari sudut representasi linguistik, tetapi juga penghasilan dan pewahanaan wacana berkaitan pada halaman Brunei Dot Com, dan Facebook. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa wacana bukan saja mampu dibentuk masyarakat tetapi juga membentuknya.

Kata kunci: diskriminasi, bangsa asing, analisis wacana kritis, Fairclough

Abstract

The issue of racial discrimination concerning the commencement of walk-in vaccination at the Indoor Stadium Vaccination Centre on Friday, 24 September 2021 was widely addressed in the social media. Chaos ensued as an influx of people attended the centre and violated the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This paper examines the issue of racial discrimination during the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic in Brunei. As a qualitative-descriptive study, data obtained from Brunei Dot Com, and Facebook page, were analysed using Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional approach. Findings have shown presence of discriminatory attitudes among the local community displayed as deliberately or unintentionally. This is

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manifested in its linguistic representations, discourse production and consumption in the selected Brunei Dot Com and Facebook pages. This study indicates that a discourse is not only capable of shaping but is also shaped by the community.

Keywords: discrimination, foreigner, critical discourse analysis, Fairclough

Pendahuluan

Komunikasi merupakan proses penyampaian atau penerimaan lambang-lambang yang mengandung maklumat, fikiran dan pengetahuan (Sinta Kartikasari, 2020). Perkembangan teknologi memudahkan manusia berkomunikasi tanpa memikirkan jarak, ruang dan waktu, sama ada secara tradisional mahupun moden. Antaranya ialah melalui media massa khususnya media elektronik seperti telefon pintar. Melalui kemudahan ini, komunikasi berkembang menggunakan platform media sosial seperti Facebook, Instagram, Reddit dan Twitter yang mempunyai peranan signifikan dalam menyampaikan gagasan kepada orang ramai (Sobur, 2009).

Selaras dengan keadaan dunia yang kini digemparkan dengan penularan wabak COVID-19 atau severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-Cov-2), maklumat berkenaan COVID-19 yang pertama kali disahkan di Wuhan, China, dan seterusnya merebak ke peringkat global (Khan et. al, 2021: 14) telah menjadi tular di semua laman sosial. Situasi yang sama juga berlaku di Negara Brunei Darussalam (seterusnya NBD) yang tidak terkecuali daripada dilanda pandemik ini. Kini, NBD dilanda gelombang kedua penularan wabak COVID-19 yang disahkan pada 7 Ogos 2021. Dalam usaha Kementerian Kesihatan membendung dan mengawal penularan wabak COVID-19, banyak isu tular telah timbul di media sosial. Antaranya ialah isu pembelian panik (panic buying), isu sekatan pergerakan (lockdown) dan isu diskriminasi kaum semasa proses pengambilan vaksin di Pusat Vaksinasi, Stadium Tertutup.

Sehubungan itu, kajian ini membincangkan isu diskriminasi kaum terhadap warga asing di Pusat Vaksinasi, Stadium Tertutup. Fokus kajian ialah untuk menganalisis wacana berbau diskriminasi menerusi komen-komen pengguna Facebook dalam konteks Brunei, iaitu semasa pandemik gelombang kedua COVID-19. Kajian ini diharap akan dapat membuka minda serta meningkatkan kesedaran masyarakat mengenai isu diskriminasi yang berlaku di media sosial.

Permasalahan Kajian

Isu diskriminasi kaum memang tidak asing lagi dan dialami bukan sahaja di NBD, bahkan di negara-negara lain. Menurut Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat (2008), diskriminasi ialah perlakuan yang membeza-bezakan warna kulit atau keturunan seperti terhadap bangsa yang berkulit hitam. William et. al (2012) berpendapat bahawa isu diskriminasi boleh berlaku dalam pelbagai bentuk tanpa mengira kaum, bangsa dan agama. Terdapat banyak kajian dilakukan yang berkaitan dengan isu tersebut seperti kajian Wicke Ayu Pratiwi (2012) yang membincangkan isu diskriminasi golongan wanita dalam berita harian Surya. Selain itu, isu diskriminasi

kaum bukan sahaja dilihat dari warna kulit atau jantina, malahan meliputi hal-hal sektor pekerjaan, agama dan sebagainya.

Pada 23 September 2021, Kementerian Kesihatan mengumumkan pembukaan Pusat Vaksinasi Stadium Tertutup bermula 24 September 2021, setiap hari Jumaat pada jam 2.30 petang hingga 8 malam. Penambahan waktu vaksinasi ini adalah bagi semua orang awam yang belum menerima dos pertama sama ada menerusi temu janji atau secara jumpa terus (Kementerian Kesihatan, 2021). Hal ini menyebabkan berlakunya kekacauan awam akibat pelanggaran Prosedur Pengendalian Standard (SOP) dengan jumlah orang ramai yang ingin mengambil vaksin melebihi dari jangkauan. Berikutan peristiwa ini, isu layanan petugas barisan hadapan terhadap warga asing yang ingin mengambil vaksin menjadi topik tular di media sosial. Pelbagai persepsi warga tempatan telah ditemukan khususnya di Facebook berkenaan warga asing sehingga wujudnya sikap perkauman dan diskriminasi sama ada secara sengaja atau sebaliknya. Berpandukan model tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992), kajian ini akan membincangkan isu diskriminasi kaum dalam situasi gelombang kedua pandemik COVID-19 berdasarkan berita tular di media sosial Facebook berkenaan pengendalian proses vaksinasi secara jumpa terus.

Kerangka Teori

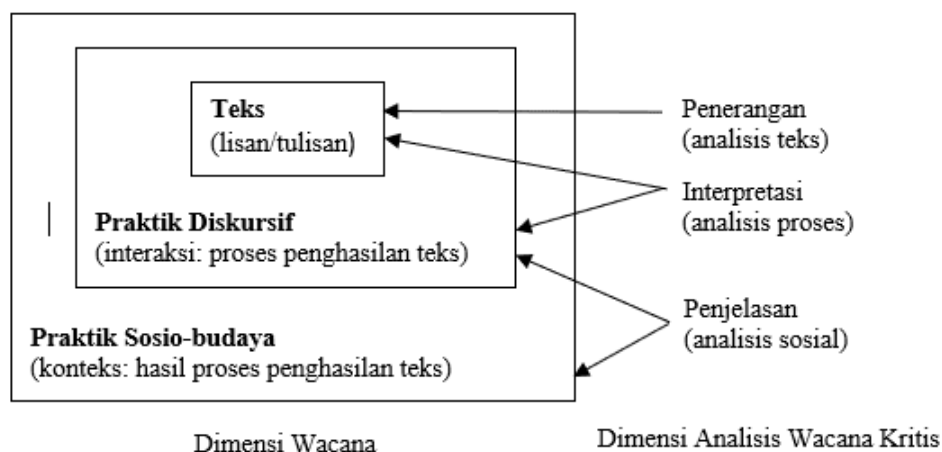
Menurut Wodak (1999:7), istilah ‘wacana’ digunakan dalam konteks dan bidang berbeza seperti bidang sains kemanusiaan dan sains sosial, termasuk cabang yang diterapkan dalam linguistik gunaan. Istilah ini menyebabkan berlakunya kekaburan semantik dan fleksibiliti terminologi berskala besar. Istilah ‘analisis wacana kritis’ (seterusnya AWK) pula meneliti penggunaan bahasa sebagai bentuk praktik sosial yang terikat pada sejarah dan konteks tertentu (Janks, 1997). Wacana kritis bukan hanya sekadar ungkapan praktik sosial tetapi juga merujuk kepada keseluruhan rangkaian mekanisme tertentu (Foucault, 1996:394). Misalnya, AWK menganalisis isu diskriminasi dan kuasa yang dimanifestasikan dalam bahasa atau wacana (Wodak & Meyer, 2009:10).

AWK dibina berdasarkan teori wacana Foucault yang merujuk istilah ‘wacana’ sebagai praktik dan sistem perwakilan yang berhubung kait dengan teori linguistik sistemik fungsional dan semiotik sosial Halliday (Hoepfner, 2006:4). Fairclough (1989: 42) mendefinisikan ‘wacana’ sebagai bentuk praktik sosial yang tertumpu pada hubungan kuasa dan ideologi yang saling mempengaruhi dan berinteraksi antara satu sama lain. Praktik sosial menyiratkan hubungan dialektik antara peristiwa diskursif dengan situasi dan struktur institusi sosial. Hubungan tersebut merupakan praktik diskursif yang membentuk ideologi atau persepsi untuk memperlihatkan hubungan kekuasaan yang tidak setara, sama ada antara kelas sosial, wanita dan lelaki atau etnik dan minoriti (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997:258).

Kajian ini akan menggunakan model tiga dimensi yang juga dikenali sebagai Dialectical-Relational Approach (seterusnya DRA) Fairclough (1992) yang memfokuskan terhadap tiga dimensi analisis iaitu teks, praktik diskursif dan praktik sosiobudaya. Fairclough (1989) menjelaskan bahawa terdapat hubungan dialektik

antara praktik sosial dengan proses pembentukan wacana. Teks sebagai wacana berpotensi untuk mempengaruhi dan dipengaruhi masyarakat. Dalam erti kata lain, wacana membentuk hubungan dan identiti sosial berdasarkan konteks sosial dan ideologi pengguna bahasa. Menerusi DRA, kajian ini akan dapat melihat peranan institusi sosial dalam membentuk wacana, dan pada masa yang sama membuktikan bahawa bahasa juga dibentuk berdasarkan situasi sosial.

Konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1989; 1992; 2003) merangkumi; (1) struktur mikro yang menganalisis dari sudut linguistik seperti leksikon, sintaksis, morfologi dan unsur-unsur figuratif, (2) struktur meso memfokuskan tentang praktik diskursif yang menganalisis proses penghasilan, genre dan interteks, dan (3) struktur makro menjelaskan tentang praktik sosial yang memperlihatkan budaya dan nilai sesuatu masyarakat. Konsep tiga dimensi dapat digambarkan secara ringkas dalam rajah berikut:



Rajah 1: Ilustrasi tiga dimensi wacana [diadaptasi dari Fairclough, N. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change* (Hal. 93, Rajah 5-2). Cambridge: Polity Press].

Menerusi kerangka tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992), analisis teks merujuk kepada pemilihan makna dan kata kiasan seperti kosa kata, sistem tatabahasa dan unsur figuratif. Analisis proses pula merujuk kepada dimensi praktik diskursif bagi menentukan proses penghasilan dan penginterpretasian teks. Teks dihasilkan dalam konteks sosial yang berbeza maka penggunaan dan penghasilan teks boleh berbentuk individu atau kolektif. Menerusi model ini, Fairclough (1992) menggunakan tiga aspek utama yang menghubungkan teks dengan konteks sosial iaitu daya ujaran, koheren dan intertekstualiti dalam teks (Hussein, 2017). Analisis sosial pula merujuk pada dimensi praktik sosiobudaya. Analisis ini akan menunjukkan pelbagai jenis elemen sosial yang berkaitan dengan bidang kehidupan sosial tertentu, dan fungsi praktik sosial.

Selain itu, konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992) juga dapat merungkai makna dan pengetahuan tersembunyi berdasarkan andaian yang didorong secara ideologi yang

berpotensi menjadikan hubungan kuasa yang tidak setara. Oleh itu, kajian ini akan membahaskan isu diskriminasi kaum yang berlaku dalam media sosial semasa pandemik gelombang kedua COVID-19 di NBD, berdasarkan tiga tahap analisis yang dijelaskan. Perincian juga akan dilakukan untuk menjelaskan perbezaan perspektif yang tersembunyi dalam wacana berkenaan.

Sorotan Literatur

Setiap komunikasi mengandungi konteks yang berbeza dan dapat diuraikan menerusi kajian analisis wacana. Menurut Sidra Akbar Niazi dan Daniyal Hassan (2020), analisis wacana tidak terhad kepada satu pendekatan sahaja, malahan satu rangkaian pendekatan interdisiplin yang memperlihatkan norma sosiobudaya sesebuah masyarakat. Empat dekad lalu, analisis wacana telah mengembangkan pendekatan, metodologi, prosedur dan kerangka kerja mengenai data semiotik yang berbeza. Gergen (1985), dalam Sidra Akbar Niazi dan Daniyal Hassan (2020), mengatakan wacana sebagai praktik sosiobudaya yang menyumbang terhadap dunia sosial, serta elemen yang berkaitan dengan hubungan-hubungan sosial, identiti, pengetahuan dan pengekal corak sosial.

Terdapat pelbagai pendekatan yang digunakan dalam kajian lepas berkaitan isu diskriminasi kaum. Kajian tidak hanya tertumpu terhadap bangsa atau kaum, malahan dilihat dari aspek agama, pekerjaan dan budaya. Misalnya, kajian Muhammad Farhan Hazaha et al. (2020) membincangkan tentang diskriminasi agama dalam kalangan pekerja beragama Islam. Kajian dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti tahap diskriminasi terhadap agama Islam antara jantina dan tahap diskriminasi terhadap agama Islam dengan pekerja yang berlainan agama.

Dalam kajian Aida Amalia (2021), isu diskriminasi dan kekerasan terhadap perempuan dalam novel Brian Khrisna *This Is Why I Need You* dibincangkan secara deskriptif kualitatif menggunakan model Sara Mills dari perspektif AWK. Sebagai genre yang mengangkat nilai feminisme liberal, novel ini memaparkan filosofi aliran bahawa setiap manusia mempunyai hak asasi untuk hidup, hak kebebasan serta hak untuk mendapatkan kebahagiaan. Hasil penelitian mendapati bahawa isu diskriminasi dan kekerasan terhadap perempuan ditampilkan dengan sangat jelas dalam setiap cerita terutama sekali menerusi paparan ketidakadilan dan kekerasan yang dihadapi oleh orang-orang yang dilabel buruk oleh masyarakat terutama sekali golongan wanita.

Kajian Kukuh Ashar Utama (2014) pula berkaitan tentang stereotaip terhadap etnik Tionghoa. Kajian kualitatif deskriptif dan berdasarkan pendekatan AWK ini dilakukan bagi mengenal pasti beberapa bentuk stereotaip bersifat diskriminasi yang terdapat dalam dokumentasi Ernest Prakasa *Merem Melek Tour Final* di Jakarta, Indonesia. Dapatan kajian menemukan bentuk stereotaip dari sudut fizikal, sistem sosial yang menggambarkan perbezaan etnik Tionghoa sebagai golongan non-pribumi, serta aspek budaya dan perbezaan bahasa kaum Tionghoa yang dianggap sebagai budaya asli China.

Kajian Indrawati (2021) juga telah membahaskan isu perkauman dan perpaduan yang direpresentasikan dalam wacana pengguna Twitter Adidas. Menerusi ciapan di Twitter, kajian ini meneliti cara Adidas, sebagai produk jenama terkemuka, menyampaikan mesej mengenai perkauman dan perpaduan di media sosial. Bagi mengenal pasti maksud, tema dan representasi wacana ciapan yang digunakan oleh @adidas untuk bersuara menentang perkauman dan menyebarkan perpaduan, kajian kualitatif deskriptif telah digunakan. Dua belas ciapan telah dikumpul, dikodkan, dianalisis dan diuraikan menggunakan pendekatan AWK. Secara keseluruhan, kajian ini menemukan pernyataan deklaratif dan kemanusiaan sebagai tema yang paling banyak digunakan. Walaupun perkongsian ciapan tersebut adalah untuk menyampaikan mesej positif kepada pengguna dan pengikut Twitter, @adidas tampak lebih tegas bersuara menentang perkauman. @adidas juga menunjukkan komitmen dalam menyokong komuniti berkulit hitam, termasuk pekerja mereka sendiri dan komuniti Asia dengan menyebarkan perpaduan, keadilan dan kebebasan orang berkulit hitam di seluruh dunia.

Selain itu, kajian Fauziah dan Aviany (2021) telah membincangkan isu xenofobia semasa pandemik COVID-19. Kajian ini dilakukan untuk meneliti penggunaan klausa nama 'virus Cina' yang meningkatkan stigma sosial terhadap komuniti Cina. Sebanyak tiga 'meme' dari beberapa laman sesawang telah diperoleh sebagai data kajian, yang kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif berdasarkan kerangka tiga dimensi Fairclough. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan sikap xenofobia terhadap komuniti Cina tidak dapat dielakkan kerana dianggap sebagai lokasi asal penularan wabak COVID-19. Penggunaan 'virus Cina' dianggap relevan atas dasar keperluan untuk bertanggungjawab akibat kesan pandemik global oleh negara tersebut. Selain itu, China diserang dengan pembawaan stigma oleh warganet (netizen), yang meragui kualiti produk pengeluaran makanan dan jenama negara tersebut. Sikap xenofobia ini juga menyumbang kepada konflik antara Amerika dan Cina memandangkan istilah 'virus Cina' pertama kali digunakan oleh Presiden Trump.

Seterusnya, kajian Badriyah Yusof dan Hafiz Kasmin (2021) merupakan kajian tempatan yang membincangkan isu pandemik COVID-19 di media sosial. Kajian ini menggunakan model sosiokognitif van Dijk (2009). Objektif kajian adalah untuk merungkai elemen sosiokognitif di sebalik penggunaan tagar #janbaba, #janganbaba dan #covaval di Twitter, sebagai reaksi pengguna 'Twitter' kepada masyarakat tempatan yang tidak mematuhi Kawalan Pergerakan Sosial (KPS). Sebanyak 92 ciapan dianalisis dan sembilan situasi konteks dikenal pasti menerusi pengkategorian tematik; peringatan, marah, saranan atau nasihat, sindiran, keluhan, harapan, sokongan dan selainnya. Dapatan menunjukkan pelbagai bentuk reaksi masyarakat terutamanya dalam menyebarkan perpaduan, menzahirkan sokongan terhadap inisiatif kerajaan, selain menunjukkan kepekaan terhadap kepentingan mematuhi KPS. Representasi linguistik pada tahapan makro dan mikro wacana memperlihatkan gabungan penanda retorik, kesantunan, multimodaliti dalam bentuk leksikon dan simbol, serta campur kod dalam situasi konteks yang ditemukan. Elemen sosiokognitif pula dapat dilihat menerusi fungsi direktif, asertif dan ekspresif. Secara tidak langsung, hubungan simbiotik sosiokognitif manusia dengan elemen

kebahasaan menggambarkan sebuah masyarakat yang membentuk bukan sahaja komuniti maya, malah wacana yang telah dihasilkan.

Kajian-kajian lepas menerapkan beberapa model AWK seperti yang dikemukakan oleh Sara Mills (1997), Fairclough (1992) dan van Dijk (2009) bagi membincangkan isu diskriminasi kaum. Data yang digunakan juga berbeza seperti kajian Aida Amalia (2021) yang memfokuskan isu diskriminasi dan kekerasan perspektif feminisme dalam novel, dan kajian Indrawati (2021) yang meneliti isu perkauman orang berkulit hitam di Twitter. Kajian Fauziah dan Aviany (2021) pula membincangkan tentang isu diskriminasi semasa pandemik COVID-19 dengan menggunakan kerangka tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992). Walau bagaimanapun, isu diskriminasi kaum dalam skop yang besar dan hanya membincangkan isu yang berlaku di luar negara.

Kajian Badriyah Yusof dan Hafiz Kasmin (2021) pula merupakan kajian tempatan yang membincangkan isu COVID-19 di media sosial. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian tersebut dilakukan semasa pandemik gelombang pertama dan tidak berkaitan dengan isu diskriminasi kaum di negara ini. Oleh itu, kajian ini akan memfokuskan terhadap isu diskriminasi kaum yang berlaku di NBD, khususnya semasa situasi pandemik gelombang kedua COVID-19. Data yang digunakan ialah menerusi Facebook dengan mengaplikasikan konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992).

Metodologi

Menerusi lensa AWK, kajian ini memanfaatkan konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992). Lazimnya, AWK digunakan untuk meneliti hubungan kuasa yang terjalat dalam proses penghasilan teks (Baker et. al, 2013). Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kualitatif deskriptif bagi memfokuskan prinsip-prinsip umum yang didasari kewujudan makna dari gejala-gejala sosial dalam suatu masyarakat (Burhan Bungin, 2007). Kaedah ini merupakan teknik analisis yang sistematik dan mengandungi kategori-kategori berkaitan variabel tertentu sehingga dapat menghasilkan satu kesimpulan umum (Agung, 2005, dalam Ivena et al., 2015). Data digarap dari siaran (post) yang dimuat naik pentadbir akaun di halaman Brunei Dot Com (BDC), menerusi aplikasi Facebook pada 24 September 2021 (Lampiran A). Tiga komen dikutip sebagai data kajian berkaitan isu diskriminasi kaum yang terjadi di Pusat Vaksinasi, Stadium Tertutup. Berikut merupakan siaran dan komen pengguna Facebook yang dipilih sebagai data kajian:

“hmm memandangkan masa hari itu urg luar ramai d stadium walk in. apa patut kitani buat? Ah cemani saja kitani berunding sama emabassy2 yg tertentu lepas ani Kalau dapat program vaccine warga asing ani di embassy dorang kah atau tempat lain secara bergilir gilir mengikut negara masing masing, supaya nampak teratur dan terkawal”.

(Siaran yang diambil dari halaman Brunei Dot Com, 24 September 2021)

Bil	Komen-komen pengguna Facebook
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Data 1	Cubatah jumaat pertama untuk lokal, pastu jumaat kedua untuk warga india, jumaat ketiga warga bangla, jumaat keempat pilipin dan sampai seterusnya kan sanang..ani kan betamu saja inda parut org dibelakang sama org dapan 😊😊..warga india sama bangla lg suka bebaris sampai behimpit himpit
Data 2	(a) lihat saja kes hari ani naik mendadak sebab orang asing banyak kan beinjik tapi tidak ikut SOP beimpit2 payahkan dilarang oleh anggota bertugas ,kalau boleh pehak berkenaan buka tah 4 Daerah untok vaksin ani jadi inda berebut2 beimpit2 bagi takut watir bah kan datang , (b) ngam..kmarin tu urg local ganya yg nada kna marahi, tpi yg mbuat petugas terais2 giritan ialah bangla, urg local merati lgi tpi bangla mcm inda ingau bh mkin petugas terais2 mkin plg drg penyulurkn
Data 3	Pling mudah mna2 rakyat luar negara yg bekerja dan tinggal di negara brunei, di sarankn ambil vaksin di kedutaan masing2 untok melancarkn pemberian vaksin..untok rakyat NBD 🇲🇵 tempat pengambilan sama saperti biasa yg di berikan sabelom ini..cadangan sja

Jadual 1: Komen-komen bagi menjawab isu yang disuarakan dalam siaran halaman Brunei Dot Com.

Seterusnya, data dianalisis menggunakan konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992) dan dilakukan secara berperingkat; bermula dari analisis praktik sosiobudaya (makrostruktural), analisis praktik diskursif (mesostruktural) dan analisis teks (mikrostruktural). Ketiga-tiga dimensi tersebut kemudian diaplikasikan berdasarkan perbincangan analisis yang berbeza iaitu pertama, penjelasan mengenai praktik sosiobudaya yang berkaitan situasi, institusi dan sosial. Kedua, menganalisis interpretasi teks termasuk penghasilan dan penyebaran teks, dan ketiga secara deskriptif, yang bertujuan untuk menganalisis teks dari sudut linguistik. Kedua, menganalisis interpretasi teks termasuk penghasilan dan penyebaran teks (Fairclough, 1992, dalam Rengganis et. al, 2019).

Analisis

Berdasarkan pendekatan DRA, analisis kajian dapat dibahagikan mengikut konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992); teks, praktik diskursif dan praktik sosiobudaya. Satu siaran (post) dipilih secara rawak, yang mengulas semula tentang isu kesesakan akibat pembukaan pengambilan vaksin secara jumpa terus yang berlaku di Pusat Vaksinasi, Stadium Tertutup. Menerusi siaran ini, tiga komen akan dianalisis untuk memerihalkan respon atau perspektif masyarakat tempatan tentang isu diskriminasi kaum terhadap warga asing yang menetap di NBD. Berikut merupakan siaran (post) yang diambil dari halaman Brunei Dot Com:

“hmm memandangkan masa hari atu urg luar ramai d stadium walk in. apa patut kitani buat? Ah cemani saja kitani berunding sama emabassy2 yg tertentu lapas ani Kalau

dapat program vaccine warga asing ani di embassy dorang kah atau tempat lain secara bergilir gilir mengikut negara masing masing, supaya nampak teratur dan terkawal”.

(Siaran yang diambil dari halaman Brunei Dot Com, 24 September 2021)

Analisis Tahapan Makro

Dimensi ini menganalisis amalan sosiobudaya bagi mengungkap persepsi dan kesan wacana yang dihasilkan. Ketiga-tiga komen terhadap siaran yang dimaksudkan telah memperlihatkan persepsi warganegara Brunei terhadap bangsa asing yang menetap di negara ini. Beberapa konteks dikaitkan bagi mencerminkan norma sosiobudaya masyarakat Brunei dan warganegara asing yang berpunca daripada sikap diskriminasi kaum, sama ada secara sedar atau sebaliknya. Antara konteksnya adalah seperti cadangan pembahagian sesi pengambilan vaksin mengikut minggu, peningkatan kes mendadak akibat tidak mematuhi SOP, dan cadangan pelancaran pemberian vaksin bagi bangsa asing di kedutaan masing-masing. Siaran ini juga menunjukkan bahawa warganegara Brunei masih mempunyai sikap toleransi dan mengekalkan budaya sopan-santun dalam berbahasa. Menurut Azme Matali (2015), masyarakat Brunei sudah lama menanamkan sifat dan naluri berunsurkan Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB) sebagai sumber kehidupan seharian. Hal ini termasuk sifat tolong-menolong, hormat-menghormati, berawar galat dan bersopan santun (Muslihuddin Syah, 2014).

Berdasarkan konteks, warganegara Brunei dilihat sebagai masyarakat yang kaya dengan budi dan ciri kesantunan dalam berbahasa. Contohnya, data (1) dan (3) mengandungi persepsi berbentuk cadangan mengawal proses pengambilan vaksin bagi warganegara Brunei dan warga asing. Walau bagaimanapun, ditemukan juga konotasi negatif mengenai bangsa asing. Dalam hal ini, penggunaan DMB sebagai Bahasa Melayu digambarkan sebagai bahasa halus dan tidak langsung (Goddard, 1997). Menurut Radzlan et. al, (2020), masyarakat Melayu sangat menjaga air muka dan amat mementingkan pendapat mereka berbanding orang lain. Hal ini menunjukkan walaupun warganegara Brunei mengekalkan sifat kesantunan dalam berbahasa, wacana yang dibentuk secara tidak langsung masih menunjukkan sikap diskriminasi kaum terhadap bangsa asing.

Bangsa asing seperti India dan Bangladesh sering distereotaip sebagai ‘agresif’ dan ‘tidak boleh dipercayai’ (Belle, 2014, dalam Arokiam, 2018). Tingkah laku ‘agresif’ menunjukkan budaya bangsa asing yang suka bersesak-sesak. Kata ‘tidak boleh dipercayai’ boleh dikaitkan dengan sikap mereka yang tidak ambil peduli dan tidak mahu mematuhi SOP. Walau bagaimanapun, hal ini boleh berlaku kerana mereka mengalami kesukaran untuk memahami bahasa Melayu atau bahasa Inggeris. Ini menunjukkan sikap diskriminasi kaum warganegara Brunei berlaku akibat stereotaip yang melabel bangsa asing dari segi budaya dan tingkah laku yang berbeza daripada mereka.

Analisis Tahapan Meso

Dimensi ini menumpukan kepada ‘bagaimana’ wacana dihasilkan dan dimanfaatkan. Dalam hal ini, penghasilan wacana dalam halaman BDC melalui aplikasi Facebook. Facebook menyediakan kemudahan pengguna untuk berkongsi siaran secara awam (public). Media sosial Facebook menjadi sarana untuk berkomunikasi dengan orang ramai dan sebagai medium pemindahan maklumat serta berkongsi pendapat (Ziani, dalam Ziveria, 2017). Platform ini menyediakan sebuah halaman (page) yang boleh dicipta sendiri di samping membolehkan artis, tokoh terkenal, ahli perniagaan atau organisasi berhubung dengan peminat atau pengikut mereka (Facebook, n.d.). Setakat Januari 2020, NBD merupakan negara keempat tertinggi yang menggunakan platform media sosial, merangkumi sebanyak 310,000 pengguna Facebook (Media Permata, 2020). Dengan jumlah pengguna Facebook berskala tinggi, penghasilan wacana boleh diterokai dalam pelbagai bentuk. Antaranya menerusi keterbukaan platform halaman bernama Brunei Dot Com (BDC).

BDC dicipta pada tahun 2013 dan kini meraih sebanyak 197,172 jumlah suka dan 223,000 jumlah pengikut. BDC menjadi sebuah laman web media dan berita harian mengenai isu-isu yang berlaku di negara ini. Penghasilan wacana dalam halaman BDC lazimnya bertujuan untuk berkongsi isu atau berita penting. Dalam konteks kajian ini, siaran dan komen yang dihasilkan menerusi BDC membahaskan isu kesesakan yang terjadi pada pembukaan sesi pengambilan vaksin secara jumpa terus. Isu ini seterusnya menimbulkan konflik antara warganegara Brunei dan bangsa asing. Wacana yang ditemukan membuktikan bahawa sebahagian besar komen-komen tersebut berasal dari persepsi masyarakat tempatan. Persepsi ini seterusnya menyumbang kepada sikap diskriminasi warga asing. Dalam data (1) misalnya, kata ‘lokal’ muncul seiring dengan kata ‘warga’ yang melibatkan warga asing seperti India, Bangladesh dan Filipina. Penghasilan kata ‘warga’ dalam komen tersebut tidak dianggap sebagai perkara biasa, tetapi mempunyai maksud yang tersendiri. Kata ‘warga’ membawa maksud orang yang bukan rakyat sesuatu negara (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2008). Hal ini menunjukkan konotasi negatif warganegara Brunei kepada warga asing yang membezakan kelas sosial mereka sebagai rakyat dan penduduk NBD. Bagi menjawab hal ini, memahami proses penghasilan wacana adalah penting untuk digunakan dalam dimensi praktik diskursif (Fairclough, 2001).

Data (1) dihasilkan secara sengaja dalam bentuk sindiran dan humor. Kata ‘lokal’ menjadi objek utama dalam wacana tersebut, sedangkan kata ‘warga’ menjadi sasaran terhadap isu yang berlaku;

(1a) “Cubatah jumaat pertama untuk lokal, pastu jumaat kedua untuk warga india,jumaat ketiga warga bangla,jumaat keempat pilipin dan sampai seterusnya kan sanang...”

Kata ‘lokal’ dalam data (1a) merujuk kepada orang tempatan; rakyat atau warganegara Brunei, dan jika merujuk kepada ayat ‘cubatah jumaat pertama untuk lokal, jumaat kedua ... , jumaat ketiga ... , jumaat keempat ... ’, cadangan diberikan supaya rakyat Brunei diutamakan terlebih dahulu untuk mengambil vaksin, kemudian pada minggu-minggu berikutnya diutamakan kepada bangsa asing. Menurut United Nations Human Rights (2020), isu kritikal hari ini melibatkan protokol pengedaran vaksin berdasarkan

keutamaan kumpulan tertentu. Cadangan ini menunjukkan sikap diskriminasi kaum kerana mengandungi keputusan untuk mempertimbangkan keutamaan pengambilan vaksin terhadap warganegara Brunei, sedangkan Kementerian Kesihatan tidak mengkhususkan pengambilan vaksin mengikut kaum, malah mengutamakan dasar 'first come first serve'. Keutamaan pengambilan vaksin perlu dilakukan berdasarkan kriteria yang telus, selaras piawaian serta norma hak asasi manusia bagi memastikan kesaksamaan, dan mengelakkan strata yang boleh menyumbang kepada sikap diskriminasi kaum.

Selain itu, terdapat juga ayat yang mengandungi unsur sindiran secara ironi disusuli dengan emotikon ketawa untuk memunculkan unsur humor (1b);

(1b) "... ani kan betamu saja inda parut org dibelakang sama org dapan😂😂..warga india sama bangla lg suka bebaris sampai behimpit himpit".

Data (1b) berbentuk sindiran yang mengatakan sesuatu dengan maksud berlainan dari apa yang terkandung dalam rangkaian kata (Keraf, 2008). Walau bagaimanapun, ayat ini digunakan mengikut kesesuaian konteks yang dibicarakan. Selaras pendapat Foucault (dalam Fendler, 2004), nilai penaakulan manusia tidak berkurang dengan kemasukan ironi, sebaliknya nilai ini diperkukuh, membina taakulan dengan cara yang lebih mantap termasuk dengan cara berjenaka. Dalam hal ini, sindiran tersebut ditujukan kepada bangsa asing berikutan ayat warga india sama bangla lagi suka bebaris sampai behimpit-himpit. Ini menunjukkan persepsi negatif terhadap kelakuan warga asing yang suka bersesak-sesak ketika beratur menunggu giliran pemberian vaksin.

Seterusnya, data (2) mengandungi sikap perkauman terhadap bangsa asing meskipun golongan ini tidak disebut secara khusus. Bangsa asing dikatakan sukar mengikuti arahan petugas barisan hadapan sehingga dilabel tidak mengikuti SOP. Hal ini meninggalkan impak psikologi apabila sikap ekspresif berbentuk keluhan dapat dilihat menerusi wacana yang dihasilkan, iaitu tentang kemungkinan peningkatan kes positif COVID-19, yang seterusnya menimbulkan rasa takut dalam kalangan masyarakat untuk mengambil vaksin (2a)-(2b);

(2a) "... sebab orang asing banyak kan beinjik tapi tidak ikut SOP beimpit2 ..."

(2b) "... urg local merati lgi tpi bangla mcm inda ingau ... "

Frasa (2b) menunjukkan maklum balas kepada frasa (2a), sebagai ulasan semula isu yang diperkatakan, iaitu mengenai kesukaran petugas barisan hadapan untuk mengawal situasi yang berlaku. Sikap diskriminasi dizahirkan dengan membandingkan warganegara Brunei dengan bangsa Bangladesh. Martinot et. al (2002) membuktikan bahawa perbandingan antara kaum boleh menjatuhkan harga diri kaum yang telah dinilai. Sikap perbandingan ini menyumbang kepada sikap diskriminasi kaum kerana mengusik sensitiviti kaum tersebut (Dumont et. al, 2006). Sebagai contoh, warganegara Brunei menghasilkan penggunaan kata 'merati' dan 'inda ingau' dan menganggap mereka lebih mendengar arahan petugas barisan hadapan, berbanding warga Bangladesh yang menunjukkan sikap tidak ambil peduli.

Selanjutnya, penghasilan ayat dalam data (3) menunjukkan representasi mental penutur mengenai bangsa asing. Hubbard (2007) menyatakan bahawa bahasa dapat merepresentasikan pemikiran di luar kesedaran. Bahasa tidak sepenuhnya menentukan pemikiran, tetapi penggunaan bahasa boleh mempengaruhi tabiat pemikiran dan tindakan (Asoulin, 2016). Hal ini dapat dilihat dari tahap kefahaman individu yang menganggap warga asing sebagai rakyat yang juga bekerja dan menetap di negara ini. Tambahan lagi, sikap neutral dan tidak bias juga dikekalkan dalam memberikan pendapat mengenai isu yang dibincangkan. Cadangan juga diutarakan kepada pihak kerajaan supaya mengkhususkan tempat pengambilan vaksin bagi bangsa asing di kedutaan masing-masing.

Meskipun demikian, terdapat juga penggunaan kata, yang menunjukkan persepsi tentang pengendalian yang tidak lancar akibat isu bersesak-sesak dalam kalangan bangsa asing seperti berikut:

(3) “Pling mudah mna2 rakyat luar negara yg bekerja dan tinggal di negara brunei, di sarangk nambil vaksin di kedutaan masing2 untok melancarkn pemberian vaksin, untok rakyat NBD 🇲🇵 tempat pengambilan sama saperti biasa yg di berikan sabelom ini..cadangan sja”

Hal ini menunjukkan sikap perkauman kerana individu tersebut secara tidak langsung ingin mengekalkan kedudukan, kuasa dan hak istimewanya sebagai warganegara Brunei. Selaras kenyataan Cole (2017), pelaku dianggap melakukan diskriminasi dan prasangka sebagai alat untuk menegakkan stratifikasi etnik atau kaum, semata-mata untuk menguntungkan kaum mereka dan merugikan kaum lain. Sikap diskriminasi kaum menunjukkan kepercayaan tingkah laku dan moral yang mencerminkan suatu bangsa, sehingga menganggap bahawa bangsa tersebut lebih unggul daripada bangsa lain.

Dalam hal ini, sikap diskriminasi kaum ditunjukkan secara tidak sedar. Dalam ertikata lain, data (3) cuba mengekalkan sikap neutral tetapi pada masa yang sama juga menunjukkan sikap bias secara implisit. Penutur meskipun tidak memberikan persepsi negatif terhadap bangsa asing secara langsung namun mencetuskan kepercayaan untuk mengutamakan bangsanya. Di sini menunjukkan pengalihan perhatian semasa menghasilkan wacana dapat mewujudkan tindak balas afektif, tetapi berpotensi untuk mengelakkan prasangka dan emosi negatif (Gotlib & Joorman, 2010). Perubahan representasi mental memudahkan penilaian semula makna wacana serta menyumbang kepada keupayaan masyarakat untuk mengatur emosi dan sikap (Gross, 2002). Oleh yang demikian, penelitian secara tuntas perlu dilakukan untuk memahami mekanisme bahawa ketaksamaan antara kaum boleh dihasilkan semula tanpa disedari termasuk menerusi penghasilan wacana (Pyke, 2010).

Analisis Tahapan Mikro

Dimensi ini menganalisis teks dari aspek linguistik seperti penggunaan kata dan simbol. Merujuk data (1), pernyataan yang cuba disampaikan ialah tentang cadangan individu mengenai strategi dalam mengawal isu kesesakan di Pusat Vaksinasi,

Stadium Tertutup. Dalam ayat (1a) misalnya, ditemukan beberapa kata dan frasa yang menandakan sikap diskriminasi kaum mengikut konteks;

(1a) “Cubatah jumaat pertama untuk lokal, pastu jumaat kedua untuk warga india, jumaat ketiga warga bangla, jumaat keempat pilipin dan sampai seterusnya kan senang...”

Dalam (1a), kata bilangan pertama, kedua, ketiga dan keempat, diikuti kata nama lokal, india, bangla dan pilipin sebagai kumpulan warganegara yang menetap di NBD. Kata-kata tersebut membentuk satu ujaran yang menggambarkan keutamaan terhadap warganegara Brunei berbanding warga asing dalam mengambil vaksin. Contohnya, minggu pertama Pusat Vaksinasi dibukakan kepada warganegara Brunei, minggu kedua dan berikutnya bagi bangsa India, Bangladesh, Filipina dan seterusnya.

Kata diikuti penggunaan simbol juga ditemukan dalam data yang memperlekehkan bangsa India dan Bangladesh (1b);

(1b) “... ani kan betamu saja inda parut org dibelakang sama org dapan 🤔🤔..warga india sama bangla lg suka bebaris sampai behimpit himpit”.

Merujuk data (1b), kata suka dan behimpit-himpit cuba menyifatkan bangsa India dan Bangladesh yang suka bersesak-sesak. Kata ‘suka’ menurut Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat (2008) merupakan penanda kata kerja yang bermaksud gemar, sudi dan rela. Ini menunjukkan individu tersebut cuba menstereotaipkan bangsa India dan Bangladesh yang dikatakan gemar untuk berbaris dalam keadaan sempit dan sesak. Kemudian, penggunaan simbol emotikon ‘🤔🤔’ menunjukkan sikap mempersendakan sikap bangsa asing sehingga menyebabkan keadaan berada di luar kawalan. Emotikon ditakrifkan sebagai grafik gambaran ekspresi wajah yang digunakan dalam komunikasi bukan lisan yang bersifat elektronik (Walther dan D’Addario, 2001). Data (1) membuktikan sikap diskriminasi perkauman terhadap warga asing berdasarkan penggunaan kata dan emotikon.

Data (2) pula memperlihatkan dua komen sebagai interaksi antara dua individu. Data (2a) mengandungi ujaran tentang kemungkinan peningkatan kes jangkitan positif COVID-19, berikutan isu yang berlaku di Pusat Vaksinasi, Stadium Tertutup.

(2a) “lihat saja kes hari ani naik mendadak sebab orang asing banyak kan beinjik tapi tidak ikut SOP beimpit2 payahkan dilarang oleh anggota bertugas .. ”

Kata kerja naik dan mendadak ditulis secara berurutan untuk menekankan isu kes jangkitan wabak COVID-19 yang dijangka meningkat secara drastik. Kata ‘naik’ bermaksud meningkat atau bertambah, manakala kata ‘mendadak’ bermaksud serta-merta atau tidak disangka-sangka (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2008). Hal ini dikaitkan dengan bangsa asing kerana terdapat penggunaan kata hubung sebab dalam frasa ... sebab orang asing... ’yang menjadi punca kemungkinan peningkatan kes jangkitan. Unsur stereotaip juga dikenal pasti dalam data (2a) dalam frasa ... payahkan dilarang. Menurut konteks, kata ‘payahkan’ membawa maksud degil atau sukar

menerima arahan. Pernyataan ini berbentuk sindiran terhadap warga asing yang sukar dikawal akibat sikap keras kepala dan sukar mematuhi arahan.

Warganegara Brunei dikatakan mematuhi arahan berbanding bangsa Bangladesh yang mengalami kesukaran mengikuti arahan, sehingga petugas barisan hadapan terpaksa menengking golongan tersebut (2b);

(2b) “... urg local ganya yg nada kna marahi, tpi yg mbuat petugas terais2 giritan ialah bangla, urg local merati lgi tpi bangla mcm inda ingau bh mkin petugas terais2 mkin plg drg penyulurkn”.

Kata *local* dan *nada* telah memperlihatkan perbandingan antara warganegara Brunei dan bangsa Bangladesh. Bagi merepresentasi sikap lokal dalam teks, frasa ... *nada kna marahi* ... dan kata *merati* telah digunakan. Kata ‘*nada*’ merupakan bentuk nafi ‘tidak’ kerana ‘*nada*’ menjadi unsur nafi bagi frasa kerja ‘*kna marahi*’ (Nik Safiah et. al, 2010). Tambahan lagi, kata ‘*merati*’ dalam data (2a) memperkuatkan lagi penafian tersebut yang bermaksud mendengar cakap dalam BMS. Berbanding bangsa Bangladesh, sikap warganegara Brunei dipuji kerana mematuhi arahan yang diberikan semasa proses pengambilan vaksin.

Dalam data (3), perkara yang cuba disampaikan ialah cadangan kepada Kementerian Kesihatan supaya membahagikan tempat pengambilan vaksin bagi warganegara Brunei dan bangsa asing;

(3) “rakyat luar negara yg bekerja dan tinggal di negara brunei, di sarankn ambil vaksin di kedutaan masing2 untuk melancarkn pemberian vaksin ... ”

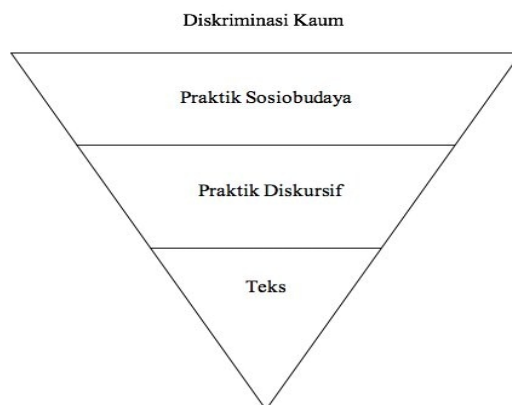
Dalam cadangan tersebut, individu dalam data (3) tidak mengutamakan mana-mana pihak, sebaliknya mencadangkan supaya pengambilan vaksin bagi bangsa asing ditempatkan di kedutaan masing-masing, manakala di Pusat Vaksinasi Stadium Tertutup dikekalkan bagi warganegara Brunei. Cadangan ini adalah untuk mengelakkan daripada berlakunya kesesakan semasa proses pengambilan vaksin. Walau bagaimanapun, kata luar negara dan di kedutaan masing2 berbau sikap perkauman kerana memperlihatkan maksud untuk tidak menyatukan bangsa asing dengan warganegara Brunei.

Seterusnya, kata melancarkan mengandungi unsur pragmatik. Unsur-unsur pragmatik dapat dilihat menerusi tindak tutur lokusi, ilokusi dan perlokusi Austin dalam (Schriffin, 2007). Dalam analisis tahapan mikro, tindak tutur lokusi dan ilokusi dapat dilihat menerusi frasa untuk melancarkn pemberian vaksin.... Menurut Chaer dan Agustina (2014) tindak tutur lokusi ialah sesuatu ujaran dalam ayat yang mudah difahami. Kata ‘melancarkan’ berbentuk pernyataan bahawa proses pengambilan vaksin akan berjalan dengan cekap. Manakala unsur tindak tutur ilokusi juga dikenal pasti. Tindak tutur ilokusi merupakan suatu tindakan dalam ujaran yang memiliki maksud tertentu (Searle, 1974). Dalam hal ini, ujaran tersebut cukup jelas maksudnya iaitu isu situasi pusat vaksinasi di Stadium Tertutup tidak akan timbul jika pengasingan warga asing dengan warganegara Brunei dijalankan, sebagai langkah untuk melancarkan proses pengambilan vaksin.

Perbincangan

Berdasarkan analisis kajian, kesemua komen menunjukkan persepsi masyarakat Brunei terhadap bangsa asing. Sikap diskriminasi kaum ditampilkan sama ada dalam bentuk sindiran, humor atau stereotaip. Selain itu, warganegara Brunei secara tidak langsung menggambarkan sikap xenofobia kepada bangsa asing. Berdasarkan penelitian, data (1) dan (3) menunjukkan sikap perkauman, manakala data (2) menjana sikap xenofobia. Sikap perkauman merupakan pembentukan ideologi yang menganggap mereka berkuasa berdasarkan sifat fizikal dan budaya seperti warna kulit dan bahasa, manakala sikap xenofobia menggambarkan sikap, prasangka dan tingkah laku yang menolak, mengecualikan dan menganiaya orang asing (Hennebry & KC, 2020).

Walau bagaimanapun, sikap xenofobia hanya ditunjukkan atas faktor tidak berpuas hati dengan kelakuan bangsa asing, berikutan isu bersesak-sesak yang berlaku di Pusat Vaksinasi Stadium Tertutup. Tambahan lagi, sikap ini boleh berlaku di luar kesedaran individu. Sebagai contoh, penutur mengemukakan cadangan namun berdasarkan penggunaan ayat dan kata, penutur secara tidak langsung menunjukkan sikap xenofobia yang secara tidak langsung menyumbang kepada sikap diskriminasi kaum. Berdasarkan penggunaan konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough, hal ini dapat diperincikan seperti berikut:



Rajah 2: Triangulasi berdasarkan konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough (1992)

Rajah 2 memaparkan ilustrasi konsep tiga dimensi Fairclough dalam bentuk triangular. Dalam hal ini, wacana merujuk kepada komen yang diambil dari halaman Brunei Dot Com, berkaitan sikap diskriminasi kaum warganegara Brunei terhadap bangsa asing.

Sikap ini dilihat menerusi tiga tahapan dimensi Fairclough (1992). Pada tahapan makro, sikap diskriminasi kaum dilihat berdasarkan praktik sosiobudaya antara warganegara Brunei dan bangsa asing. Warganegara Brunei dikatakan bersopan santun dalam berbahasa dan pada masa yang sama, mementingkan pendapat mereka sendiri berbanding orang lain. Hal ini menyebabkan kedangkalan persepsi warganegara Brunei sehingga menyebabkan berlakunya sikap diskriminasi kaum.

Tahapan makro menganalisis amalan sosiobudaya bagi mengungkap persepsi dan kesan wacana yang dihasilkan. Wacana dalam ketiga-tiga komen mencerminkan sosiobudaya masyarakat Brunei. Keharmonian dan kesepaduan hidup bermasyarakat membawa peranan penting antara kaum. Jika tidak wujud perpaduan masyarakat mala tidak wujud juga sikap penerimaan dan toleransi dalam kelompok sosial. Oleh yang

demikian, hal ini menimbulkan perselisihan antara masyarakat Brunei dan bangsa asing. Perselisihan berpunca daripada halangan komunikasi (language barrier) dan sikap masyarakat itu sendiri.

Halangan komunikasi telah mengehadkan keupayaan individu untuk menyesuaikan diri dengan persekitaran sehingga menimbulkan faktor perselisihan antara kaum. Sebagai contoh, bangsa asing menghadapi kesukaran untuk memahami arahan yang disampaikan dalam bahasa Melayu dan bahasa Inggeris. Pada masa yang sama, masyarakat Brunei tidak bersikap terbuka dalam menghadapi situasi tersebut. Hal ini mencerminkan norma sosiobudaya di negara ini apabila kedua-dua pihak tidak mengamalkan sikap penerimaan dan toleransi. Tambahan lagi, perbezaan budaya kedua-dua pihak menunjukkan nilai kehidupan yang berlainan. Oleh itu, keterikatan budaya telah mempengaruhi tingkah laku mereka sehingga menimbulkan isu diskriminasi kaum.

Pada tahapan meso, persepsi warganegara Brunei dapat diteliti menerusi praktik diskursif. Praktik ini mencakup proses penghasilan dan penggunaan wacana. Dalam hal ini, Facebook menjadi alat untuk membincangkan isu yang berlaku di Pusat Vaksinasi Stadium Tertutup. Menerusi laman sosial Brunei Dot Com, satu siaran awam berikutan isu tersebut telah dimuat turun dan memberikan ruang kepada pengguna Facebook, untuk memberikan persepsi menerusi ulasan masing-masing. Pada tahapan ini, sikap diskriminasi kaum boleh berlaku secara tidak sengaja. Contohnya, persepsi berbentuk keluhan telah meninggalkan impak psikologi. Representasi mental juga mampu mengatur emosi dan sikap setiap individu. Oleh itu, individu boleh menunjukkan sikap bias secara implisit, walaupun cuba bersikap neutral. Pada tahapan mikro, kesemua komen diteliti berdasarkan penggunaan kata secara literal. Dimensi ini menganalisis teks dari sudut linguistik, iaitu dari segi penggunaan kata nama, kata bilangan, kata hubung, kata kerja dan simbol emotikon. Selain itu, dimensi ini memfokuskan pada intertekstualiti dan interdiskursiviti. Intertekstualiti memfokuskan kepada 'bagaimana' teks merujuk kepada teks sebelumnya, manakala interdiskursiviti difahami sebagai jenis peminjaman ciri-ciri wacana atau genre yang lebih abstrak (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015). Oleh itu, sikap diskriminasi kaum juga dapat direpresentasikan menerusi teks dalam komen berkenaan.

Kesimpulan

Penggunaan bahasa dalam Facebook menerusi halaman Brunei Dot Com telah menunjukkan praktik sosial yang diterapkan di negara ini. Dengan maksud lain, masyarakat bukan sahaja membentuk wacana, malah wacana yang dihasilkan secara tidak langsung membentuk mereka sebagai satu masyarakat. Budaya, identiti dan persepsi masyarakat terbentuk berdasarkan wacana yang telah dihasilkan. Dalam situasi pandemik gelombang kedua COVID-19 di NBD, media sosial juga telah memainkan peranan penting bagi berkongsi maklumat, dan pada masa yang sama menjadi pemangkin dalam menyebarkan sikap diskriminasi yang boleh menimbulkan konflik antara kaum, terutamanya jika tidak membatasi pemilihan bahasa yang digunakan. AWK menjadi pendekatan berkesan bagi mendekonstruksi kepakaran dan

identiti pengguna Facebook menerusi wacana. Penyelidik akan datang diharap dapat meneruskan lagi kajian ini secara komprehensif menggunakan pendekatan berbeza.

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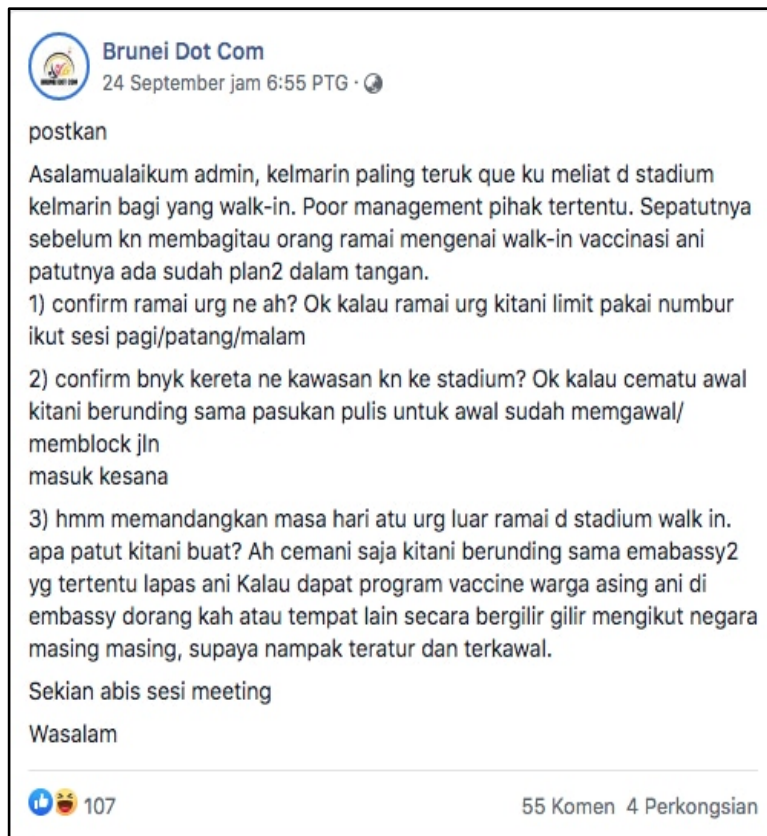
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LAMPIRAN (A)

Tangkapan skrin Facebook Brunei Dot Com berkaitan isu Pusat Vaksinasi Stadium Tertutup, Berakas Brunei.



Book Review

Indonesia's Islamic Revolution

Kevin Fogg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020)¹.

Conventional analyses of Indonesian nationalism and revolution have customarily foregrounded the roles of secular nationalists like Sukarno and Hatta, the military, and the leftist groups such as the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI). The roles of Islamic groups have tended to be downplayed, if not ignored altogether. While assertions of the more significant contributions of Islamic groups in Indonesian political development have been made, such as B. J. Borland's *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (1971) and Michael Laffan's *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia* (2003), Kevin Fogg's *Indonesia's Islamic Revolution* breaks ground by pushing the logic of the idea, demonstrating that the Indonesian Revolution was not just a nationalist undertaking, but also a "Islamic" one. It provides compelling illustration of specific ways and the significant extent to which various Islamic groups, both elites and grassroots movements, played various roles in the Indonesian Revolution of 1945-1949. Of equal importance, it also shows the lasting impact of the revolution on the practice of Islam and on Islam a political force, thus illuminates crucial points about the position of Islam in contemporary politics in Indonesia.

After a thorough review of relevant literature on the position of Islam before the revolution in Chapter 1, which both beginner and seasoned observers of Islam and Indonesian politics would appreciate, the first part of the book explains in detail in what senses the revolution was Islamic. Chapter 2 highlights the Islamic framing of the call for participation in the national revolution and the exhortations came from Muslim clerics, many of whom acted as revolutionaries. The following chapter sheds light on the use of Islamic militias and organizations to mobilize mass participation. Two groups are discussed in particular, Sabilillah and Hizbullah. A fascinating analysis of the use of amulets, magic and trances is discussed in Chapter 4. Emphasized is that despite injunction against it by modernist, pious Muslims, ordinary Muslims regarded their use as something in accord with Islamic teachings. Chapter 5 focuses on the social aspect of the revolution, where revolutionaries tried to undertake reforms by, among other things, toppling down long-standing social and cultural hierarchies. The case of Aceh is discussed as exemplar of the success of Muslims in social revolution. The last chapter in Part I focuses on the case of Darul Islam in West Java. While it stood out in some respects such as leadership, the chapter shows that it was fundamentally similar to the struggles of other Islamic groups in other parts of the country.

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Consisting of seven chapters, the second part examines the ways and extent to which the revolution had impacted the development of Islam in Indonesia as a socio-religious practice as well as a political force. Chapter 7 discusses the failure of the Islamic leaders to have the provision for implementing Islamic law for Moslem adherents—the so-called Jakarta Charter—be incorporated in the Constitution. This episode heightened distrust by Muslim leaders towards their secular counterparts. This made them realize that need for a more effective organization and mobilization to fight for the interests of the Islamic community. These efforts were evident in the formation of the political party called Masjumi, which is discussed in Chapter 8, and in the establishment of, and their dominance in, the Ministry of Religion. It was as platform that enabled Muslim intellectuals to shape policies and influence practices of Islam, as discussed in Chapter 9. The practice within Masjumi of allowing younger and foreign-educated Muslims to assume important positions, while putting the old influential member in advisory positions, paved for the rise Muslim intellectuals who pushed for the fusion of socialist and Islamic teachings, as Chapter 10 elaborates. From the bosom of Masjumi also rose regional Islamic parties and other splinter groups. The final chapter in Part 2 examines the diplomacy pursued by the early government with countries in the Middle East, which showed the Islamic orientation or aspiration of the incipient nation-state.

The book is lucidly written and cogently argued. The engaging, even lyrical writing style, with use of shorter sentences and level-headed but precise vocabularies, makes the book a pleasure to read. Another strength is the extensive use of sources in Bahasa Indonesia. Unlike several other books in Southeast Asian Studies that tend to be sparing in use of local authors' works, this book profusely cites them, along with relevant works in English. The author's erudition is on display all throughout the book.

The Western media and the liberal strands of domestic press often promote Indonesia as a showcase of "moderate Islam", even "liberal Islam." In their narrative Islam is not a legitimate political force but a benign socio-cultural and religious way of life. The book's main message may have chilling effects on them. By foregrounding critical role played by Islamic groups in the Indonesian Revolution, and by demonstrating that this episode in turned revolutionized the understanding and practice of Islam in Indonesia, the book underscores the entwined relationship between Islam and politics as one of the key features of the country's foundational process. Even without intent, the book validates the long-standing gripes by Islamic activists over the marginalization or restrictive role of Islam in national politics and academic discourses. In addition, it helps legitimize the increasingly vigorous pro-Islam activism in the past two decades. The book may prove divisive politically, but academically it is not just a welcome addition to the expanding body of work on this area. It is, in fact, long overdue.

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