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## **Fear Appeal Approach For A Political Campaign Published in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during the 13<sup>th</sup> General Election**

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### ***Abstract***

Previous studies have shown the ability of fear appeal in influencing voting behaviour among citizens (Jerit, 2004). During the 15-day campaign period of 13th Malaysian General Election (GE13), candidates from Barisan Nasional (BN) and Pakatan Rakyat (PR) tended to induce fear appeal into the stories reported by newspapers that support them, namely *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*, respectively. This study seeks to investigate the characteristics of fear appeal in both the newspapers, the genre of news and articles that comprise the fear appeal, relationships between the genre of news and articles with characteristics of fear appeal, and differences in the way political fear appeal was employed in the content of both newspapers. In order to achieve

these goals, a quantitative content analysis method was used in the study of selected news and articles. The following are the findings from the study; (a) five identified fear appeal characteristic comprising fear, threat, anger, anxiety and risk have were used frequently in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*, (b) *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* demonstrated the highest interest in employing the fear appeal approach in political articles compared to other genres in both newspapers, (c) characteristics of fear appeal are strongly related to genres contained in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*, and (d) the way *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* raised the issues and selected the appropriate genres determined the differences of the use of fear appeal in each newspaper.

**Keywords:** *Fear, fear appeal, political, election, general election.*

## **1.0 Introduction**

A general election is a significant political event for any democratic nation. It is significant in the sense that it gives voices to the ordinary people to elect not only their representatives to parliament but, more importantly, the party that will lead and rule the nation. Realising this fact, political parties in Malaysia have fought hard in order to win the hearts and minds of the people. They use various approaches in their campaigns, which began with a simple form of campaign such as banners and speeches during the earliest general election in 1950s and 1960s. However, campaign trends have gradually changed as banners and speeches are no longer enough to help politicians achieve their goal. Generally, the campaign is important to politicians [2] as it has become a main player in conveying necessary information to the public to help them make their choice in the poll [3].

After several general elections, it can be observed that Malaysian politicians have started to adopt a new strategy and tactics which can be conceptualised as the fear appeal inducement. This kind of appeal was widely used, especially in the print media, during 13th general election (GE13) campaigning period (20 April – 4 May 2013) by Barisan Nasional (BN) and Pakatan Rakyat (PR). Fear appeal is used in persuasive message

to scare people off [4] by illustrating dire consequences if they ignore the recommended suggestions [5]. It can appear to be a rather hard and shocking approach with negative impacts of risky behaviour [6]. Additionally, fear appeal has also been described as an effective approach in raising interest, recall, involvement and persuasiveness.

### *Background of the study*

Politics and elections are about attaining political power. Therefore, in achieving the goal, political parties tend to rely heavily on various media channels, with major newspapers that officially support them as the main channel to induce the fear appeal during the campaign period, thereby possibly influencing the voting behaviour of citizens. In the GE13, a 15-day campaign period was given by the Election Commission (EC). The 15-day period lasted from 20<sup>th</sup> April to 4<sup>th</sup> May 2013. During that time, various candidates from BN and PR extensively used the fear appeal in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* to win the hearts and minds of the voters. This kind of phenomenon is not extraordinary. According to [7], political candidates prefer to employ fear appeal during this period in order to persuade undecided voters to turn away from the opposition and becoming their partisans. [8] pointed out that politicians have been utilising fear appeal for years in campaigns through television advertisements. Fear appeal was used heavily by President Bush during his presidential campaign in 2004 [9].

In Malaysia, it is believed that news coverage of the political actors before the GE13 had a significant impact on citizens, which translated into the poll's result [10]. Therefore, by inducing fear appeal into *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* content, it can provide a greater impact on the support received by BN and PR. Although some scholars argue that fear appeal has a significant impact on political behaviour [11] and may activate the citizen's behaviour of voting [8], other researchers have produced different findings. For example, [12] argue that interest towards the campaign and intention to vote may increase by using positive emotions rather than fear.

The 'cause-to-effect' reasoning highlighted by [8] provides support for the idea of use of fear appeal in influencing voter's behaviour. [8] further stressed

that when someone anticipates a negative outcome or event, he usually tries to remove the cause. This theory may be observed in politics when candidates try to deliver a message through the media that choice of the opponent will result in negative outcomes for the voters. The objective of the present study is to analyse the fear appeal contained in articles published by *Harakah* and *Utusan Malaysia* before GE13 and to identify differences in the ways fear appeal was used in each newspaper. In order to achieve this outcome, the study adopted a quantitative research design and content analysis of selected articles and news items from *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during the 15-day campaign period.

### *Definition of concept*

#### *Fear appeal*

[7] pointed out that fear appeal has been employed to promote social awareness involving serious matters. The term fear appeal can be defined as a persuasive message which is sent purposefully to stimulate the audience to succumb to any suggested behaviour by inducing fear and threat. Fear appeal can cause anxiety and tension [13][7], hence motivating people towards certain defensive mechanisms [7] or specific actions [14]. [5] argued that fear appeal is used to make people feel intimidated by the message that bad things may happen if they refuse to comply with the recommendations of the message.

The definition of fear appeal indicates that several terms underlying the concept are interrelated. These underlying terms are considered as characteristics of fear appeal. Therefore, the following section highlights the definition of these characteristics: fear, threat, anger, anxiety, and risk. All the terms underlying the concept of fear appeal addressed below provide important contributions to the outcome of the study.

#### *1. Fear*

Fear can be categorised as a negative emotion [8] which appears when a person believes that he or she cannot avoid a negative circumstance or is unable to cope with it smoothly [14]. [11] pointed out that fear can be measured by the degree to which a person is fearful and afraid.

## *2. Threat*

[15] pointed out that threat is an object of fear that refers to something that was feared such as death or hunger. On the contrary, [16] defined threat as a statement that involves communication in order to harm another person or group. It can involve oral, written and body language. [16] further stressed that threat can be classified into three categories which are direct threat, vague threat, and inappropriate contact or communication threat. Direct threat creates harmful behaviour against a certain individual. On the other hand, vague threat is a sort of communication that relates to the tone or things that support the behaviour of harm but without any specific target, while inappropriate contact or communication is something that is not necessarily threat. However, threat may stimulate a person to be aware of his or her own safety such as when a stranger asks about a confidential matter. Additionally, threat can also be viewed as taking the form of physical threat, social threat [17] or control [18]. [11] suggested that a usual threat can stimulate anger, but an unusual threat can cause anxiety.

## *3. Anger*

According to [19], anger is triggered when a perpetrator commits an offense, but at the same time it needs to involve an important person or someone that people care for. He also emphasized the significance of awareness of the offense and the need to rectify the situation in determining the emergence of anger. [11] suggested that anger can be measured by the extent a person becomes angry and disgusted. On the other hand, [20] suggested three things that can trigger anger: (a) community violation (not showing respect towards the hierarchy and communality of a person and society), (b) autonomy violation (ignoring the freedom and human rights of a person), and (c) divinity violation (not showing respect to another person's religion).

## *4. Anxiety*

[21] pointed out that anxiety can occur when a person experiences worrying thoughts and physical feelings. This condition can affect the way he or she thinks and acts. When the person fails to control their anxiety, negative

thoughts such as suicide may occur in his or her mind. This spontaneous thought may occur in an unrealistic and irrational form or it may ultimately increase the level of anxiety.

### *5. Risk*

According to [22], risk can be defined as something that involves exposure and uncertainty. When a person is exposed to a particular matter, he has no way of predicting the future with regards to the matter. This is referred to as uncertainty. [23] suggested that a person has the option of taking the risk or imposing it.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### *The Concept of Fear Appeal and Its Purpose*

Fear appeal has been practiced widely in order to build social awareness regarding important matters and usually highlights the negative or unpleasant consequences which might happen if people choose to ignore the message [5]. On the other hand, the purpose of arousing fear among the target audience is to influence or motivate them to adapt to certain behaviours [4].

[7] suggested that fear appeal expands the emotion of tension and anxiety, hence inspiring a particular defensive mechanism and at the same time stimulates people to search for ways in order to remedy the unpleasant feeling. The role of a defence mechanism is to keep people safe from the feeling of threat after they receive the fear appeal message [24][25]. To some extent, fear appeal plays a part in stimulating the changing behaviour of people. According to [26], the persuasiveness of fear appeal can be significant if it is applied to two types of people; people who feel most vulnerable towards the negative result illustrated in the message and people who see the message as individually important. They added that perceived vulnerability and individual relevance are connected, but a fear appeal message may personally be relevant to people, whether they are vulnerable or not. The success rate of the mission in influencing people's behaviour depends on other additional factors including culture orientation [6], a person's characteristics, language,

attitudes, state of change and goals [27]. Other criteria emphasized by [27] that play a significant role in ensuring the fear appeal message is most effective are novelty, interesting approach, sensitivity to cultural aspects, relatively unknown topic and the ability to capture attention, as well as demographic factors such as age, gender and education level.

There are several approaches that are usually applied in fear appeal. [6] asserted that a fear appeal message commonly consists of obvious and usable recommendations that are believed to be alternative solutions in avoiding a negative outcome. Additionally, these recommendations commonly use direct and personal words and they may even come with 'tough' or painful pictures. The stronger levels of threat which rely on the verbal or visual (graphic) cues, or both, can produce positive outcomes over the perceived threat. Furthermore, it is believed that by applying relevant visuals such as graphic vividness in a message that contains a threat may help to increase the perception of the perceived threat, hence making the level of that threat greater. Inserting threat-relevant arguments and facts might also help to develop the threat [28].

### *Components and Elements of Fear Appeal*

There are several required elements of fear appeal. According to [29], these elements are: severity of a threat, the individual's susceptibility to the threat, and efficacy, by which they mean recommended feedback and the individual's capability to apply the recommended feedback. [30] described two components applied in a typical fear appeal which are threat component and suggestion component.

According to [5], a threat refers to an external motivation that can appear even without an individual realising it. When the fear appeal is well constructed, people will be alert to it and concurrently offer to convey the threat severity, and it enhances a community's threat susceptibility [31][5]. [29] asserted that anyone will build his or her beliefs once he or she learns of the threat. On the other hand, [32] depicted threat as a level that a person perceives to be easily connected to a serious possibility of danger and consists of susceptibility and severity dimensions.



[32] explained that efficacy is a degree to which people assume they can easily implement the suggested response in order to keep them away from the threat, hence determining the action taken. From this point of view, they suggested that efficacy can form other dimensions which are self-efficacy and response-efficacy. Moreover, [5] emphasized two efficacy perceptions; (a) cognition of efficacy on the suggested feedback, and (b) the person's efficacy in executing the feedback. Self efficacy refers to the belief that a person is able to execute the suggested response. Meanwhile, response efficacy can be described as the belief that the suggested response may help to avert the threat.

### *The Influence and Significance of Fear Appeal*

According to [33], the capability of fear in affecting political behaviour is possible in miscellaneous ways. This idea is strongly supported by [1] who acknowledged the ability of fear to influence the individual's decision making. She stressed that people with fear will apprehend a bigger risk when faced with new circumstances, hence driving them to be risk-averse.

The threat, which is triggered by a fear appeal message, can drive people to become scared. When they start to feel afraid about something, [34] suggested that it is the right time to tell them the appropriate way to counter the feeling, hence making them succumb to the recommended behaviour. This is consistent with the assertion by [35] that fear appeal in a political campaign comes with a particular message, which is: 'if you do not take this action, something bad will happen'. Moreover, previous research has shown the significance of emotion in influencing the decision-making process among citizens with regard to the political candidate [36].

[28] described fear appeal as an effective campaign strategy whether it involves familiar or unfamiliar issues. The fear appeal may have greater impact if the threat message comprises of a combination of verbal and visual cues. This kind of outcome mostly appears in unfamiliar issues. [37] believed a negative campaign by candidates can successfully stimulate voters to elect them rather than using a more positive approach. According to [38], there is much evidence to show that people assess negative information such as fear more strongly than positive information when establishing their attitudes.

### *The Means of Fear Appeal*

It is undeniable that fear is a pillar of fear appeal. However, the outcome of the process depends on the level of fear. [39] believed that a very mild menace is unable to rouse enough fearful reactions. In contrast, an extremely strong menace may not be effective either due to the recipient defensively averting awareness, rejecting personal vulnerability or twisting the message. Although it is learned that fear is a main ingredient in fear appeal, this negative emotion cannot stand alone. Instead, it should come together with two other basic concepts which are identified as menace and perceived effectiveness by [27]. Meanwhile, [40] asserted that it also depends on the threat's ability to conjure up the unpleasant consequences which might happen if a person ignores the recommended behaviour.

[7] determined that the three stages of employing the fear appeal concept are; (a) form a fearful situation that can trigger people's awareness of risk and danger (b) illustrate the danger as absolutely crucial in order to attract people attention, and (c) provide a solution that might lessen the fear.

### *Politicians, Media and Fear Appeal*

Previously, the use of fear appeal was dominated by practitioners in the field of marketing, where it had been used widely since 1950s [7], in recognition of its ability to influence an audience. However, the trend eventually shifted when political actors began to show their interest in incorporating fear appeal as part of their campaign strategy. This change is supported by [12] who have claimed that the number of political actors involved in negative campaigns, such as discrediting their opponents with one-sided attacks, is increasing. Moreover, negative campaigns which include fear appeal messages seem to dominate the political scene in America, as politicians believe that such messages work in increasing their ratings and obtaining greater support during elections [41]. Conducting negative campaigns by attacking the opponent's credibility becomes a pivotal strategy, as credibility is significant in determining the strength of a politician [12]. Moreover, [42] acknowledged the fact that information which is usually provided through negative campaigns is needed by voters in order to help them make rational decisions during elections.

Generally, a negative campaign is conducted in order to diminish the positive reputation of the opposing political candidate [41].

[7] pointed out that politicians tend to apply fear appeal in their campaigns purposefully to persuade and convince undecided citizens, and hence gain their support. In order to accomplish this mission, the political actor intentionally highlights possible risks and unpleasant circumstances that citizens might face if they ignore the message and continue to support the opponent from another party. Prior to adapting fear appeal in a campaign, it is important to decide the ways to implement it, as there are different ways of applying the appeal. According to [27], fear appeal can be applied either directly or indirectly. This clearly supports the relevance of political actors opting for mass media such as newspapers to induce fear among citizens during the campaigning period.

According to [5], a threat refers to an external motivation that can appear even without individuals realizing it. When the fear appeal is well constructed, people will be alerted to it and convey the threat's severity, thereby enhancing a community's threat susceptibility [31][5].

### *The Role of Utusan Malaysia and Harakah in the Malaysian GE13*

As the leading media supporters of UMNO and PAS, respectively, it is significant for Utusan Malaysia and Harakah to play their roles effectively, especially during the Malaysian GE13. According to [43], this kind of channel (newspapers) may help the party to convey certain information regarding the leadership, policies, principles and activities of the party, and also attempt to persuade people to support its attitudes in issues and concerns, records and proposals of policy. In addition, the media can also be seen as a symbolic and persuasive medium, thus allowing newspapers to be able to influence their readers' minds [44].

Although [43] stated that the role of biased newspapers against a certain party is part of conveying the information and persuading the public, it seems that the idea is not necessarily practiced in Malaysia. In the local political environment, the situation seems to be contradictory, as most newspapers seem biased towards certain parties as they tend to criticize, manipulate and

aggravate the opposition parties. For instance, [45] stated that Harakah does not only focus its coverage on PAS affairs, but also includes pervasive critiques regarding leadership immorality, incompetence and authoritarianism of the ruling party, the BN-led United Malay National Organisation (UMNO). From the news media perspective, [43] found that newspapers are sympathizing with distinct political parties by giving way for them, hence allowing public to get the message.

Moreover, [43] pointed out that party campaigns depend strongly on partisan journalists, even though a particular newspaper is either independently owned or controlled but gives sympathetic coverage to a party, or a newspaper company is subsidized and directly owned by a political party. This could be done when the partisan journalists spin stories through journalistic commentaries or editorial columns.

### *Theories Guiding the Study*

#### *Parallel Response Models*

Referring to the class of fear appeal theories, there are two discrete and potentially interdependent processes produced by fear appeal called danger control process and fear control process. According to [33], the danger control process is an attempt to manage danger or threat, while the fear control process is an attempt to manage one's fear regarding the danger or threat. However, parallel response models are unable to clarify when fear control or danger control will be activated. According to [7], people manage to activate their danger control component in order to allow them to deal with any difficulty after going through the fearful situation, thus stimulating them to look for other options. When the arousal of fear reaches a certain level where the ability to think calmly decreases, fear control tends to eliminate the displeasing emotion of fear.

#### *Extended Parallel Process Model (EPPM)*

The EPPM, which was developed by Witte, describes fear appeal in terms of its successes and failures. It proposed the emotion of fear in fear appeal processing [28]. There are two processes of appraisal that someone will engage

in when receiving a fear message, which are threat and perceived coping appraisal. According to [4], the threat appraisal is a process that engages with the strength of the jeopardy and the person's susceptibility to the jeopardy. In addition, coping appraisal integrates recommended response efficacy and self-efficacy consideration.

Referring to the EPPM, [4] argued that people should be stimulated to become involved in the danger control process when they feel that the threat is putting them at risk and concurrently the efficacy judgment suggests they can react to the threat. In a situation where the threat and efficacy are at a high level, EPPM assumes that interaction exists between both threat and efficacy, with danger control processes. On the other hand, danger control processes have an ability to boost attitude accessibility against recommended behaviour. Additionally, the danger control processes should direct the person to accept and perform the suggested behaviour in order to reduce the jeopardy.

However, the fear control process will operate when the person assumes that the recommended behaviour is ineffective, even though he or she evaluates the threat to be true. In a circumstance where the threat level is high but efficacy is low, the EPPM assumes that interaction occurs among threat and efficacy and the processes of fear control [4]. Based on the EPPM, the fear appeal evaluation triggers two message appraisals, hence leading to the three results. First, [33] suggested that a person evaluates the threat over an issue contained in the message. It is argued that if a person believes that he or she is vulnerable to a serious menace, there are more stimulants to make him or her shift to the second evaluation which involves the efficacy evaluation regarding the suggested response. However, if the person perceives the threat to be insignificant or irrelevant, he or she will ignore the fear appeal message.

Referring to the EPPM, [33] believed perceived threat to be an important factor to the extent of a feedback to a fear appeal. They argued that anyone could be scared if a threat contained in a fear appeal message is illustrated as and trusted to be serious and significant. Fear that arises from the threat spontaneously stimulates a person to take actions that could diminish the feeling. However, perceived self-efficacy and response efficacy play an important role in determining whether a person is going to be stimulated to

manage the menace of the threat or to manage his or her fear of the threat. [33] asserted that people are inspired to manage the menace and be aware of the actions they should take to eliminate or diminish the threat if they believe they are capable of executing an effective suggested response to the threat.

### **3.0 The Instrument**

#### *Content Analysis Design*

Content analysis has been used widely in social science and mass communication studies. It is a technique in which the content of the message constructs the basis for drawing inferences and conclusions regarding the content [46]. It is also a technique that helps researchers to make inferences objectively and systematically by identifying certain characteristics of messages [47]. Therefore, it can be concluded that this technique concerns valid, replicable and objective inferences from the message, which at the same time hold the basis of explicit rules [48].

Content analysis complies with three basic scientific method principles which are objectivity, systematicity, and generalizability [48]. The technique also engages the interaction of two processes which, according to [49], refer to specification of the content characteristics being scrutinized and application of definite principles for pinpointing and recording these characteristics. [48] described six steps that are commonly used in the content analysis technique; (a) develop research questions or objectives, (b) pick the sample and communication content, (c) establish content categories, (d) decide units of analysis, (e) provide a pilot testing, coding schedule, and examine inter coder reliabilities, and (f) evaluate the retrieved data. There are several strengths or advantages in using content analysis process. Content analysis has been seen as virtually unobtrusive [50], easy to conduct, inexpensively accessible, and also fruitful when involved in analysing indepth interview data [49]. In addition, it does not require an interview session, questionnaire, or a laboratory experiment [49].

However, despite its strengths, the content analysis process also has several weaknesses. The technique is limited to scrutinizing messages that have already been recorded [49] and it is therefore bounded solely to the content

of the text [48]. In addition, it is also not effective if applied to test causal relationships among variables [49]. The outcome of the content analysis may be less valid and reliable when it engages with semantic dissimilarity; that is, dissimilarity which involves the meanings of words [49].

### *Quantitative Content Analysis*

[51] defined quantitative content analysis as an empirical method for systematic analysis which involves well-defined, visual, textual, audio, and/or content of audiovisual media. It can also be classified as a well standardised method which could contribute an objective replicable or inter-subjective credible outcome [52]. However, [52] pointed out that this method requires the researcher to make a decision whether to examine all the accessible content or merely a representative sample, to determine the period of the sample, to define the sample unit, the sample material and the analysis unit, and also to assemble a code book.

### *Research Design*

This study employs quantitative content analysis of the content of two selected local newspapers, *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*. The newspapers are known to support and represent different political parties; namely, BN and PR, respectively. This status of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* gives a huge opportunity for BN and PR to use these newspapers as a medium to induce fear appeal in the public, thus influencing voters' decision making. Since the main focus of this study is the fear appeal approach used in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*, the sample of the study involves any article and news containing fear appeal in either newspapers during the 15 days of the GE13 official campaigning period which started on April, 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 and continued until May 04<sup>th</sup> 2013.

### *Sampling*

This study chose purposeful sampling as the sampling method. It is a non probability type of sampling process in which the elements are chosen from the target population that suit the study purposes, according to specific criteria

of exclusion and inclusion [53]. In this study, the sample comprised 120 news and articles retrieved from *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* within the 15-day campaign period of the GE13. These two newspapers were chosen as part of the sample after the study considered their important role as mouth-pieces for the respective parties, hence disseminating the parties' principals, ideas and propaganda towards the audience. The sample was selected from news and articles that included fear appeal inducement.

### *Utusan Malaysia*

*Utusan Malaysia*, formerly known as *Utusan Melayu* began publication in 1967. It has been regarded as pro-BN because of its tendency to cover stories that are biased towards BN. [54] pointed out that, compared to five other pro-BN newspapers including *The Star*, *NST*, *The Sun*, *Malaysia Namban* and *Makkal Osai*, *Utusan Malaysia* allocated 82 percent of its space priority to pro-BN stories. This figure indicates the high support *Utusan Malaysia* afforded the existing government.

### *Harakah*

*Harakah* is an alternative newspaper which was established in 1987 by the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS) before the party joined forces with the People's Justice Party (PKR) and the Democratic Action Party (DAP) in 2008 to form Pakatan Rakyat (PR). Since its establishment, *Harakah* has become a main channel for PAS and later PR to convey their messages, ideologies, principles and news that are related to the party. In the beginning, *Harakah* was published twice a week with its circulation reaching around 75,000 copies a week in the middle of 1990s. However, the case involving Anwar Ibrahim in the late 1990s quadrupled the figure. After its publishing permit expired in 2000, the publication frequency of *Harakah* changed to twice a month [45].

## **4.0 Findings & Discussion**

*Fear, Threat, Anger, Anxiety and Risk within Utusan Malaysia and Harakah Fear*



**TABLE 1**

Fear emotion and fear circumstance in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		<b>Fear (%)</b>	<b>No Fear (%)</b>
Emotion	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	100.0	0.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	100.0	0.0
Circumstance of the news / articles content	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	98.3	1.7
	<i>Harakah</i>	95.0	5.0

*Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* showed a marked tendency to use the fear appeal approach in their news and articles published during the 15-day campaigning period. This is shown by the figures which demonstrate that both newspapers contained fear emotion (see Table 1). Nevertheless, the fear emotion is more prevalent in *Utusan Malaysia* content compared to *Harakah's* at 98.3 and 95.0 percent, respectively. Although the difference in percentages is small and may seem insignificant, the percentages of both newspapers indicate that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* are very aware of the importance of using fear appeal during the campaigning period. The figures also show that journalists from both newspapers acknowledged the ability of fear appeal in influencing the voters' decision, motivating citizen to vote for BN or PR during poll [10].

### *Threat*

Referring to the EPPM, perceived threat is an important factor in the extent of feedback to a fear appeal [33]. This reflects the significance of analysing threat in the *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* contents. The findings of the present study show a high content of threat in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* at 93.3 percent and 95.0 respectively (see Table 2). The difference between these percentages is small. However, the high content of threat indicates the strong threat induced in both newspapers. On the other hand, this strong threat will motivate readers to build their beliefs once they know the threat [29].

**TABLE 2**

Fear issue arise in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	<b>Fear object/issue exist (%)</b>	<b>No Fear object/issue exist (%)</b>
<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	93.3	6.7
<i>Harakah</i>	95.0	5.0

*Anger*

Anger is an important part of fear appeal. In some degree, usually threat can motivate the anger [11]. In this study, the inducement of anger in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* was analysed by examining the wrongdoings or decisions made by political actors which could be found in both newspapers.

The findings of the study show that *Harakah* induced higher emotions of anger at 95.0 percent compared to *Utusan Malaysia* which induced 68.3 percent (see Table 3). The large difference between these percentages indicates that *Harakah* has a very strong tendency to evoke anger among the readers compared to *Utusan Malaysia*. One of the news items published by *Harakah*, dated 26-28 April with the title ‘BN gagal tangani masalah kos sara hidup rakyat’ is identified as having high inducement of anger. The news reported the failure of BN to overcome the rising cost of living.

Previously, [45] has pointed out that PAS uses *Harakah* as a channel to criticize the immorality, incompetence and authoritarianism of the UMNO leadership; an action which is likely to evoke anger among the readers. On the other hand, the findings also demonstrate that *Utusan Malaysia* is not that interested in evoking anger among the readers through its contents.

**TABLE 3**

Wrongdoing or decision by perpetrator in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Wrongdoing or decision by perpetrator	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	93.3	6.7
	<i>Harakah</i>	95.0	5.0

**TABLE 4**

Worrying thought in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	<b>Worrying thought (%)</b>	<b>No feeling (%)</b>
<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	98.3	1.7
<i>Harakah</i>	95.0	5.0

### *Anxiety*

Feelings of anxiety were also identified in the *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* contents. Based on the figures in Table 4, *Utusan Malaysia* had a higher percentage of articles evoking anxiety towards the public compared to *Harakah* at 98.3 percent and 95.0 percent respectively. These figures indicate that both newspapers were strongly interested in evoking anxiety in their contents, which will motivate readers to be worried and to develop negative thoughts [21]. Moreover, high anxiety tends to stimulate people towards a particular defensive mechanism, thus searching for ways to remedy the unpleasant feeling [7]. Generally, the remedy refers to the behaviour recommended in the article. Several situations or issues highlighted in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* could trigger anxiety; these include politics, economy, race, religion, safety, development and social welfare.

### *Risk*

More than 90.0 percent of the articles in both newspapers contained elements of risk. However, *Utusan Malaysia* had greater contents of risk compared to *Harakah* at 98.3 percent and 93.3 percent, respectively (see Table 5). These percentages indicate that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* acknowledged and applied the role of risk in the fear appeal approach. The present study suggests that political actors from BN and PR intentionally highlight and depict the possibility of risk and unpleasant circumstances through *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* in order to stimulate readers to be against their opponents [7]. Generally, risk involves exposure and uncertainty [22].

Many news items and articles in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* highlighted risks if the opposing coalition were to win the GE13. For instance, an article titled “*Pembangkang tiada kerjasama, tidak boleh majukan negeri*” published in *Utusan Malaysia*, dated 22 April 2013 reported that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed claimed that PR would destroy Malaysia if people let the coalition rule the country because DAP, PAS and PKR were unable to cooperate effectively. On the other hand, PR warned people that a disaster would happen if they voted BN during GE13. This warning appeared in *Harakah* dated 3-5 May 2013 with the title is “*Undi BN bermakna mengundang1,001 petaka.*”

*Genre of News and Articles Containing Political Fear Appeal in Utusan Malaysia and Harakah*

**TABLE 5**

Uncertainty issue in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	No uncertainty issue arise (%)	Uncertainty issue arise (%)
<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7	98.3
<i>Harakah</i>	6.7	93.3

**TABLE 6**

Genres of articles and news in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		Fear appeal (%)
<i>General</i>	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	13.3
	<i>Harakah</i>	33.3
<i>Politics / campaign / poll</i>	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	66.7
	<i>Harakah</i>	48.3
<i>Religion</i>	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	3.3
	<i>Harakah</i>	0.0
<i>Economy</i>	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	1.7
<i>Race</i>	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	3.3

This study shows a variety of genres of news and articles used by *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during the 15-day period before the GE13. These genres are general, politics, campaign and poll, religion, economy, race and education. Referring to the figures in Table 6, politics, poll and campaign genres received the highest attention from both *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* compared to other genres at 66.7 percent and 48.3 percent respectively. The percentage differences between both newspapers is definite and large, but these percentages are consistent with the election season in which the politics, campaigns and polls are become priority. Nevertheless, these figures indicate that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* also showed interest in other genres, despite lower percentages recorded.

The general genre appeared to be the second most frequent in both newspapers. For this genre, *Harakah* had a higher percentage compared to *Utusan Malaysia* at 33.3 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively. This study suggests that the small percentage of *Utusan Malaysia* is due to its high interest in politics, polls and campaign genre. A similar level of interest was shown by *Utusan Malaysia* in defence and internal security, and general genres. Moreover, *Utusan Malaysia* also had similar level of interest in development and social welfare. On the other hand, *Utusan Malaysia* appeared to share similar level of interest in the development genre with *Harakah*, even though the percentage recorded was small, at less than 2.0 percent.

The low percentage recorded for several genres leads to the suggestion that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* had less interest in using fear appeal through these genres. It also reflects the fact that both newspapers definitely did not decline the necessity of the genre in employing fear appeal. However, it is clear that there are several genres that are given attention to by only one newspaper. For example, *Utusan Malaysia* did not use fear appeal in the economy, race and education genres. On the other hand, *Harakah* showed no interest in employing fear appeal in the religion genre.

From the findings, it can be seen that not all genres were considered as suitable for adopting a fear appeal approach by both newspapers. The selection is made based on the preferences, needs and interests determined by *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*, which motivated both newspapers to give high priority

to the political genre. In addition, Harakah also showed its effort to balance the use of fear appeal between politics and general genres.

*Relationship between Characteristics of Political Fear Appeal and News Genre of Utusan Malaysia and Harakah*

*Fear*

Generally, there are five characteristics of fear appeal and nine genres of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* identified in the study. Referring to the figures in Table 7, all genres indicated the same percentage of fear in the newspapers' .. The high percentage justified the strong relationship between fear and all the genres which are general, politics, campaign and poll, religion, economy, race and education. It also indicates a strong awareness of adopting the emotion of fear by journalists from both newspapers into the content, as they realised the potential ability of fear appeal to influence voters' decisions.

**TABLE 7**

Fear emotion and genres of articles and news in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		<b>Fear emotion (%)</b>
1.	General	100.0
2.	Politics / campaign / poll	100.0
3.	Religion	100.0
4.	Economy	100.0
5.	Race	100.0
6.	Education	100.0
7.	Defence / internal safety	100.0
8.	Development	100.0
9.	Social welfare	100.0

**TABLE 8**

Threat and genres of articles and news in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		Threat (%)
1.	General	89.3
2.	Politics / campaign / poll	95.7
3.	Religion	100.0
4.	Economy	100.0
5.	Race	100.0
6.	Education	100.0
7.	Defence / internal safety	90.0
8.	Development	100.0
9.	Social welfare	100.0

*Threat*

The high percentages showed in the findings reflect the strong relationship between threat and the nine genres of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* (see Table 8). However, compared to six others genres, the relationship between threat and general, politics, campaign and poll, and defence and internal safety genres appeared to be weaker, although still 90 per cent and above. This strong relationship justified the level of threat which is significant in consolidating the fear appeal approach in the contents of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*. By receiving a high level of threat, a person is more likely to assume a serious possibility of danger, which creates susceptibility and severity dimensions [32]. Moreover, the stronger levels of threat can produce positive outcomes from the fear appeal approach [33].

*Anger*

In general, the percentages shown in the findings indicate a similar pattern to the relationship between threat and all of the genres in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* (see Table 9). However, the figures demonstrate that the genres of economy, race, education, defence and internal safety, and development in both newspapers have a very strong relationship with anger at 100.0 percent. In contrast, the genres of general, politics, campaign and poll, religion, and

social welfare registered less than 83.0 percent. The percentage difference between these genres and the five previous genres is clear and large, especially when the comparison involves the religion genre which measured only 50.0 percent. Therefore, this present study suggests that the relationship of anger to the nine genres is less consistent compared to the relationship of fear and threat to the genres.

**TABLE 9**

Anger and genres of articles and news in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		<b>Anger (%)</b>
1.	General	82.1
2.	Politics / campaign / poll	73.9
3.	Religion	50.0
4.	Economy	100.0
5.	Race	100.0
6.	Education	100.0
7.	Defence / internal safety	100.0
8.	Development	100.0
9.	Social welfare	80.0

**TABLE 10**

Anxiety and genres of articles and news in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		<b>Anxiety (%)</b>
1.	General	96.4
2.	Politics / campaign / poll	97.1
3.	Religion	100.0
4.	Economy	100.0
5.	Race	100.0
6.	Education	100.0
7.	Defence / internal safety	100.0
8.	Development	50.0
9.	Social welfare	100.0



### *Anxiety*

Based on the findings, anxiety can be seen to have a very high correlation involving several genres of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*, as six of them showed the highest percentage at 100.0 percent (refer to Table 10). Meanwhile, percentages of politics, campaign and poll, and general genres recorded above than 96.0 percent but less than 98.0 percent, which also indicated a strong relationship with the anxiety. However, the development genre recorded a medium percentage. This reflected the moderate relationship between anxiety and the genre. From the figures obtained in the findings, it is found that the content of anxiety in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* has a strong correlation with all the genres except for development. On the other hand, the findings justify the conclusion that the relationship between all genres and anxiety is more consistent compared to their relationship with anger.

### *Risk*

Figures in Table 11 show similar pattern between the relationship of genres and risk with the correlation of genres and threat as previously described. Based on the findings, it was found that the six genres of religion, economy, race, education, development and social welfare contained in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* had strong relationship with risk at 100.0 percent. In contrast, other genres including general, politics, campaign and poll, and defence, and internal safety indicated lower percentages. Compared to threat, anger and anxiety, the relationship between risk and all the genres is strong and consistent in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*. It also significant in ensuring the effectiveness of the fear appeal approach.

**TABLE 11**

Risk and genres of articles and news in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		<b>Risk (%)</b>
1.	General	92.9
2.	Politics / campaign / poll	97.1
3.	Religion	100.0
4.	Economy	100.0
5.	Race	100.0
6.	Education	100.0
7.	Defence / internal safety	90.0
8.	Development	100.0
9.	Social welfare	100.0

**TABLE 12**

Category of news and articles in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	<i>Utusan Malaysia (%)</i>	<i>Harakah (%)</i>
Current news	95.0	86.7
Feature	3.3	10.0
Opinion / columnist	1.7	3.3

*The Use of Political Fear Appeal in Utusan Malaysia and Harakah Category and News Sections*

The previous discussion indicated that the use of fear appeal was found to be high in both newspapers. However, *Utusan Malaysia* illustrated a stronger tendency to use fear appeal in the current news at 95.0 percent (refer Table 12). Although *Harakah* showed a similar interest, the percentage was lower than that of *Utusan Malaysia*. Both newspapers tended to highlight the current news because their readers were strongly interested in current issues at the time, such as phantom voters. It is a nature where people get attracted towards something that is up-to-date and highly related to their daily lives.

In the feature category, *Harakah* used the political fear appeal approach more than *Utusan Malaysia*, albeit the percentage difference was small. Besides that, *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* recorded only a small percentage of instances of fear appeal into the opinion or columnist category, with less than 4.0 percent. It is therefore suggested that both newspapers are inclined to use fear appeal in the current news category due to its quality. Compared to features and opinion or columnist categories, current news tends to have simple, short and compact contents, and is sometimes accompanied by attractive pictures. This encourages people to read it more compared to other categories of news and articles in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah*. In contrast, feature, opinion or columnist categories are usually long and have more than 15 paragraphs.

Although *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* used fear appeal approach in the same category of news and articles, the findings show that journalists from both newspapers were inclined to allocate covered stories into the different sections. Each newspaper created three main sections. The three main sections in *Harakah* were: General, Fikrah and Bangkit. The figures from the findings indicated an equal percentage of political fear appeal content in the General and Bangkit sections with 40.0 percent, while the Fikrah section had 20.0 percent (see Table 13). It is suggested that *Harakah* had high awareness regarding the importance of these three sections in the inducement of fear appeal approach, thus giving priority to these sections, especially General and Bangkit.

**TABLE 13**

News section in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	<i>Utusan Malaysia (%)</i>	<i>Harakah (%)</i>
General	0.0	40.0
Fikrah	0.0	20.0
Bangkit	0.0	40.0
Dalam Negeri	11.7	0.0
Utusan Kota	3.3	0.0
Pilihan Raya ke 13	85.0	0.0

**TABLE 14**

Fear in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	<b>Unable to prevent (%)</b>	<b>No negative circumstances arise (%)</b>	<b>Able to prevent (%)</b>
<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	50.0	3.33	46.7
<i>Harakah</i>	33.3	1.7	65.0

In *Utusan Malaysia*, on the other hand, the three sections used to convey political fear appeal messages to readers were: Dalam Negeri, Utusan Kota dan Pilihan Raya ke-13 sections. However, the percentages in these sections are distributed differently compared to the *Harakah* sections. *Utusan Malaysia* concentrated its use of fear appeal in the Pilihan Raya ke-13 section, with 85.0 percent, thus influencing the percentages of other sections (see Table 13).

Compared to the Pilihan Raya ke-13 section, *Utusan Malaysia* placed less emphasis on the Dalam Negeri and Utusan Kota sections. It is clear that *Utusan Malaysia* concentrated on the Pilihan Raya ke-13 section as it was purposefully created to convey political messages which included fear appeal to readers. However, this strategy was not constructed in a well-balanced manner as *Utusan Malaysia* neglected the importance of other sections. The name Pilihan Raya ke-13 section itself clearly indicates the real intention of *Utusan Malaysia* creating it; this could cause discomfort among undecided voters who might skip the page altogether.

### *Fear*

There are three circumstances that may arise in inducing the emotion of fear into the *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* contents. These circumstances refer to 1) situations in which fear cannot be prevented, 2) those in which it can be prevented, and 3) those when no fear arises. Based on the figures in Table 14, it was found that *Utusan Malaysia* highlighted the first group (fear cannot be prevented) moderately, while *Harakah* gave them less emphasis. On the contrary, *Harakah* showed higher interest in covering issues in the second group (fear can be prevented) in its contents. Neither newspaper showed much

interest in situations where no fear arose. Thus, it is clear that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* had different interests and tendencies: *Utusan Malaysia* tended to focus on issues in which fear could not be prevented, while *Harakah* was more inclined to focus on issues where fear could be prevented.

It is suggested that the inducement of fear appeal in both newspapers is accompanied by the recommended behaviour, with the implication that the fear issue will be able to be prevented if the audience follows the recommended action. This is supported by the PMT model, in which [5] pointed out that when the cognitive responses towards fear appeal are perceived high, readers will be motivated to adopt and adapt the recommended behaviour.

Although *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* intentionally used fear appeal to increase people's support towards the respective coalition they each supported (BN, or PR), both newspapers employed different ways. This can be shown through their highlighted issues. Based on the figures in Table 15, the findings show that *Utusan Malaysia* had a strong tendency to induce fear in the political issues, including unstable and dirty politics at 90.0 percent. However, *Utusan Malaysia* showed a moderate tendency towards the general election, phantom voters, and immoral attitudes at 50.0 percent respectively. At the same time, the figures depicted a low propensity for *Utusan Malaysia* to cover issues such as economy, property, rural and urban development, safety, security and violence, race, abuse of power, general election, citizenship and Malaysia identity card, and religion issues. Three other issues, which are social development, cost of living, and education, were also ignored by *Utusan Malaysia*.

The tendency shown by *Utusan Malaysia* is in line with the election campaign season in which the aim was to persuade readers to support BN during GE13. It is also suggested that *Utusan Malaysia* tended to induce the fear emotion into the political, general election and phantom voters issues more than *Harakah* did in order to complement the space of Pilihan Raya ke-13; a section that was purposefully created by *Utusan Malaysia* to support the BN's political campaign.

The inducement of fear into the issues of politics, general election, phantom voters, and immoral attitudes involving the the opposition was part

of the strategy to convince readers that BN was the best coalition to rule the country. One of the news items that contained strong fear inducement in *Utusan Malaysia* was “*Musa akui sentimen ditiup Kit Siang jejas hubungan kaum*” dated 29 April 2013. It says that fear and racism sentiment played by DAP among Chinese community in order to get their votes will have a negative effect on multiracial relationships in the country. In addition, the action taken by *Utusan Malaysia* either by giving less attention or ignoring the other issues justified the insignificance of the issues.

Referring to the data in Table 15, *Harakah* showed almost a moderate tendency in inducing fear appeal into issues of politics and immoral attitudes. One of the news items by *Harakah* dated 29 April-2 May 2013 with the title “*Calon BN Perak ‘ketua keganasan politik*” reflected the immoral attitudes of the BN candidate. In contrast, the figures demonstrate a slightly lower tendency of *Harakah* in covering general election, phantom voters, abuse of power and cruel government issues compared to the previous issues. The tendency of *Harakah* towards nine other issues, which are economy, property, social development, rural and urban development, cost of living, safety, security and violence, education and race, is also very low. In addition, it showed no interest or inclination to introduce fear appeal into religious issues.

The findings justified the conclusion that *Harakah* had a tendency to induce fear into all the issues that have been identified earlier in this study, except religion. *Harakah* may have tended to ignore the religious issue due to its awareness that it was a highly sensitive issue. Nevertheless, *Harakah* was inclined to allocate almost a moderate fear emotion into issues related to politics and immoral attitudes, in which it used similar amounts of induced fear.

However, *Harakah* induced greater amounts of fear in the issues of abuse of power, cruelty and government compared to *Utusan Malaysia* as the way to convince its readers that BN was not a suitable coalition to rule the country. Since some of the issues registered low percentages and some of them only received coverage from one newspaper, the assumption can be made that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* induce fear emotions only into issues that reflected the newspapers’ own interests.

**TABLE 15**

Fear issue in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

			Yes (%)
1.	Politics / unstable politics / dirty politics	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	90.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	58.3
2.	Unstable / uncertain economy or financial	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	13.3
3.	Property (house /land)	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	10.0
4.	Social development	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	3.3
5.	Rural / urban development	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	8.3
6.	Cost of living increase	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	15.0
7.	Safety / security / violence	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	21.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	13.3
8.	Education	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	3.3
9.	Race / racism	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	11.7
10.	Religion	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	13.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	0.0
11.	Immoral attitudes	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	50.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	58.3
12.	Abuse of power / cruel / government	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	36.7
13.	General election / poll / phantom voters	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	50.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	25.0
14.	Citizenship / Malaysia identity card	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	5.0

### *Threat*

Based on the figures in Table 16, it appears that the political issue had a high content of threat in *Utusan Malaysia*. This is not surprising in the GE13 season when journalists from *Utusan Malaysia* tended to give more coverage to this issue. In contrast, it had a moderate inducement of threat in issues of immoral attitudes. *Utusan Malaysia* also seemed to have limited interest in inducing threat into several issues such as safety, security and violence, race, loss or damage, property, and abuse of power, and no interest at all in inducing threat into the issues of economy, poverty, education, and phantom voters.

On the contrary, *Harakah* has been seen to be less focussed on political issues compared to *Utusan Malaysia*, as the threat inducement was at a moderate level. Meanwhile, the level of threat by *Harakah's* journalists in covering the issue of abuse of power appeared to be almost moderate. Among the issues identified in this study, *Harakah* showed the highest interest in the immoral attitudes, although the threat inducement level was only slightly above average. Meanwhile, *Harakah* had a low inducement of threat into nine other issues.

It is suggested that *Utusan Malaysia* was more concerned with inducing fear into political issues rather than other issues, although the newspaper had a moderate tendency to highlight the immoral attitudes of opposition candidates in order to convince people that the opposition coalition was of suitable to rule the country. On the other hand, *Utusan Malaysia* clearly gave low priority to inducing threat into several insignificant issues and ignored the issues of economy, poverty, education, and phantom voters.

Unlike *Utusan Malaysia*, *Harakah* was inclined to employ threat in all the issues, but priority was given to immoral attitudes, political and abuse of power issues. However, although *Harakah* tended to induce the threat into all the issues, this was at a low level.



**TABLE 16**

Fear issue in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

			Yes (%)
1.	Politics / unstable politics / dirty politics	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	86.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	50.0
2.	Unstable / uncertain economy or financial	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	13.3
3.	Immoral attitudes	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	50.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	60.0
4.	Safety / security / violence	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	23.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	11.7
5.	Poverty	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	5.0
6.	Cost of living increase	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	16.7
7.	Education	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	3.3
8.	Race / racist	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	8.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	8.3
9.	Loss / damage	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	13.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	10.0
10.	Property	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	10.0
11.	Abuse of power	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	40.0
12.	Phantom voters	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	8.3

Although *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* support different political coalitions, the findings reveal a similarity in the type of threat used in their contents. Referring to Table17, both newspapers appeared to apply vague threats, inappropriate communication threat and direct threat.

**TABLE 17**

Type of threat in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

	Vague (%)	Inappropriate contact (%)	Direct (%)
<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	31.7	33.3	35.0
<i>Harakah</i>	33.3	18.3	48.3

**TABLE 18**

Form of threat in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		Yes (%)
Physical	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	23.3
	<i>Harakah</i>	16.7
Social	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	55.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	76.7
Control	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	71.7
	<i>Harakah</i>	83.3

Even though the percentages for each type are below average, *Utusan Malaysia* showed its consistency in using vague threat, inappropriate contact threat and direct threat. The distribution suggests that *Utusan Malaysia* is aware of the need to balance the use of the three types of threats to achieve its goal to increase support for BN. On the contrary, *Harakah* was inclined to use direct threat more than vague threat or inappropriate contact threat. The level of its tendency to use vague threat was similar to the level of appropriate contact threat used by *Utusan Malaysia*. This suggests that *Harakah* believed the use of direct threat is more effective than other types of threat. In addition, *Harakah* had a greater tendency to use direct threat compared to *Utusan Malaysia*.

Thus, *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* showed similar patterns in the use of forms of threat although they each support different political coalitions (refer Table 18). Each of newspaper had the highest propensity to apply physical forms of threat, followed by social and physical forms of threat. However, the tendency of each level is different. Figures in Table 18 indicate that the

difference between the level of control form of threat and social control form of threat used by *Harakah* is small, but there is a big difference in the level of physical form of threat. Moreover, *Harakah* also showed greater tendency than *Utusan Malaysia* in to use control form of threat and social form of threat, while *Utusan Malaysia* had a greater tendency to use physical forms of threat than *Harakah*.

*Anger*

Figures in Table 19 indicate that *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* both produced news and articles that were able to make their readers angry and disgusted. About two-thirds of the content produced by *Utusan Malaysia's* journalists could provoke anger and disgust, at an equal level. In contrast to *Utusan Malaysia*, *Harakah* showed a significantly greater tendency to produce anger and disgust at a much higher level, with a slightly higher level of content that coul produce emotions of disgust in its readers. It is likely that *Harakah* induced more anger and disgust in its content because journalists believed this approach would be able to influence the voter behaviour during GE13. The findings depict the greater tendency of *Harakah* compared to *Utusan Malaysia* to include a high level of anger and disgust in the fear appeal message of this alternative newspaper.

**TABLE 19**

The audience response towards *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

		Yes (%)	No (%)
News and articles able to make readers angry	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	31.7	68.3
	<i>Harakah</i>	10.0	90.0
News and articles able to make readers disgusted	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	31.7	68.3
	<i>Harakah</i>	8.3	91.7

**TABLE 20**

Violation content of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* that triggers anger during GE13 campaign

		Yes (%)
Community violation	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	70.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	83.3
Autonomy violation	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	30.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	68.3
Divinity violation	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	5.0
	<i>Harakah</i>	1.7

Three types of violation coverage that can trigger anger among readers - community violation, autonomy violation, and divinity violation (Hutcherson & Gross, 2011) – occurred in both newspapers. Referring to the findings shown in Table 20, *Harakah* showed its higher tendency towards community violation and autonomy violation coverage compared to *Utusan Malaysia*. The high percentage shown in the table suggests that *Harakah* gave a high priority to community violation coverage in its space. In contrast to *Harakah*, *Utusan Malaysia* included less coverage that violated community norms, and autonomy violation was at a moderate level. Neither newspaper showed much interest in divinity violation.

It can be concluded that *Harakah* had high awareness regarding the potential of anger inducement through violation coverage, which it used to persuade people to vote PR during the GE13. However, as a mainstream newspaper and a mouth-piece of the ruling BN coalition, *Utusan Malaysia* was more cautious in pursuing the issue of violation, because it could affect social harmony in the country. Similarly, the tendency to avoid divinity violation by both newspapers is due to its sensitivity.

**TABLE 21**

Fear issue in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

			Yes (%)
1.	Politics / unstable politics / dirty politics	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	90.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	50.0
2.	Unstable / uncertain economy or financial	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	13.3
3.	Safety / security / violence	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	26.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	11.7
4.	Poverty	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	5.0
5.	Rural / urban development	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	5.0
6.	Education	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	6.7
7.	Race / racist	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	8.3
8.	Cost of living	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	16.7
9.	Loss / damage	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	11.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	10.0
10.	Property	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	11.7
11.	Immoral attitudes	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	48.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	51.7
12.	Abuse of power	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	38.3
13.	Phantom voters	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	8.3

*Anxiety*

Table 21 shows that *Utusan Malaysia* had a very high propensity to use political issues in order to evoke anxiety among its readers, compared

to other issues. Its tendency in inducing anxiety into immoral attitudes, and safety, security and violence issues are below average level, and it showed a low inclination towards other issues including economy, rural or urban development, race, loss or damage, property, and abuse of power. It had no interest in education, cost of living, and phantom voter issues.

In contrast with *Utusan Malaysia*, *Harakah* showed a moderate level of interest in inducing anxiety into politics and immoral attitudes issue. However, this alternative newspaper allocate a low level of anxiety inducement into other issues excluding abuse of power, which is below moderate level.

Referring to the finding, it is suggested that *Utusan Malaysia* was deeply concerned with inducing anxiety into political issues as part of the pre-season campaign ahead of GE13. This inclination, which is clearly greater in *Harakah*, caused *Utusan Malaysia* to give less attention or to ignore other issues that were considered less important. On the contrary, *Harakah* was able to attend to several issues, whether significant or less significant, without ignoring any of them.

### *Risk*

The findings in Table 22 show that *Utusan Malaysia* had a very high propensity to highlight the risk of political issues, followed by immoral issues, which are almost at a moderate level. Moreover, *Utusan Malaysia* also had a tendency to incorporate risk into safety, security and violence issues, but at a below average level. Meanwhile, other issues contained in *Utusan Malaysia* had little risk except for three issues that did not get attention from the newspaper, namely: cost of living, Malay political autonomy, and non-transparent election process. Compared to *Utusan Malaysia*, *Harakah* was more inclined to induce risk into all the issues, albeit at a low level. Based on the figures, *Harakah* showed a moderate level of risk in immoral issue, but the level of risk in political issue was below moderate level.

It may have been counter-productive for *Utusan Malaysia* to concentrate only on political issues, as not all readers are interested in that issue. *Harakah* made a wise decision to fully utilise all issues, although the inducement level of risk was low.

**TABLE 22**

Risky issue in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* during GE13 campaign

			Yes (%)
1.	Unstable / uncertain economy or financial	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	8.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	13.3
2.	Politics / uncertain politics	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	81.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	41.7
3.	Cost of living increase	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	16.7
4.	Malay loss political autonomy	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	1.7
5.	Voting opposition bring disaster	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	1.7
6.	Immoral attitudes	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	48.3
		<i>Harakah</i>	50.0
7.	Abuse of power	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	10.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	28.3
8.	Rural / urban development	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	1.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	6.7
9.	Unfair / non-transparent election process	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	0.0
		<i>Harakah</i>	11.7
10.	Loss public trust	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	6.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	11.7
11.	Safe / security / violence	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>	26.7
		<i>Harakah</i>	8.3

**CONCLUSION**

This study has shown that both *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* used a fear appeal approach in their news and articles during the election campaign. The 100.0 percent percentage showed in the findings regarding fear emotion inducement in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* contents confirmed that all the samples selected in the study included elements of the fear appeal approach. In fact, the relationship that was shown to exist between the characteristics of

fear appeal's characteristics and the genres and types of news items and articles reinforces the significance of the use of fear appeal in the GE13 campaign.

To conclude, several assumptions can be made regarding the outcome of the study. Fear appeal's characteristics, which are fear, threat, anger, anxiety and risk, were strongly induced into the contents of *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* by the journalists. The study found that both newspapers used various genres in employing the fear appeal approach during the campaign period as they both had a vested interest in inducing fear into the issue of politics. Moreover, the characteristics of fear appeal and genres of the news and articles published by *Utusan Malaysia* and *Harakah* reflected the strong relationship between them. Even though both newspapers shared the same goal, which was to increase support for their respective political coalitions, the way they raised the issues and selected the genres determined the differences in the use of fear appeal between the two newspapers.

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