

Islamic journalistic model of news writing: the effective tips for news writing by using acrostic model

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Keywords: News writing, islamic journalistic, acrostic model

ABSTRACT – Study on the representation of Islam and Muslims is strongly encouraged as this special issue is progressing. The idea and inspiration of this study sparked from the negative portrayals of Islam and Muslims in the media. Therefore, we put forward our interest to commence Islamic journalistic model of news writing. The findings that we collected from this research we presented in the form of acrostic model. Most importantly, this study on the other hand offers ideas from the experienced media practitioners helped us a lot in developing the model that can be used among communication students and Muslim journalists.

1. INTRODUCTION

Muslim journalists should be more proactive and creative in order to respond to the global issue on negative portrayal about Islam and Muslims in the media especially from the West. The point is that the issue of Islam and Muslims has been consistently portrayed negatively in which Islamophobia and media stigma becomes a main agenda as shown through a news reports from Al Jazeera dated July 10, 2019 [1] which saying that the rise of Islamophobia in the UK contributing to the negative coverage on Islam and Muslims. This has been supported by [3] in her study saying that the topic of Islamophobia become the mainstream and media discourse by labelling Muslims as fanatical, bigoted, extremists and terrorists. Other than that, Rane, Nathies, Iskhan and Abdalla [3] mention in their study that Islam and Muslims have been presented in public and media discourses in ways that are stereotypical, anecdotal and often unsubstantiated. Alghamdi [4] points out the perception that all the terrorist attacks occurring in this world must have connections with Muslims. Among some of the reasons why Islam and Muslims are being labelled as the influence, for provoking certain individuals to commit more violence, crimes and attacks is based on the confirmative language used by the media to make explicit statements and clear accusations against Muslims. This shows that language is manipulated and represents a prejudiced reporting against Islam and Muslims, as the Western media perceived that Islam or Islamic organizations are accountable for any terrorist attacks. Due to the above claims and statements, an improvement needs to be done on how the news should be written is necessitated.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The utmost reason to produce the acrostic model of Islamic journalistic writing is to counter the rapidness of information flow especially in the social media. The free-flow information disseminated on the social media has opened up the space for communities to share everything such as news, photos, videos and etc. and also possibilities to create free content through website platform. According to the recent study by Nor Afizan and Fariza Hanis [5] the news writing has given tremendous impacts to the society as the social media such as *Facebook* has allowed news and videos shared among the communities swiftly. Therefore, their analysis found out that the news writing should be improved as it gives impact to the journalistic endeavor. Due to this, *New Straits Times* on March 9, 2019 reported that a Malaysian was sentenced to more than 10 years' jail and three others were charged over insults against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad on social media under laws against causing racial disharmony, incitement, and misusing communications networks.

Another intention to initiate the acrostic model of Islamic journalistic writing is to have the starting idea on how to give simple tips or guidelines for journalism students to do a reporting on news based on Islamic perspective. This idea is very significant as this could be one of the ways to counter the negative portrayals of writing related to Islam and Muslims in the media.

The awareness is very alarming as this issue gives negative reflections to the image of Islam and Muslims over the globe. Therefore, a well-prepared strategy should be done to overcome this issue slowly but surely will work effectively. To realize this, we look into producing an acrostic model of Islamic journalistic writing which can be applied by young writers especially to students and any Muslim writers and journalists. Through this, teaching and learning for particular subjects related to news writing can be very hands-on, interactive and impactful to the students. Ideally, the implementation of acrostic formulas in writing news based on Islamic perspective can be the best practice among Muslim writers, Muslim professionals, journalists and students.

3. METHODOLOGY

In general, many have known in common that there are six fundamentals of news writing and gathering. According to Krull [6], timeliness, impact, prominence, proximity, singularity and conflict or controversy are the main principles in news writing to be followed. Hence, to

fit into this study, we develop the general principles of news writing by innovating them for Islamic perspective. We conducted two types of methodological approach which are Quantitative Content Analysis and Interview the experts and experienced media practitioners.

To achieve this, the content analysis is performed by analyzing news articles related to Islam and Muslims published in Malaysian newspapers such as *Harian Metro*, *Sinar Harian* and *The Star*. Through the analysis in one-year duration which is 2018 for quantitative part, we found variety of themes and different style of reporting news have been emerged from Malaysian newspapers in past year 2018 which are majority in Political Islam, Islamic laws, Muslims' Attitude, Islamic Fine, Islamic Thinking. Thus, the findings from content analysis is strengthened with the qualitative approach. We interviewed the experienced media practitioners from variety news organizations, and realized that there is a need to formulate a guideline in writing and gathering news based on Islam and Muslims issues in order to enlighten the standard and quality image Islam and Muslims in the media.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The output from the interview, we aim to the development of the acrostic model of Islamic journalistic writing can help students and other Muslim journalists to provide a well-written without any bias, favoritism and unfairness. Thus, the standard and quality of news writing can be enhanced by all.

Table 1 Acrostic Model of Islamic Journalistic Writing

Acrostic Word	Definition	Description
F	Find out	For example, each journalist should find a news on issues related to Islam and Muslims, looking for a fresh/ information etc.
A	Accurate	All the facts must be accurate and based on multiple credible and trusted sources
I	Impact	The news about Islam and Muslims should give impacts/good impacts to the audiences.
T	Truth	All the news must be true and is well known for reporting the news as it is. It serves a healthy dose of reality from both sides of the political spectrum.
H	Honesty	The journalists must be honest in collecting information, write based on the facts given to them and strictly no lying.
F	Fact checked	The journalist should have to check all the facts before publishing
U	Uniqueness	The uniqueness of the news will give credit to the news

itself as it can promote Islam
 Lead News about Islam and Muslims should lead over other news or should be prominent compared to other news.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study proposed on how communication students specifically can practice knowledge, skill and talent to write news related to Islam and Muslims in a positive way. Due to the main aim of this study is to provide insight on how news writing can help to improve the image of Islam and Muslims in the media, the content creators should be realized.

The news writing from an Islamic perspective remains significant, with respect to not only understanding about Islam itself, but also in view of incorporating diverse global religious, multi-racial societies and most importantly to capitalise on Islamic values and principles towards media representation of Islam and Muslims.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was supported by Research and Innovation Management Centre (RIMC) Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia under the Short Grant (PPPI/FKP/0217/05100/10918). I would like to thank my great team from Communication Program at Faculty of Leadership and Management, USIM who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted the research.

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