REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS IN MALAYSIAN MAINSTREAM NEWS REPORTS

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ABSTRACT

People who use drugs (PWUD) are a marginalised group of people in Malaysia. They experience multiple denunciation including being homeless, having limited educational and career opportunities, experiencing fear and paranoia, having medical issues, being exposed to street violence, and learning to be helpless. While it is undeniable that PWUD (albeit not all) engage in crime to fuel their addiction and to survive, it is argued in this research that the relatively persistent engagement of semantic characterisations of PWUD in mainstream news perpetuates a societal conception that PWUD are dangerous pariahs. There are implications to these kinds of semantic propositions. These characterisations make it difficult for PWUD to be reintegrated into society as they reinforce existing stigmas, to break out of the aforementioned predicaments, to find stable jobs and to become useful members of society. This qualitative study examines a total of 77 mainstream news reports extracted from online archives to examine how the PWUDs' identities are represented and established in the mainstream news reports, and (3) the possible theoretical explanations behind the construction of their identities with special focus on stigmatisation and ideologies that shape perceptions and mental representations. The findings of this study reveal that mainstream news reports represent PWUD with multiple identities through the employment of various linguistic elements and rhetoric devices. Through this realisation, this study provides possible alternatives that can be done to reduce stigma in the media against PWUD.

Keywords: People who use drugs, semantic representation, identity, Malaysian news media, mainstream news, stigmatisation, ideologies, crime, discourse analysis.

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ABSTRAK

Individu yang terlibat dengan penyalahgunaan dadah (PWUD) adalah golongan terpinggir di Malaysia. Mereka berhadapan dengan pelbagai masalah seperti ketiadaan tempat tinggal, peluang pendidikan dan pekerjaan yang minimal, ketakutan, paranoia, masalah kesihatan, pendedahan kepada keganasan jalanan serta 'learnt helplessness'. *Meskipun PWUD biasanya terlibat dengan kegiatan jenayah, ia dihujahkan di sini bahawa ciri-ciri semantic dalam representasi PWUD dalam media umum meneruskan suatu konsepsi sosial bahawa PWUD adalah pariah yang berbahaya. Terdapat implikasi daripada ciri-ciri semantic ini. Ciri-ciri ini menimbulkan kesukaran untuk mengintegrasikan PWUD ke dalam masyarakat kerana ciri-ciri ini menguatkan stigma yang sedia ada, PWUD sukar keluar daripada masalah-masalah yang dinyatakan awal tadi, PWUD sukar mencari perkerjaan yang stabil dan PWUD sukar menjadi warga masyarakat yang berguna. Kajian kualitatif ini meneliti 77 laporan berita yang diekstrak daripada portal berita untuk mengetahui bagaimana identiti PWUD digambarkan dalam laporan berita, dan untuk mengetahaui mengapa identiti mereka direpresentasikan sedemikian dengan menggunakan penjelasan teori yang bersesuaian, dengan memberikan penekanan terhadap stigma dan ideologi. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa laporan berita mencirikan PWUD dengan pelbagai identiti melalui aplikasi elemen linguistik dan perantian retorik. Melalui elemen-elemen ini, kajian ini juga memberikan pendekatan alternatif untuk mengurangkan stigma terhadap PWUD.*

Kata-kata kunci: Individu-individu yang menggunakan dadah, representasi semantik, identiti, media berita Malaysia, berita aliran arus perdana, stigma, kefahaman ideologi, jenayah, analisis wacana.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

News media do not only exercise influence on the public in shaping ideologies and opinions, but they also play a role in shaping public perceptions, attitude and needs (Bell, 1991; Turow, 2011; Van Dijk, 1995b). News media have been archetypally examined from various dimensions such as social meaning, representations, intertextuality and power (Bernier, 2011; Boholm, 2012; Burns & Crawford, 1999; Hartman & Golub, 1999; Hilton, Hunt, Langan, Bedford, & Petticrew, 2010; Kabgani, 2013). In relation to news media and drug related matters, scholars have examined how the news media have depicted drug issues and the stereotypical views on people who use drugs (Boyd, 2002; Hughes, Lancaster, & Spicer, 2011; Jones, 2005). Cain (1991) for example, examined how people who use drugs have been portrayed across various discourses as 'addicts'. He finds that people with addiction problems are "crucially mediated through discourse" (p.26).

Unsurprisingly, people who use drugs (henceforth PWUD; can also refer to the singular noun – person who uses drugs) are regarded as outcasts and they are often marginalised, suppressed and stigmatised (Ahern, Stuber, & Galea, 2007; Anker, 2006; Chermak, 1997; Jackson, Dykeman, Gahagan, Karabanow, & Parker, 2011; Jürgens, Csete, Amon, Baral, & Beyrer, 2010; Stevens, 2008; Stoddart, 2006). What seems like 'normal labelling' are stigmatising because through negative representations, PWUD are likely to become deprived of basic needs, human rights and employment (UK Drug Policy Commission, 2008). Stigmatising labels affixed to PWUD brings about harm, among others:

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- make reintegration difficult and deteriorate their self-worth and image and as a result, makes reintegration complicated
- harm the reputation of PWUD and their family members (Barker & Hunt, 2004; Jackson et al., 2011). This would lead to two possibilities: family and relative members supporting their recovery or disowning them (Barker & Hunt, 2004, p.348)
- make it hard for PWUD to access pharmacies, drug treatment services, hospitals, dentists, social services, housing landlords, criminal justice system and employment (UK Drug Policy Commission, n.d.)
- pose a big impact on the recovery of PWUD
- threatens their chances of reintegration into the society and will ultimately lead them to the path of recidivism (Van Olphen et al., 2009, p.7).

Based on a personal interview with an *Agensi Anti-Dadah Kebangsaan* (The National Anti-Drugs Agency; henceforth AADK) officer and medical practitioner, it is understood that drug abuse is a complex 'disease' that not only limits one's self-control but is also governed by "influenced by a multitude of highly entangled factors", that include environment, genes, and biological factors (also see National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2008). This study takes on a textual level of analysis to examine how PWUD have been represented – or more aptly, stigmatised – in the mainstream news media.

By acknowledging the fact that "crime, drugs, violence and cultural deviance are [the news media's] preferred ethic issues of coverage" (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 1996, p.93), this study hopes to shed light on the ways the relevant stakeholders represent PWUD, and that the findings of this study would be able to promote social changes by (i) creating public awareness, (ii) promoting human rights, (iii) empowering PWUD to uphold their rights against inequality and stigma, and (iv) acting as a mediator between the media

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and relevant parties to suggest non-stigmatising ways to represent PWUD in the news media.

1.1. Research Purpose and Questions

In general, this study examines how PWUD are represented in the Malaysian English news media. To achieve this purpose, this dissertation is driven by the following research questions:

1. *How are PWUD represented in Malaysian English news reports in mainstream news media?*

   The first research question examines how PWUD are represented in the Malaysian English mainstream news reports. The representation of PWUD in 77 mainstream news reports are thematically analysed (Roberts & Sarangi, 2005) in Chapter 4 using semantic concepts like denotation, connotation, reference, thematic relations and word classes that are employed in the news in order to represent their identities. Van Leeuwen's (2008) analytical framework of representational analysis is also employed to aid the analysis.

2. *What are the possible theoretical explanations for the PWUD's representation in the news media?*

   Chapter 5 provides a theoretical discussion on why PWUD are represented as such in the news by others (i.e. journalists, politicians, etc.); tying in relevant studies to understand this phenomenon.

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1.2. PWUD in Malaysia

Stigmatising labels have commonly been used to identify PWUD. Calling people who use drugs as "drug users" or "drug addict" is stigmatising because these terms carry negative connotations and can cause shame (Hayes, 2000). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as well as other international drug agencies (e.g. Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation, World Health Organisation) have ceased using the term "drug users", preferring the term 'people who use drugs' instead. This could be a wise move because the modifier, *who use drugs*, identifies users as *people*, rather than by their illness. For this reason, the term "person/people who use(s) drugs" (PWUD) is also used in this research.

This can be regarded as an approach towards decriminalising PWUD because negative labels evokes more negative reactions and sustains punitive treatment. Since PWUD are often associated with the "mentally ill", they are also not exempted from being linked to "substance use" problems.[1] The World Health Organisation conducted a study in 14 countries to find out about the various kinds of stigmatisation (e.g. homeless, HIV/AIDS, criminal) and they ranked drug use as the most stigmatised human condition while substance abuse was ranked fourth (Ahern et al., 2007; Kelly & Westerhoff, 2010). People with substance related problems also experienced shame and fear alike PWUD. Kelly and Westerhoff (2010) explained that describing people with substance related problems as "substance abuser" instead of "someone with substance use disorder" call forth for more negativity and punitive treatment towards this marginalised group.

Malaysia is still considered a 'young nation' with lesser experience compared to its neighbouring Asian countries like Japan when comes to dealing with the emerging and

[1]It is worth taking note that alcoholism is indeed an act of substance abuse, but is not documented under the Dangerous Drug Act 1952 (Act 234) or any other Malaysia laws and legislation.

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proliferating drug addiction problem (Kamarudin, 2007).[2] The estimated population of people who consume drugs in Malaysia is constantly growing. According to statistical data provided by the Malaysian Department of Statistics (2010), the numbers of PWUD between 2000 and 2008 in Malaysia were 126,153, with an average estimated growth of 14,017 of new PWUD per year. Only an estimated number of 250,000 are registered users in year 2008 and this figure is predicted to continue rising until half a million by 2015. This is an obstacle to Malaysia's endeavours to becoming a "*drug free*" nation by 2015 (see Razan, 2010). Out of this figure, approximately 90% of PWUD are unskilled and jobless (Yoong, 2012, p. 4-5) and 65% of PWUD are mainly young adults between ages of 20-29. The adverse effect of drug abuse threatens the nation's socio-economic health, natural culture of the demographics and population, whilst "undermining national resilience and national security" (Tanguay & Drug Policy Consortium, 2011).

It also reported that the PWUD are often associated with HIV/AIDS (Barra, n.d.; Gordon, 2011; Pittam & Gallois, 1997) and those affected in Malaysia are recorded as high as 76%. In 2004, it is found that 1,448 inmates in prison rehabilitation centre (Kajang) are infected with HIV/AIDS. At the initial stage of this epidemic during the 1990s, the PWUD are the "main drivers" for 70-80% of HIV/AIDS reported cases (see International Aids Society, 2013).

The AADK 2013 drug report provides detailed information on the use of drugs by Malaysian Malays, Chinese, Indians and indigenous people. The largest drug consumption users are the Malays (18,693 as of 2010). This figure dropped to 5,667 (13.97%) in 2013, whereas the Chinese and Indian scaled up to 7.29% and 9.79% respectively, from 2009

[2] Japan launched the "Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy in Japan" after the Headquarters for the Promotion of Measures to Prevent Drug Abuse collaborated with United Nations to curb drug problems. This strategy plan was prepared and drafted out for the Special Session on International Drug Control of the U.N. General Assembly (see *http://japan.kantei.go.jp/yakubutu/980701yakubutu.html*).

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until 2013. Heroine is found to be one of the most commonly abused drugs in Malaysia, followed by methamphetamine, kratom, cannabis, ketamine and ecstasy (MDMA), in respective order (see Alcohol Rehab, n.d.).

The next section provides a brief discussion on the relevant Malaysian Laws concerning PWUD.

1.3. Related Malaysian Laws Concerning PWUD

Malaysia is one of the strictest countries that impose capital punishment for drugs, apart from its neighbouring countries, Singapore and Brunei. Drug control, distribution and even use are governed by the *Dangerous Drugs Act* 1952 (*Act 234*; previously known as the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance 1952). This statute covers aspects like the penalty system, import and export regulation, sales and usage and procedures. Other existing Malaysian drug statutes include the Drug Dependants (Treatment and Rehabilitation) Act 1983 (*Act 283*), the *Dangerous Drugs (Special Preventive Measures) Act* 1985 (*Act 316*), the Poisons Act 1952 (*Act 366*) and also the Dangerous Drugs (Forfeiture of Property) Act 1988 (*Act 340*). PWUD are labelled as "drug dependants" under Act 283, which is arguably stigmatising because it creates negative impressions. "Drug dependant" is defined under the Act as:

> A person who through the use of any dangerous drug undergoes a psychic and sometimes physical state which is characterised by behavioural and other responses including the compulsion to take the drug on a continuous or periodic basis in order to experience its psychic effect and to avoid the discomfort of its absence.

Under Act 366, a "drug dependant" may be charged under Section 15 if they are found to possess and administer drugs themselves:

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S. 15. (1) Any person who—

(a) consumes, administers to himself or suffers any other person, contrary to section 14 to administer to him any dangerous drug specified in Parts III and IV of the First Schedule; or

(b) is found in any premises kept or used for any of the purposes specified in section 13 in order that any such dangerous drug may be administered to or smoked or otherwise consumed by him, shall be guilty of an offence against this Act and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding five thousand ringgit or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

(2) For the purpose of this section, "consumes" includes eat, chew, smoke, swallow, drink, inhale or introduce into the body in any manner or by any means whatsoever.

The word "consume" in this section, which includes "eat, chew, smoke, swallow, drink, inhale or introduce into the body in any manner or by any means whatsoever", could put PWUD at a disadvantage because they could be mistaken as abusing substitute drugs (e.g. methadone) even though they actively seek treatment for their recovery (e.g. methadone maintenance therapy) (Mohamed & Kasa, 2007). Moreover, if law enforcement officers "reasonably" suspect PWUD of abusing drugs, they could be taken into custody and tested for drug use, as stipulated in Section 3(1) of Act 283.

When PWUD are arrested, they are detained for 24 hours to undergo a drug test. Bail with or without surety is only allowed if the tests cannot be conducted within that 24 hours. After 24 hours, the police may proceed by producing the arrested PWUD to a magistrate for an extension up to 14 days of detention. After being subjected to a rehabilitation officer or government medical officer who determine if he/she is a drug dependant, the magistrate will then decide an order for his/her rehabilitation or treatment.

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The PWUD would then be refrained from undergoing treatment if the police or narcotics officers are present at the NSEP sites or community care centres to avoid any possibility of apprehension. The law unfortunately jeopardises the PWUD's recovery and ability to obtain effective treatment because they are under the mercy of the officers and may get caught if they are 'reasonably suspected' (Mohamed & Kasa, 2007). Sometimes, law enforcement officers would raid the clinics to arrest PWUD who are suspected of breaking the law (Kamarudin, 2007) although in recent times, this practice has become rare but testimonies from PWUD reveal that it is common for officers to confiscate their legally obtained syringes away from NSEP sites (Yoong, 2012, p.13). These sorts of legal harassment are not only unique to Malaysia, but they also happen in other countries too (Lian & Chu, 2013; Matheson et al., 2013; Smith, 2010; Van Olphen et al., 2009; World Health Organisation, 2009).

Enforcement officers can even arrest a suspect without a warrant. If this were to occur, the individual will be denied bail unless by court order. When caught by the police, PWUD may be charged violating the law. PWUD may also be charged on the death penalty if the police have reasonable suspicion that the PWUD is trafficking drugs (and not using them for self-consumption). If they are charged for being a drug dependent, the PWUD will not be liable for life imprisonment although if convicted, but he or she may have to be incarcerated in a rehabilitation centre to undergo series of treatment (see Sections 38B and 39).

On the other hand, the types of offences listed under the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952: Section 10 (2) (b), 14 (1) and 15 (a), are applicable to PWUD in which they may be charged under the Act if found guilty. It is interesting to note that Section 35 of this Act states the involvement of the person or company who hires the PWUD, albeit not directed at the PWUD. This may result in employers having doubts about employing PWUD for the

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fear that the individual will be caught in the act or recidivate to their old habit. This creates stigma and makes PWUD encounter difficulties in getting a job. This law poses a threat to the well-being of PWUD in the event that they repent and seek reintegration into the society. In other words, such law hinders PWUD's future opportunities and indirectly gives legitimacy to the companies to deny employment options for PWUD as to avoid taking risks of hiring them.

1.4. Drug Practices and Abuse

Drug consumption can be done either injecting or non-injecting method. In the case of this study, people who use drugs generally include injecting and non-injecting users. For non-injecting method, the drug is introduced into the body via oral intake and oral drugs often come in the form of smoking, inhalation and pills (see European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, n.d.). These pills can be reproduced with the mixture of other drug component such as heroin with methamphetamine; more commonly known as 'ice' (Reid, Kamarulzaman, & Sran, 2004). The trend of using "poly drugs" has increased after the quality of heroin decreased in Malaysia (ibid.). It is unknown when this shift took place although use of poly drugs is reported to be on the rise (Reid et al., 2004). The problem with poly drug use is that the ingredients of mixture are usually unknown or not medically tested (see DrugScope, 2014) and more than one drug are used at the same time or on the same occasion (see also RELEASE, 2014). Experimental poly drugs, like the "Tab" pills are commonly used by party-goers (Soliano & Ng, 2014).

The injection method involves opioid or stimulants (i.e. Ecstasy, Amphetamine and Cocaine) to the body system via direct injection into the blood stream (Centre for AIDS Prevention Studies, 2003). The injection method are usually driven by peer pressure, hike in heroin price, lower quality and shortage of heroin and stronger desire for euphoria

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(AVERT, n.d., Rahman et al., 2011). The act of sharing needles exposes them to the threat of HIV/AIDS. Injecting PWUD are frequently linked to the epidemic of HIV/AIDS (see United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2009). This risk is further aggravated by unprotected sex activities amongst the PWUD. Drugs like methamphetamines have the potential to heighten sexual desire and unsafe sex (see Centre for AIDS Prevention Studies, 2003).

The National Anti-Drug Agency (2013) reports that opium has been the most popular drug for Malaysian PWUD. Within 5 years (2009- 2013), it is estimated that more than 45% of PWUD became users of heroin and morphine. Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) drugs on the other hand rates as the second most popular choice of drug consumption to date. The steady rise in the demand for the ATS drugs is due to its fast production rate and cheaper production cost, making it more affordable and readily available in the market (Fah, 2004).

PWUD also use heroin in Malaysia. It is an extremely 'potent opiate' and highly addictive regardless of its way of consumption and administration (Centre for Substance Abuse Research, 2013b). It is commonly introduced into the body system through intravenous injection apart from other methods like sniffing, snorting and smoking. The latter methods are usually done to avoid the practice of needle sharing. Processed from morphine, the heroin effect is quick to appear (about 7-8 seconds) and PWUD could most instantly feel the 'peak effects' after the single dose and it would last for a few hours (ibid.).

Withdrawal from this drug would then start to appear after a few hours, producing side effects like restlessness, vomiting and uncomfortable feeling of drug craving amongst many others. These side effects will only dissipate after a new injection is administered to the body, thus leading PWUD to continuously abuse the drug even if they could no longer

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"experience the euphoric effects, simply to provide relief from the painful, flu-like withdrawal symptoms". After repetitive use of heroin, the PWUD becomes tolerant to it and would increase its dosage until the heroin is no longer effective. The PWUD would then resort to mixing drugs in order to achieve the diminishing effect of pleasure that they once felt. Injecting heroin with cocaine is known as 'speedballing', whereas 'crisscrossing' is commonly practiced with snorting heroin and cocaine mixture (ibid.). Other methods of heroin consumption include mainlining (injecting heroin into a vein), skin-popping (injecting heroin just below the skin's surface), and tourniquet/ tie-off (tie around the arm in order to make a vein protrude) (Centre for Substance Abuse Research, n.d.).

1.5. Malaysian Mainstream News Media and Practices

News organisations in Malaysia are required to acquire a mandatory license for media operation from the Home Ministry in accordance to the clauses and regulations in the Printing Presses and Publications Act (The Open Society Foundations, 2013). The media's dependency on the license to operate puts them in a position whereby their freedom of publication is somehow restricted to an extent whereby all publications deemed errant required adequate explanation (p. 67). Even if sources are from independent, non-governmental organisations, these organisations are required to submit all of their information (i.e. organisation's name, sender's name, contact number, signature, address) to the media for monitoring purposes (p. 36). Such requirement shows that the prime source of knowledge and news are from a "controlled source" of information (Mastroianni & Noto, 2008, p.299).

This regulation is enacted by the government to curb and prevent sensitive issues in the media such as issues "relating to relating to race, religion, and royalty" (see The Open Society Foundations, 2013, pp.67-69). Arguably, the frequency of certain news (e.g. drugs

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related matter) that appeared in mainstream can be linked to the fact that mainstream news are mainly funded and supported by the government (The Open Society Foundations, 2013). In a study conducted by Nain and Anuar (1998), the Malaysian mainstream news media are found to be aligned with the government, in which the media are owned by the "ruling coalition BN" and others by businessmen alike, and this puts them in a difficult position if the news published are "too critical of the government".

Apart from government funding, the Malaysian mainstream news organisations get its income from webpage-based advertisements. Additionally, Kenix (2011) states that the mainstream news generally functioned to maximised its group of audiences through "journalism that is conventional and formulaic [in newswriting], [whilst] relying on content that would appeal to most number of readers and therefore ignoring the issues that are more important to smaller, minority groups".

The following table provides some information of the circulation and total unique visitors per day (to respective websites) for the mainstream news media under study:

Table 1.1: Mainstream News Media of Interest

Mainstream newspapers	**Readership**	**Circulation**	**Unique visitors per day**
BERNAMA	N/A	Online (bernama.com.my)	44,944
New Straits Times	236,000	95,860	55, 204
Star The people's paper	1,839,000	298,821	290,522

(Information retrieved on the 26th of February, 2015)

BERNAMA (*Berita Nasional Malaysia*), also known as the Malaysian National News Agency is an autonomous news agency under the umbrella of Ministry of Communication

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and Multimedia. *BERNAMA* started its operations on 20th of May 1968 and functions as the government's official news portal. *BERNAMA* distributes local and foreign news in Malay and English and is the first to "computerise its editorial operations" in 1984. *BERNAMA* provides syndicated news services (somewhat similar to the services provided by *Reuters* and *the Associated Press*) and therefore, do not possess the readership and circulation information. Additionally, *BERNAMA* operates online in order to provide immediate news.

The second mainstream news media in this study is The New Straits Times (NST). This newspaper is re-established in 1974 after the ban due to political dispute between Malaysia- Singapore water issues (Seah, 2005). Its online website (nst.com.my) receives an estimated total of 55,204 unique visitors per day (Simple Web Stats, 2015). The third mainstream news media in this study *The Star*. Founded on the 9th of September 1971 with its first publication as a regional newspaper, it began its nationwide circulation on the 3rd of January 1976 after its new setup in Kuala Lumpur. This newspaper agency is well known as a mainstream media due to its strong influence and ownership of Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), which is Malaysia's "second-largest party in the ruling coalition" (Malaysian Chinese Association, n.d.).

The following chapter further discusses the conceptual and theoretical preliminaries of some relevant literature to this research.

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CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Preliminaries

This chapter discusses the relevant theories and concepts in answering the research questions. It covers the following topics:

- News media (Section 2.1)
- Ideology in the news media (Section 2.2)
- Identity (Section 2.3)
- Linguistics analysis (Section 2.4)

2.1. News Media

Under this section, news media is discussed in three parts pertaining to the following areas:

- Newspapers: Definitions and practices (Section 2.2.1)
- The production team: Roles and responsibilities (Section 2.2.2)
- News creation and dissemination (Section 2.2.3)

2.1.1. Newspapers: Definitions and Practices

There are numerous attempts by scholars to define 'news' but it remains ambiguous to date (Van Dijk, 2013b). News, for instance, is defined by Bell (1991), as "the primary language genre" that serves to "fill pages of daily newspaper and hours of radio and television time" (p.1). Catenaccio et al. (2011) on the other hand defines it as going beyond a "wide range of genres and media that it encompasses" and they also mentioned that it is also a difficult task

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to attach a definition to the word ‘news’. However, they said that in order for one to define news, one has to view ‘news’ from their own respective roles. For instance, different people with different roles, like the news practitioners and media scholars, would have different views of what ‘news’ is (Cotter, 2010). For the purpose of this study, the term ‘newspaper’ shall include news reports retrieved from online database. These news materials may have been published in the printed format, and they may be archived online as well.

Despite differences in printed and digitised format, van Dijk (2013) points out that the main gist of ‘news’ comrprise of three interrelated ideas: 1) ‘new information’ regarding situations, events, and persons, 2) television or radio programmes in which news are disseminated, 3) ‘news item or news report’ (i.e. a text or discourse) found either in radio, TV or newspaper that gives off ‘new information’. As further emphasised by van Dijk, ‘news’ in this era is not typically presented in a “concrete article or item, but [rather as] the latest media news information”, in which it possesses “a more semantic nature” of information in news reports (p.14). In addition, Catenaccio et al. (2011) also mention that the term ‘news’ refers to “ a broad spectrum of journalistic activity” that are not limited to newspapers but also to other technological domains such as online news sites and internet based social media among others.

On the other hand, the understanding of news event is subjectively dependent on the aforementioned variables that enabled the readers to form a “model of representation” from the news they read, regardless of the news domain. This ‘model’ is defined by van Dijk (1996) as the “mental representation of an experience that is, an event people witness, participates in, or read about”. Through the understanding of news reports, readers construct a model in their minds with regards to the content of the news report and such model also includes their perceptions or opinions as well (ibid.).

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However, van Dijk notes that in order for these models of representations to form, the newsmakers would already have a model of their own of the news events, in which "they will generally write their reports in such a way that readers form a model that is at least similar to their own model of such an event". These preferred meaning or understanding forms the "core of processes of persuasion, disinformation and the media control of the public" in the best interest of the 'elites'. Information is manipulated based on its importance by the display of "more or less prominently news report, headlines, leads, or photographs" (p.14), in which all the above mentioned is decided and constructed by the newsmakers.

Where information is concerned, there are particularly two methods that the news media organisations could make use for material publication – print or digital. In a research conducted by Veglis and Pomportsis (2004), they investigate the transition from traditional print media to digital format of online news and discovered that news production models change when information technology is introduced to news making organisations. News media has undergone profound changes since the introduction of information technology in the news production industry. Driven by the needs for profit and revenue generation, the print media have "taken advantage of digital technologies in order to accelerate production throughput and to optimise capital investments" (p.2).

2.1.2. The Production Team: Roles and Responsibilities

News production has evolved to be extremely challenging, and it demands journalists to produce news on the day the event occurs (The Open Society Foundation, 2013). Journalists tend to resort to using smart phones for on-the-spot news reporting. Some even provide 'live feeds' with updated news on social media sites like Twitter and Facebook (p.57). In order for news media to provide the fastest and most accessible coverage to the

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public, it often neglects the cost of news credibility and exaggeration in order to garner support from the public for various reasons (e.g. political, newsworthiness) (Cassels et al., 2003; Cotter, 2010; Druckman, 2005; Farsetta & Price, 2006; Forsyth, 2012). This section discusses the roles and responsibilities of newsmakers in producing the final news product.

Traditional print media have embarked on news digitisation and have assigned editors for their online sites. Journalists would also need to adapt to higher workload and responsibilities, which include web sites monitoring on a regular basis (The Open Society Foundation, 2013, pp. 58-59). The differences between newsmakers' roles and responsibilities in traditional print and digital news media's operations are difficult to distinguish nowadays, due to the fact that overlapping responsibilities and changes in technology influence and impacte the flow and process of news making (Hayes, Singer, & Ceppos, 2007; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009).

While there are many versions in defining 'news writers' and 'journalists', these terms shall be used exclusively in this study as "[someone] who applies his or her powers of observation, investigation and enterprise [in order to] provide the public with intelligence and commentary about current affairs" (Knight, 2008, p.14). Since the 'journalistic role performance' happens to generally overlap in practice, Mellado (2014) provides a stronger 'conceptual basis' that views journalists' role performance in "three different perspectives of specific role typologies":

- the degree of manifestation of the journalistic voice in the news
- the relationship that journalism has with people in power
- the way the journalist approaches the audience in the news story

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However, these three perspectives shall be analysed based on different socio-economics, cultural and political considerations, with six different dimensions of journalistic role performance as the following (Mellado, 2014, pp. 8- 13) (also see Appendix A):

- *Intervention*- "manifest the need for change in relation to any event or topic, propose or demand changes as to how a determined action is being carried out by a group or individual".
- *Watchdog* – "function of scrutinising official behaviour".
- *Loyal-facilitator* – "cooperate with those in power, and accept the information they provided as credible".
- *Service* – "impact everyday life, provide tips and advice to manage problems in audiences' life, tips and advice to improve aspects or solve personal problems, consumer advice".
- *Infotainment* – "narrate on one or more people and their different intellectual, physical, mental, social or basic personal attributes, stimulate senses and trigger emotions".
- *Civic* – "educate in duties and rights citizen perspective, address to citizen demand and citizen questions, and provide background info, local impact".

From these dimensions, the journalists' role performance are redefined as "the actions performed prior to the news output" in order to churn out the final product of news, whilst abiding by other organisational rules that commit a journalist (or news writer) to other tasks like working in the newsroom, writing several articles on various topics on a daily basis, and also depending on how one's news organisation demands the journalist's role in general (Mastroianni & Noto, 2008; Mawindi Mabweazara, 2010; Mellado, 2014). Ultimately, the role and responsibility in producing news lie in the outcome of the final product (news) which reflects how these news writers, a representative of their news organisation, project viewpoints through the utilisation of language and substance of content (function, meaning, structure) (Perrin & Ehrensberger-Dow, 2006).

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2.1.3. News Creation and Dissemination

Rickheit and Strohner (2008) note that the people involved in "journalistic mass media production [are subjected] to conflicting expectations with respect to their role" (p.304). Such demanding expectations on news workers require them to produce "high impact at low cost" newsworthy materials, alongside with their readiness to "respond to the unexpected [while] working within rigid production structures". In the following 'journalistic text production' process, journalists might possibly encounter problems in these areas (Perrin, 2006):

i. Topic limitations
ii. Source of news and reproduction
iii. Personal stance and position of the topic
iv. Linkage of obtained facts altogether
v. Relevance of news to audience
vi. Inadequate space and time restrictions.

Perrin and Ehrensberger-Dow (2008, pp. 304- 306) have also discussed that news workers' media competence have helped them achieve the desired news outcome. Media competence, according to them, is defined as:

> "The embodiment of general, topic-specific, and event-specific abilities that together make it possible to solve tasks appropriately and effectively with medially-transmitted communication".

Media competence is considered an ability possessed by the individuals concerned in the news making, who are also part of the "people's retrievable and usable knowledge" about their environment and even themselves. In other words, the public would rely on these

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media competent news workers to provide source of information and to furnish them with facts. A media competent news worker would also require competence in media-specific language skills or demonstrate "the capacity to use language in a socially appropriate way and apply it successfully to meet one's own communication objectives (and those of other relevant concerned parties) in interpersonal, organisational, and public settings" (pp. 310-311).

In order to achieve these communicative objectives, news workers have to undergo the following processes of news writing: *gather, focus, order, draft, revise.* According to Hall (n.d.), writing news is a "logical sequence of steps". The first step is to gather important and relevant information for the piece of article. Once the facts are obtained, the writer has to decide the focus of the news, whereby every news should be entitled to a 'dominant idea' organised into a logical order. Facts that do not fit or flow into the coherence are discarded. The story must be edited to be "more powerful" and writer must not hesitate to remove "anything that does not belong" to the text. The end product is then revised by editors until satisfactory.

Montgomery (2002) says this process would mean that "certain dominant styles of linguistic construction" actually portrays the media's ways of evaluating and perceiving an event. Van Dijk (2013b) also discovers that news agency are commonly deleted as part of its operational news production. Lexical substitution and syntactic rules are also employed in news editing throughout the process of news creation (Bell, 1991, pp. 71-73). In a study done by Hughes et al. (2011), they find that news media reporting on illicit issues are "sensationalised, biased and narrow" and they differentiate the various Australian local newspapers' ways of reporting illicit drugs. They conclude that the media has its ways of representing different drugs in various contexts and the type of drug mentioned would bring about the readers' mixed reactions towards it. For instance, amphetamines appears to have

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the "most explicit and pejorative value dimensions, with almost half portraying a 'bad' moral evaluation" (p.289). Thus, PWUD who consumed a certain kind of drugs (e.g. ATS, amphetamines) would likely to be known as the dangerous kind of individual. The portrayal of PWUD as 'dangerous people' often appear in various news spreads typically more common with the news media found in the local newspapers, news and editorial columns. Disparaging representation of the PWUD's identities in the news reinforces stigma and causes the public to fear them.

Sources have also argued that news media are not only created to represent a group of people in a certain manner but to also specifically construct realities through language use in order to illicit the audience's desired reaction (Manning, 2001, 2006; Mastroianni & Noto, 2008; McKane, 2013; Tsfati, 2010). This brings about journalistic approaches (i.e. inverted pyramid, narrative, hourglass) that are responsible in constructing 'news' in a different light. Yet the most common way of producing news that journalists generally use or recommend is the *inverted pyramid* model (Jacobs, Maat, & Van Hout, 2008; Turow, 2011; Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2010). The inverted pyramid structure is divided into sections that help guide journalists to create objective' news[3] that are typically structured and functions to incite emotions into their readers. However, there are news practitioners who do not condone the use of the inverted pyramid. To them, it is not the best way of organising a piece of news because information deemed unimportant to the journalists at that moment in time; thus to be omitted (Emmanuel, 2010). Despite of this, it is still the

[3] Objective' news are news that are presented in a "fair, balanced and impartial representation of the events that took place" (Turow, 2011). This kind of news follows the *inverted pyramid* structure that guides the journalists on how to summarise, research, organise and present the news (p.54). An objective news report shall contain four major characteristics: 1) news writing must adhere to the format of an *inverted pyramid*, 2) news should be told by third person, 3) news should include at least two sides of a conflict, and 4) the news must include quotes from matter experts as support (p.55).

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prevailing structure used by the journalists to create "hard, breaking news" stories because it tells allows them to tell "quickly what [the audiences] want to know" (Hall, n.d.).

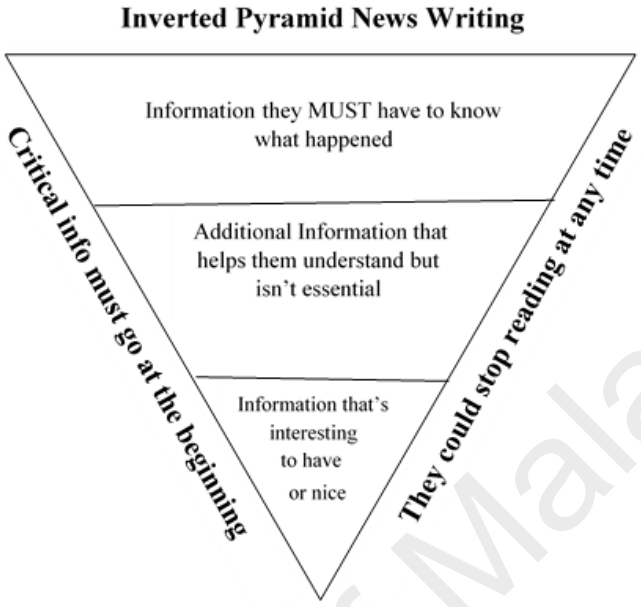

Figure 2.1: The Inverted Pyramid structure

It is also important to note that within the context of this study, not all news articles might be structured and written based on the inverted pyramid. Whilst inverted pyramid news might attract the readers with its catchy details, topics that are controversial would still create and incite negative vibes.

With a special focus on newswriting about drugs, Mastroianni and Noto (2008) confirm that drug related news are indeed the subject of controversy, regardless of how 'informative' the news could be. Topics regarding drugs would create "fear and insecurity". In their study to understanding the process of news making in relation to representation of drugs from the viewpoint of Brazilian journalists, 22 professional journalists were interviewed and they said that newspapers would sometimes deliberately instil fear in order to generate high sales, even though the stories' contents might be compromised.

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News media researchers (Jacobs et al., 2008; Johnston & Flamiano, 2007; Perrin & Ehrensberger-Dow, 2006; Van Dijk, 2013a) tend to agree that it's difficult to monitor the flow of news production due to the complex nature of overlapping roles (also see Appendix B) that are responsible towards respective news organisations to provide timely news to the public. Because of tight deadlines, journalists would sometimes opt for syndicated news or even press releases as "written sources which are already prefabricated in [appropriate] news style [required] minimal reworking", thus saving time (Bell, 1991, p.58).

Based on news studies on its creation and processes (Mastroianni & Noto, 2008; Mawindi Mabweazara, 2010; Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2010), the purpose for news writers to publish not only in print media but also digital news is to report not solely on the truth but also, to generate and raise news organisation's profits. When the latter becomes the focus and target amongst news workers, it becomes very difficult for the public (who relies on news workers for their source of information) to perceive depicted events in other perspectives when the privileged news media is on the upper hand to control how news reporting should be in order to boost revenues or in rare cases, for personal interest (i.e. award, promotion) (Reinarman & Duskin, 1999). Furthermore, people generally see the news media as mirroring society and they rarely question the credibility of the perceived news (Turow, 2011) because readers tend to assume a "large number of people" have been accountable for the reported events, even though the "code of behaviour" in reality may differ (p.28).

In order to disseminate news to the public, the end product (newspaper) needs to be distributed in mass production. The distribution included places like newsstands, supermarkets and even digital devices (computer, mobile phone) (Turow, 2011). At the distribution level, the finished issue is exhibited (p.327). The local news organisation would

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then have to determine the appropriate places to market their newspapers, based on these factors (p.329):

i. Location of target audience and consumers
ii. Location of present (and future) printing area
iii. Competing newspapers
iv. Loyalty (if any) of consumers towards a specific newspaper in the area

Although this current study aims to look into the representations of PWUD in the local newspapers (via online), it is equally important to comprehend the underlying foundations of news production and its organisational practices that in turn, influence the kind of news outcome that news makers (e.g. journalists, editors) from various news organisations would produce. Often, the newsmakers are partially responsible for the way people treat PWUD; either through mitigating or amplifying stigma. If the latter takes effect and causes PWUD to be rejected by the community, the existing or non-existing stigma within the society is further reinforced and their identities become harder to challenge (Bruce & Phelan, 2001; Guyll, Madon, Prieto, & Scherr, 2010; Hayes, 2000).

2.2. Ideology in the News Media

News functions to mediate the process of information dissemination by selecting what the public needs to know and eventually determines what people should think or be concerned of. Van Dijk (2013b) defines 'news media' as a news making process that is "partly autonomous in cultural reproduction, partly dependent and monitored by more embracing societal structures and ideologies [like selecting and focusing on elite social actors]" (p.192). It is important to note that ideology is often interwoven with news media.

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'Ideology', in the words of Luke (1998), is a system of "ideas, beliefs and practices, and representations, which operate in the interests of an identifiable social class or cultural group". Van Dijk (1995a, p.248) explains that:

> "Ideologies are basic frameworks of social cognition, shared by members of social groups, constituted by relevant selections of sociocultural values, and organised by an ideological schema that represents the self-definition of a group. Besides their social function of sustaining the interests of groups, ideologies have the cognitive function of organising the social representations (altitudes, knowledge) of the group, and thus indirectly monitor the group-related social practices, and hence also the text and talk of members".

Ideologies represent "sociocultural norms and values that are relevant for each social group, based on shared a particular set of beliefs and values" (Van Dijk, 1995b, pp.11-12). It is almost impossible to separate ideology from news media and society because news exist to embed ideas and beliefs into the society (Van Dijk, 2006, 2013b).

On the other hand, Mastroianni & Noto (2008) also note that if the news fails to influence its audience, at least the news had set its "priorities for which issues should be considered". The importance of these priorities is indicated through its occurrences. The more recurring a topic is, the more important it becomes and this would influence general readers (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Relating to drugs, although it may not necessarily be popular with the public, the idea of togetherness and 'shared values' in fighting the drug scourge is commonly instilled, to make all parties equally responsible for the outcome they desired to have within the society – in this case, Malaysia as a drug free nation by 2015 (also see *BERNAMA, 2012).*

News reinforces ideas and perceptions in order to create a need or demand to fuel the public's desire to "orientate themselves properly towards their environment" (Shaw,

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1977, p. 102). Such needs are rendered 'beneficial' and necessary to create social equilibrium. For example, what the society despises (e.g. crime) could be a motivational drive for stakeholders (e.g. policymakers) to formulate solutions to address existing or future social problems and to unite people to fight a common enemy.

News media have been emphasising the idea that drugs are 'malevolent agents' and that associations with this substance will often lead the disastrous results like moral punishment and long term stigmatisation (Tupper, 2008). People who utilise this substance will be branded 'wicked' and deserve punishment (Marlatt, 1996). By framing drug use as a 'disease', PWUD risk being labelled a 'society menace'. Awareness of such labels has prompted human rights activists to fight against prevailing drug addiction discourses, and for the rights of PWUD.

'Framing', another relevant concept associated with "organising everyday reality and essential feature of news" (Scheufele, 1999, p.4), is concerned about "dominant perspectives" about "how issues [at stake] are reported" (also see Weaver, 2007 in Jönsson, 2011). Framing thus becomes a tool of "viewing media or news frame that turns meaningless and incomprehensible happenings into discernible events" (Scheufele, 1999). According to Jönsson (2011), framing analysis is useful in media text analysis as this method is generally used to "describe how different issues are represented in news media". The type of analysis will generally explain how "words, phrases or ideas help contribute in [shaping] public perception". In her study about environmental risks in the Baltic Sea, she analyses the way Swedish news media discuss risk issues by identifying keywords combined with 'risk-related' concepts (e.g. "Baltic Sea* + environment* + risk).

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2.3. Identity

Whilst numerous theories are available to explain the phenomena of stigma and labelling, it is important to acknowledge the fact that it is not feasible and practical to provide all explanation in one study. Thus this section functions to discuss identity in four relevant key ideas, namely:

- Labelling theory (Section 2.3.1)
- Intergroup relations: Us-Them (Section 2.3.2)
- Identity and representation (Section 2.3.3)
- Identity and stigma (Section 2.3.4)

2.3.1. Labelling Theory

Extensive research on labelling and its consequences have sparked interest in multidisciplinary research (Hayes, 2000; Heckert & Best, 1997; Link & Phelan, 1999; Schur, 1984). Prominent researchers like Link and Phelan (1999) have shown how labelling and stigma have implications in understanding society's core issues and its long term effects on the affected people. They also discuss how stigma exists in different aspects of our lives and creates drastic effect on the affected individuals, such as opportunities for employment, reintegration, health, housing and others. In addition, they note that "social scientists who are interested in understanding the distribution of such life chances should also be interested in stigma". The Labelling Theory is important for this study because it helps to explain the relevance of stigma and labels with the existing problem of human rights and inequality for those who do not conform to the societal norms.

The theory also helps to explain how the self-identity and behaviour of individuals (in this case the PWUD) are constructed or influenced. Labelling individuals who do not fit

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into an in-group status mark these individuals as deviants who are different from the normal 'us'. The words used to label the PWUD are generally negative and these are done to depict a malfunctioned individual/criminal. Labelling consists of stereotyping, or finger-pointing attributes of differentness of a specific individual or group (Schur, 1984). This theory is also often associated with the concepts of self-fulfilling prophecy (Horwitz & Scheid, 1999; Link & Phelan, 1999; Walton & Banaji, 2004). The process of labelling also involves agencies that possess a great deal of power to control the society's perception, behaviour, norms, et cetera. In the case of this study, the media serves as an agent that spreads information about what a PWUD is.

In reference to this study, it is worthy to also consider both Social Identity and Identity theories in describing affiliated identities of PWUD, in which the discussion should focus on "situations, roles, characteristics and ideologies that are often stereotypical and that these associations become part of the shared knowledge and representations of [PWUD group], which in turn feed into wider ideologies and beliefs" (Fina, 2006, p.13).

2.3.2. Intergroup Relations: Us-Them

The act of categorising PWUD has set forth many research to identify the "labels used for identification, criteria [for] categories membership [as well as] attributes, actions and situations that are typically associated with them" (Fina, 2006, p.12). The process of categorisation is understood as how local identities expressed are reflective of the broad social circle that includes representations between individuals and groups (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Hornsey, 2008; Labarta & Dolón, 2005). Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, and Flament (1971) argue that categorisation is not a 'universal' event and for it to happen, society must first create a generic out-group attitude, in which norms, values, moral and expectations that

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exists within the social system shall be "fostered or reinforced [into] modes of socialisation and education" towards treating the in-groups and out-groups differently (p.3).

Tajfel and colleagues suggest that the purpose of categorisation is to serve as a guide to understand role relationships in order for people to determine in-group membership or out-group membership. This guideline drives a person towards an appropriate manner or conduct, and in turn, creates "order and coherence to social situations" (p.5). From this perspective, categorisation gives power to the group of people in charge for the "order and coherence of society" (e.g. government, policymakers), where "prototypical attitudes, behaviours, and values" are enforced upon the public in order for them to function properly. The act of social categorisation would indeed lead to discriminatory acts against the out-group members, if the media functioned to set 'order and coherence' by propagating discriminatory remarks or prototypical values upon its mass readers; whether or not to judge the PWUD from a negative or neutral perspective in news.

Some parallels can also been drawn from Dyers and Wankah's (2012) research on the discursive construction of South Africans in Greenmarket Square, Cape Town. They analyse the use of lexical items in spoken and written discourses that separate South Africans from people of other nationalities. They argue that inequality exists within the migrant community of Cape Town and this bias behaviour is understood from the words used to describe the South Africans as 'those people', 'black people' and 'white people' to name a few. Such inequality shows "hegemony of cultural racism and exclusionary state policies as well as the often violent exposure to xenophobia" (p.16). Dyers and Wankah's study about the intergroup relations is useful to this current study in terms of understanding the underlying themes and discursive patterns in both spoken and written discourses that are involved in studying the representations of the marginalised. Like their study, the

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current one reveals lexical items used by journalists to depict PWUD in news discourses and these lexical items are also organised according to relevant emerging themes.

2.3.3. Identity and Representation

Manning (2006) observes four 'symbolic frameworks' that news agencies commonly use to organise news coverage. These four frameworks are divided into dimensions of (i) location, (ii) behaviour/ identity, (iii) substance images, and (iv) causes and consequences. He then elaborates based on those four dimensions. Drug abuse normally takes place within the confines of a home (location), whereby this act is often associated with crime and violence (behaviour/ identity). To paint a negative image of the PWUD, all these factors coupled with exaggerated media reporting are required to lead to the consequences of 'social disorder'.

After all, the public relies on the news media for information as it represents reality (Wilson, 2011). Furthermore, the media could come across as being 'political' and have a major impact on how readers would see the world, in which stereotype or prejudice can either be "reinforced or shattered" (ibid.). Wilson (2011) also lays out the factors and questions needed in order to interpret representations in media texts:

- The person who produces the media text
- What and who is represented in the news
- The audiences' frame of reference in the process of understanding the news context (positive/negative)
- Why is the story framed in such a way and how was this specific representation phrased in such a term?
- Are there any other alternatives in interpreting such representation?

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Bucholtz and Hall (2004) formulate a semiotic model to explain the nature and processes of how "social and political relations engendered through semiotic acts of identification" (p.370). Their framework, called the Tactics of Intersubjectivity, attempts to fill in the gaps of what other identity model failed to resolve. These gaps identified are issues pertinent to culture, power and agency (p.382). Tactics, as explained in their framework, are termed into three pairs: (i) adequation and distinction, (ii) authentication and denaturalisation, and (iii) authorisation and illegitimisation (p.383), and they function to 'foreground' the use of identity in various contexts:

- Similarity and difference
- Genuineness and artifice
- Legitimacy and disempowerment (of some reference group, individual)

However, they also note that this model does not serve to complete the identity models; rather, they function as a "way to examine relational dimension of identity categories, practice and ideologies" (ibid.). In another study by them, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) state that identity is the product instead of "the source of linguistic and other semiotic practices". It is sociologically and culturally determined rather than being an internal psychologically driven consequence. They also note:

> "Identity may be in part intentional, in part habitual and less than fully conscious, in part an outcome of interactional negotiation, in part a construct of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an outcome of larger ideological processes and structures".

Although Bucholtz and Hall's framework is used to provide explanation in the semiotic processes of identity formation, Turner's (2007) Theory of Transactional Needs provides a

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detailed explanation on how identity of formed via self-verification and transactional needs. Turner defined the four basic identities, namely the core identity, social identity, group identity and role identity. He attempts to explain this 'hierarchy of identities in relation to the individuals' needs and emotions (Turner, 2013). He also explains that these levels of identities are interrelated and help one another to form identity. Additionally, he reasons that people would "orchestrate their behaviour in an effort to verify any or all four identities in a situation" (p.351). For instance, an individual would experience negative emotions (e.g. shame, guilt, etc.) if his/her identity is not verified. To be verified, one's identity must be acknowledged and accepted by the society and thus, in the process, gave way to representations of the individuals' identities.

With this in mind, van Leeuwen's social actor's representation network model serves as one of the working systems that is responsible in explaining the representations of social actors and social actions of this study. According to him, social actors (also 'participants') or the timing of social practices can be recontextualised". Indeed, how recontextualisation takes place is by looking at how these people and their actions are being represented in 'specific discursive contexts', in accordance to his model's "sociological and critical relevance of categories" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.160). By looking at discursive strategies and linguistic forms of how PWUD's identities and actions are represented in Malaysian news reports, this social actor representation model provides a "socio-semantic categorisation" for this study to explore the ways these PWUD are represented (Don & Lee, 2014). In the process of recontextualisation, van Leeuwen emphasises on the aspect of social practice, wherein social actors, their actions and even, news presentation style are represented in desired, specific ways through language manipulation, as employed by the journalists and news writers (Labarta & Dolón, 2005; Westera & Intelligence, 2008).

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2.3.4. Identity and Stigma

Stigmatisation, which could lead to the stereotyping of certain groups, are usually triggered by inferences and assumptions made by readers (Fina, 2006; Galinsky, Hugenberg, Groom, & Bodenhausen, 2003; Heckert & Best, 1997). From inferences and assumptions, stigma becomes the outcome of 'cognitive categorisation' (Jones, Farina, Hastorf, & French, 1984), when in-group members decide what characteristic is to be deemed desirable or discrediting to disengage and counter 'deviants' (out-group members). In reality, stigma attached to out-group members like PWUD inevitably stereotype them as "members of imputed attributes" because they do not fulfil the criteria as expected of them in order to blend into the in-group (pp. 5-6).

When there is a clash of 'imputed attributes' versus the 'expected attributes', a negative 'gap' is formed and this gap creates stigma. Goffman (2009) envisions this 'gap' as the trigger to stigmatisation, resulting from the "discrepancy between [virtual social identity] and actual social identity" (p.2), in which the former deals with how one is characterised based on society's expectations whereas the latter refers to the true attributes that are possessed by that person. That said, stigma is socially constructed (Yang et al., 2007). Link and Phelan (1999) further elaborate that stigma is interrelated with five social components, namely labelling, stereotyping, cognitive separation, emotional reactions and discrimination (p.2).

Unlike Goffman who sets to conceptualise stigma on managing 'spoiled identity' of stigmatised individuals, Link and Phelan (1999) offer a different stance on stigma as a process that "depends on the use of social, economic, and political power that imbues the preceding stigma components with discriminatory consequences" created by 'structural power' (i.e. government, media). This system of *representation* does not consist of 'individual concepts' but also the various ways of "organising, clustering, arranging,

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classifying concepts, [and] establishing complex relations between them" (Hall, 1997, p.5). Moreover, these representations are configured by readers in order to make sense of the 'context dependent prototype' of these individuals' social category.

Once categorised, Hogg and Reid (2006) elaborate that the group of people are seen as the "relevant group prototype" and are represented in a way that they will "[fit in or] embody the prototype" (pp.10-11). In their writing, they note:

> "[Prototyped individuals] are not viewed as unique individuals but as embodiments of the attributes of their group. Since group prototypes specify how people feel, perceive, think, and behave, social categorisation generates stereotypical expectations and encourages stereotype-consistent interpretation of ambiguous behaviours".

By the same token, Roccas and Brewer (2002) puts Smith's (1998) definition of prototype as "abstracted representations of the central tendency, average or typical values of the members of a category" (p. 6). Unlike prototype that focuses on a set of shared values that dictates the identity the said individual/group, stereotyping is about how one group acts in a way to differentiate another by upholding their shared beliefs in comparison to the other group (Tajfel, 1981).

Geeraerts (2008) explicates that "that prototypicality is basically a psychological notion, whilst stereotypicality is a sociolinguistic notion" (p.32). For example, the display of common shared values of group activists who fought for the decriminalisation of PWUD (see also Branson, 2014) in comparison with the perspectives of some people in the society who do not believe that PWUD could overcome their plight. However, representations manifested are not only depicted by prototypical attributes and stereotypes but also intensified by the use of adjectives, denotations or connotations within the news contexts.

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Connotations within labels in the text gives rise to meanings that are governed by culture and emotional associations of the particular word. As a result, inferred identities are constructed from the personal view and understanding of readers from various reported sources (Walton & Banaji, 2004). Inferred identities can conjure assumptions and subjectivity from the labels used. To infer an identity, aspects like culture and emotions are triggered. Because inferring identities are commonly observed in the news, PWUD are presented with wide range of identities to suit the content of news (this would be further explained in Chapter 4).

2.4. Linguistic Analysis

In order to examine how PWUD are linguistically represented, it is important to develop a systematic analytical framework of analysis. To achieve this, the following concepts and theories are referred to in this research as they are most relevant and appropriate. These theories and concepts are discussed in the following subsections:

- Connotations in the Representation of Identity (Section 2.4.1)
- Denotation and Reference as Representation of Identity (Section 2.4.2)
- Word Classes in the Representation of Identity (Section 2.4.3)
- Thematic Relations (Section 2.4.4)

2.4.1. Connotations in the Representation of PWUD

Research on connotations have been studied extensively over the years by scholars in areas like corpus linguistics (Baker et al., 2008; Edmonds & Hirst, 2002; Geeraerts, 2006), collocations (Montevecchi, 2011; Philip, 2003), representations (Hall, 1997), and even metaphors (Deignan & Potter, 2004; Wikberg, 2006). However, studying connotations can

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be challenging due to the vast meaning and nature of words (Montevecchi, 2011), as Hoffman (1993) puts it: "[the] term has no accepted meaning, except that it is opposed to denotation, so it may be wise to avoid it" (p.308). Unlike denotations, connotations are subjective, culturally bounded and evolves according to time (Yao, 2012).

Connotations also involve 'emotive meanings' and for this reason, word meanings would change from time to time, bounded by cultural expectations and individuals' background knowledge (Geeraerts, 2010). 'Emotive meanings' that undergo changes are distinguished either by the *pejorative change* or *ameliorative change*. The former change is shifted towards a 'more negative meaning' whereas the latter is more inclined towards the positive side of meaning (p.28). Yet, both changes to the words do not necessarily alter the denotational meaning of words. It is also equally important to note that the pejorative and ameliorative changes are not the same as euphemism and dysphemism, although all of those terms would mean the use of more or less negatively (or positively) connoted word (p.29). Geeraerts (2010) continues to explain that pejorative and ameliorative changes are 'diachronic semasiological process' whereas euphemism and dysphemism are devices that involve 'synchronic stylistic choices'. In other words, pejorative and ameliorative changes take place through the evolution of time and development of language, thus changing the meaning of a negatively (or positively) connoted word to a more positively (or negatively) connoted word. In contrast, euphemism and dysphemism are simply for typological (i.e. structural or functional) purposes.

Apart from having 'emotive meanings' attached, connotations are more than mere 'descriptive meaning' and are heavily influenced by "sociocultural implications [of the words used]" (Montevecchi, 2011, p.4). Montevecchi (2011) also states that connotations 'condition [the] interpretation of words' and as such, linguistic ambiguity with the lack of clarity (i.e. connotation) do indeed shapes the way one perceives reality as 'common sense'

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and eventually creates 'ideological assumptions' based on one's own "commonsensical interpretation of linguistic expressions" (pp.4-8). Thus in her study, she suggests looking at a lexical item's "surrounding words", in which she referred to as "habitual friends", in the process of determining possible alternatives in order to interpret the original meaning because "finding a complete and exhaustive definition of [a word] is indeed [tough]" (pp.3-4).

For this reason, connotations would usually evoke a 'frame of reference' where assumptions are made with ideological positions expressed (ibid.). Where ideological stance is concerned, Chong and Druckman (2007) propose a method in identifying frames as well as a psychological model in order to understand how frames could affect public opinions. In order to influence the thoughts of others, they posit that 'certain features' are highlighted for this purpose (p.106). That said, a person's identity (e.g. PWUD) could either be highlighted or played down by framing individuals with negative or positive attributes. The researchers also point out that "manual or human coding [should be] guided by prototypes instead of exact terminology [so that] greater flexibility [is possible, in order to] discover new frames that were not identified in the initial coding scheme [that was coded by a machine]" (p.108). Like framing of words, connotations are never neutral in its terms but carries meanings "as a constellation of signifiers that are expressed by linkages of keywords or concepts" (Kim, 2013). These signifiers are marked by the use of nouns, noun phrases, lexical items, adverbs, verbs and other semantic representations that can be observed from the data of this study.

In another study related to connotations and synonymy, P. Edmonds and Hirst (2002) agree that denotations alone would not suffice in interpreting connotations. It is "not precise enough" as connotations are "simply too broad and ambiguous" (p.109). Due to its complexity, connotations are often misused to refer any word meaning even though people

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generally do not comprehend the word meaning "well enough to formalise". Unlike denotations that are "literal [and] context independent", connotations involve "meaning, emotions, expressed attitudes, implications, tone and style" (ibid.). Although the areas of study conducted from the aforesaid researchers are multidisciplinary, there seemed to be salient similarities in terms of their approach in studying connotations. Kim (2013), whose research is focused on analysing internet discourses of public support towards their national 'hero' (Hwang), applies 'a manual technique' to identify the associations of thematic relation and two concepts of keywords found in every internet posting in order for her to study the emergent meanings (p.341). He suggests that in order to study "structural pattern of discourse", it is necessary to simplify the "complex network [of data]" into related "common themes [with the] same functional meaning" (p.343). By simplifying the data into thematic based analysis, Kim (2013) subtly consolidates denotated and connoted words in order to provide explanations on 'internet representations' (pp. 343-345).

As far as representations are involved, Saeed (2009) posits that words gain its "ability to denote because it is [linked] to the speaker's/hearer's mind". In the process of generating meaning to words, these 'mental representations' give rise to *sense* (p. 33). However due to restrictions in terms of cultural variation and different emotive attachments, it is challenging to determine the common *sense* for a specific object. In this case, Saeed proposed that *sense* could be understood through the application of *concepts* that contain abstract features (e.g. cultural definition, complexes) which makes 'an object the object' (ibid.). He provides the example of 'democracy'. The understanding of such word resonates with the individual's current geological and cultural factors. Since it is difficult to determine a specific common *sense* for intangible, Murphy (2003) proposes that these 'idiosyncratic mental representations' could be studied by observing the subjects' judgment and behaviour (p.6). From recognising one's characteristics and how these traits

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are represented through the use of lexical items (nouns, adjectives, etc), 'the good and the bad' terms reflect people's (i.e. media, public) general perspectives and stance towards a certain group of people (e.g. PWUD) based on the language used (Perdue et al., 1990).

2.4.2. Denotation and Reference as Representation of Identity

The word 'denotation' conveniently relates to *reference* as its counterpart in meaning projection, and like many scholars (Lipka, 1990; Lyons, 1995; Saeed, 2009; Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2008) who generally consider *denotation* and *reference* of linguistic expression to be indistinguishable, the word 'denotation' is understood based on its classic definition as, "literal, explicit, and context-independent meaning" (Edmonds & Hirst, 2002, p.109). Yet, denotation is not merely word meanings that are projected into the world (Hoffman, 1993, p.185) but rather, a complex term often associated exclusively to *reference* (Materna, 2010; Vygotsky, n.d.), *sense* (Chalmers, 2002; Lipka, 1971) and even at times, *extensions* (Chalmers, 2002; Cruse, 2000). Nevertheless, researchers come to a consensus that it is equally challenging to specifically attach a definition to 'denotation' (likewise connotation as aforementioned in section 2.5.1) as there is no regularity in the use of this term (Thi Van Lam, 2004, Palmer 1981, Materna, 2010). In Palmer's (1981) defence, he draws distinction between *denotation* and *reference*, wherein the former term is used to designate "class of people, items, instruments, etc." while the latter term means "the actual person, items, etc". (p.18). He further elaborates with an example of a *cow*, whereby *cow* denotes and represents the class of cows (animals), but *that cow* would only be referred to the one, and only specific cow.

The difficulty in dealing with denotations lies in the words relying on its 'referents'. Denotations could be problematic when used to identify the 'essential characteristics' of a referent (e.g. verb) (Palmer, 1981). Consider abstract entities like *running, remember, like,*

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etc. There are ample of factors to be taken into account when visualising a boy 'running'. One cannot possibly draw a picture of 'running' without considering other elements like its "speed, movement of feet and arms, or the change of position" and these 'essential characteristics' are not easily recognisable or identifiable based on the picture per se. Palmer also questions the viability of such verbs in relation to referencing an object because "they [could possibly] denote different things at different times" (p.19). Such problem also arises for other class of words (apart from verbs) including pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions due to the fact that these word classes must function with other surrounding words to support its meaning and context (Murphy, 2003, p. 21), and its denotational meaning cannot solely depend on its referents. Hoffman (1993) agrees unanimously to this notion that denotations can "never be treated as meaning to most adjectives, as denotated words must be determined with knowing what nouns they are used with" (p.182). To reiterate his statement, Hoffman reads:

> "Denotation is clearly not meaning, but the projection of meaning into a world" (p.185)

Relevant to Hoffman's statement, Saeed (2009) echoes that denotations could be studied under the umbrella of *reference* (p.197), because "treating meaning as denotation can ever give a meaning to most adjectives, [since denotation] cannot be determined without knowing what noun they are used with" and thus must be referred to its referent (p.182). That said, denotation takes the form of the literal meaning which helps to supplement and complement connoted words within the same context; whereas connotative meanings adapts to the context based on the sense making devices like reference, participant roles (context-driven) and supporting words classes (additional information in the same sentence) in order to examine both areas of semantics.

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2.4.3. Word Classes and Meaning in the Representation of Identity

Every word is connected in a nexus of language terminology and some terms in this network formed a linkage based on meaning similarity, form and structure, whilst others include both structure and meaning (Jackson & Amvela, 2000, p.12). In news media discourses, researches related to the study of representations with special interest and focus on the construction of identities are found to be more involved and concerned in lexical word classes (Bell, 1985; Bradshaw, 2008; De Waal, Schönbach, & Lauf, 2004; Domingo et al., 2008; Druckman, 2005).

Through the lens of both lexical and function words, research like Jones' (2005) shed light into the ways youths respond towards the government's efforts to curb drugs via the use of anti-drug commercials. He uses various 'discursive features and concepts' to analysis drug discourses and these features include but are not limited to "the choice of words (lexical), forms of discourse, face strategies, presuppositions and cultural models" (pp.1-2). Jones reasons that his work examines not only on the functionality of these features but also to observe how these nexus of words were used in "specific interactions to perform a specific social action" (p.5). Due to the vast pool of news information, Wilson (2013) explains that when constructing identity of specific individuals in the news, it is not feasible to portray every facet of an individual. Thus, the media would often focus on [the following] traits: age, gender, ethnicity, financial state, work-related and culture. Due to this restriction, it becomes an inevitable practice for journalists to "[select and highlight] certain features of [the individual's] personality and appearance" in order to attract or appeal the news to its readers. For this to happen, journalists recreate and represent a certain group of people (like the PWUD) by creating word choices to reflect aspects of reality (e.g. people, culture, identity).

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Representation, as Taylor (2008) puts it, functions as a 'vehicle' for beliefs and values that the news media conveniently employ its strategies to mediate reality in order to construct the meanings about the world they would like to project (p. 371). In order for the news media to do so, journalists need to utilise lexical word classes (Lipka, 1990, p.179). These groups of word classes (adjectives, nouns, adverbs, etc.) perform its roles together with *function* words (e.g. conjunctions) to give rise to meanings but must work together with other words from open classes in order to form the basis of how identities are represented (*see also* Godnose, n.d.). By positioning subjects with the use of 'semantic markers' to *mark* the identity of a person, Chandler (2014) illustrates that ideologies could be 'framed and formed' from the working system of representation.

The need to look beyond sentence surface and more into lexical items has brought upon further research like Murphy's (2003), whose work displays her concerns in the faulty assumption that lexicon belongs to a 'standard linguistic faculty'. This mistake is common due to the fact that this modularity could easily be mistaken for the grammatical aspects of the language (p.14). She also agrees that the disassociation between a lexicon and semantic content require further 'justification' as "it can be an arduous task to distinguish between the knowledge about words and its denotations" (ibid.). She contests that a lexicon is not merely a *word* but it implicates both linguistic expressions "that are greater [and smaller] than words" because these expressions might be 'non-predictable' in mapping structures and word meanings (p.15). Her reference of linguistic expressions to bigger words relates to 'non-compositional phrasal expressions' (e.g. idioms) whilst the smaller words to the basic unit of words: morphemes (e.g. -ness) (*see also* Snider & Arnon, 2012). Certainly, these lexical items (i.e. words, morphemes) belong to the two major word classes: *lexical* (open) and *function* (closed) (Kolln & Funk, 2008). The former deals with nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs, and the latter with determiners, prepositions, etc. (ibid.).

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To people whose identities are marked, the study of representation enables exposure to the underlying reasons which made their 'given identities' seemed normal and eventually, acceptable to all in the society (ibid.). Like many other problematic linguistics definitions (i.e. connotation, denotation), *semantic markedness* has a "vague definition of theory" and is posited to be involved with an "asymmetric relationship between two or more elements" (Janda, 1995, p.4). The *elements* that Janda (1995) refers to are marked and unmarked words which are categorised into three main levels: *basic, superordinate* and *conflated*. To explain on semantic markedness, Hume (2008) studies on the basis of markedness that is influenced by cognitive processes. In her study, she focuses on the cognitive process of *expectation* and finds that there are language similarities amongst speakers with "common physiological and cognitive abilities". This would also mean that language patterns of language users vary in accordance to their interaction, culture and experience, which all lead to their own *expectations*, thus influencing the use of marked words in an oblique manner. Hume's study draws a parallel to the results of Janda's work in a manner which reinforces the fact that interpretation of (expected and unexpected) meanings and situations are indeed dependent on the use of unmarked or marked words, respectively (pp. 5-6).

2.4.4. Thematic Relations

The process of dealing with meanings and representation studies related to marginalised communities has led numerous researchers to underscore the use of thematic relations in order to comprehend the underlying factors and relationships between lexical components (e.g. verbs, pronouns, etc.) that served to induce meanings to the context (Arnold, 2001; Castillo, 2001; Krifka, 1992; McRae, Ferretti, & Liane Amyote, 1997; Stevenson, Knott, Oberlander, & McDonald, 2000). Researchers like Brunschot et al. (2000) have

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investigated the representation of images and prevailing themes in Canadian newspapers that portray sex workers and their 'negatively perceived' activities. On top of that, some parallels can be drawn from other similar research like Edmonds and Mizrahi's (2011). Their study investigates the thematic relation of verb-thematic role priming, and they discover that verbs allow access to immediate typical agents and patients by generating 'expectancies' of that verb in relation to its thematic roles. They posit:

> "The knowledge of thematic roles can be deconstructed into characteristic features for agents (performers of an action) and patients (receivers of an action), and that some thematic role concepts are more prototypical than others for a given verb" (p.2)

Thematic roles, in that sense, are "semantic relationships between verbs and noun phrases of sentences" (Wagner, 2014; Fromkin et al., 2013). According to Saeed (2009), thematic relations possess different labels in semantics and they are sometimes known as *participant roles, deep semantic cases, semantic roles* and also *thematic roles* (p.152). Hence in the case of this study, the term *thematic relation* and *thematic roles* are used interchangeably to describe the process and relationship between words and meanings. Stevenson and team (2000) have also explicated that thematic roles might provide "a mapping between representation and the represented event" when linked with coherence relations[4] (e.g. anaphora, connectives) (p.4). Stevenson claims that the connectives in coherence relations show various properties and these traits function in the following ways:

i. To direct attention to a specific word and thus give rise to certain meanings and implications
ii. To constrain possible coherence relation between two events

[4] There is no standard definition for coherence relations. They are also known as called *rhetorical relations* or *discourse relations* and are indeed linguistic markers (e.g. anaphora, connectives) (Knott & Sanders, 1998).

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iii. To interpret a clause as having either a causal or a temporal structure

Consider the following sentence as an example:

> The police apprehended Michael so he would be trialled in court.

The verb *apprehended* highlights (and focuses) on Michael since he is the one that is being acted upon as a consequence of the event. Connectives such as 'so' direct attention to the consequences of an event and are thus dependent on the meaning of its context, whereas the focusing power of the verb lies in its ability to "shift focus to the endpoint or consequence of the described event" (p.5). Because of its power to influence, thematic roles and its other word counterparts enable roles assignment and shifts of meaning in order to "direct a reader's tendency to focus on a particular consequence of an event" (Arnold, 2001).

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter consolidates various concepts and theories from multidisciplinary areas of research including psychology, criminal justice and semantics notions, which are deemed useful to help aid the analysis in the interpretation of PWUD's representations. As drug studies on representations are relatively new in the Malaysian context, the literature for this chapter is considered selectively, focusing more onto the aspects of textual analysis (theme based), semantics interpretations and also, drug-related content materials.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3. Introduction

In order to address the research questions, this chapter aims to explain the procedures used in collecting, coding and analysing mainstream news reports pertinent to PWUD. This chapter is divided into two main sections; Data collection procedure (Section 3.1.), Data analysis procedure (Section 3.2.)

3.1. Data Collection Procedure

3.1.1. Methods

This study accepts a qualitative text analysis research designand seeks to explore the many facades of PWUDs' identities and representations that assume an ever changing, dynamic reality. This provides rich data towards understanding complicated social situations (Blaxter et al., 2010). This research design helps facilitates the investigation of how PWUD are represented in Malaysian mainstream news reports as to why these marginalised people are being represented in such a way. Qualitative research not only provides insights with respect to *how* PWUD are stigmatised as the "bad other", but also explains *why* they are treated that way.

Moreover, the qualitative collective case study research is adopted because case studies provide an in depth 'procedure of inquiry'. This allows the study to further explore "alternative meanings and interpretations about the complexity of social life" (Blaxter et al., 2010). As such, journalistic practices are regarded as real life practices and experience that are held accountable for contributing changes in society. Because news contents with

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regards to PWUDs' actions and experiences are drawn from actual happenings, this data could actually be 'stronger in reality' and more persuasive (ibid.). In essence, the current data is extracted from online news media repositories, wherein selected articles are scouted through various keywords associated to 'drugs', as well dates ranging from 2011 to 2013.

As there are numerous complex variables to consider when selecting relevant data from a pool of information, the data are confined to the following parameters:

- Year of articles: between 2011 – 2013
- Mainstream news articles

3.1.2. Data Description

News with regards to PWUD that are featured in the Malaysian English mainstream are sourced from online media archives, in which the data retrieved are local news from 2011 to 2013. These years were chosen based on the availability and frequency of the data (also see Table 3.1). Then, 77 articles from the mainstream news media are identified from random combinations of possible words with the keyword "drug" like *drug user*, *drug problem*, *drug abuse*, *drug issue*, *drug offence* and *drug substance abuse*. Only online news from BERNAMA, The New Straits Times and The Star were referred to; based on the frequency of drug related news and its suitability to the objectives of this research.

Other news genre (e.g. Letters to the Editor, columnists) relating to drugs matters are filtered out as the main focus of this study is about how the PWUD are being represented in news reports. This distribution frequency can be understood as the number of publication unit for each of the news sources and this information could be tabulated into a table as seen in Table 3.1.

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Table 3.1: News occurrences about PWUD based on respective months and years.

2011

Newspaper /Month	Jan	Feb	Mac	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
BERNAMA				1	1		1	1		2	3	2
New Straits Times				2			1			1	1	
The Star					1							

2012

Newspaper /Month	Jan	Feb	Mac	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
BERNAMA	1	1					1	2				1
New Straits Times	1			2	1				1		2	
The Star				2	1	1						

2013

Newspaper /Month	Jan	Feb	Mac	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
BERNAMA	1	1		2		3		3		2		
New Straits Times	1	4	2	1		5	6	5				
The Star				1	1		1	2			2	

The majority of articles in all newspapers are generally focused on drug trafficking, traffickers, raid, activities, demographics, statistics and rarely on the aftermath of PWUD treatment, efforts of reintegration or their well-being. Perhaps, news organisations are attuned to produce news in line with the nation's direction at the point of publication (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Shaw, 1977).

Other challenges encountered in this study include accessing potential PWUD as interviewees within a short time. Accessing to this group of people requires tedious conformance to protocol, application of consent as well as funding (as honorarium to

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interviewees), all of which are restricted due to time limitation. Moreover, the researcher was also advised by an AADK officer (in a brief interview) that an ethnographic research with the PWUD would take up a lot of time, and due to practical constrains in this research, it was not carried out. However, the researcher manages to conduct a brief interview with an AADK officer and a medical practitioner from one of the undisclosed Cure & Care clinics in order to understand the general overview and background of drug use and its PWUD in Malaysia. Since the data is sourced from local Malaysian English online news portals (with the language being the second medium to Malaysian readers), this research also ultimately reveals how PWUD are represented in the local context through use of English as second language by local news organisations and journalists.

The next section discovers the data collection and analysis method that have indicated the features of qualitative collective case study research design as recommended by Creswell (2013).

3.2. Data Analysis Procedure: Thematic Based Analysis

This section discusses two important components. The first explains the data obtained from selected media archives (Section 3.1.1), whereas the second part discusses the methods of data analysis (Section 3.1.2).

The analysis structure is then divided into four phases as demonstrated in Figure 3.2a and each phase will be concisely explained in this section.

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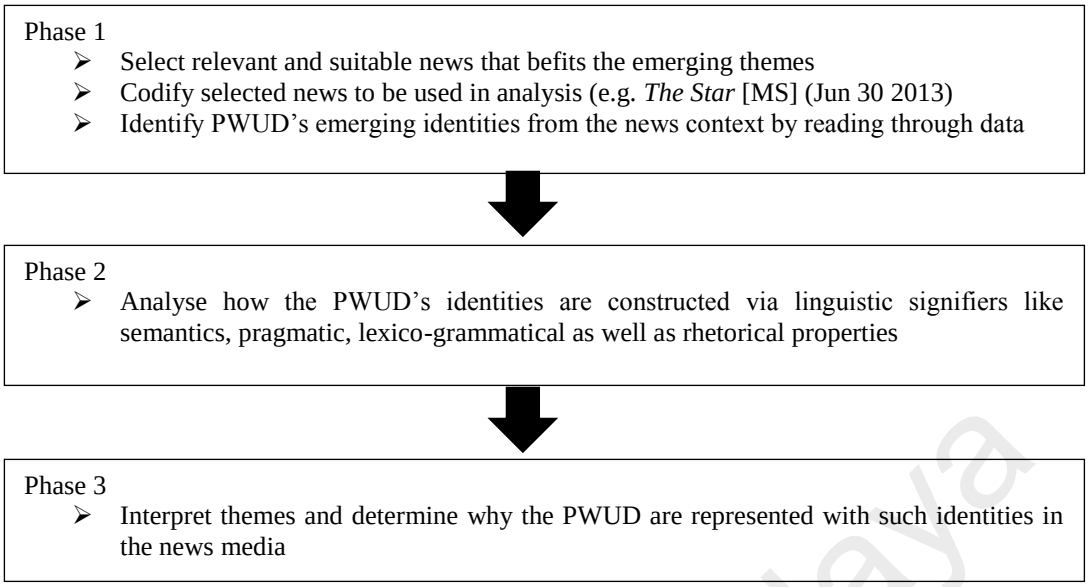

Figure 3.1: Data analysis process

Relevant theories and concepts are referred in approaching thematic analysis in order to provide appropriate analytical presentation of the data retrieved. One method, as proposed by Roberts and Sarangi (2005), is adopted to help facilitate the generation of themes, at the same time identify logical interpretations to assist semantic analysis. Combined with Attride-Stirling's (2001) 'step-by-step' thematic networks techniques, semantic features are processed to comprehend how certain people's (PWUD) identities are prescribed differently by employing selective word choices that reflect desired, or even undesired attributes. In analysing the linguistic components, semantic, pragmatic (e.g. connotation, denotation, thematic relations, reference), lexico-grammatical (e.g. application of pronouns, adjectives, nouns) and rhetorical devices (e.g. metaphors, metonymy, syllogism) are examined to make sense of how the PWUD's identities are negotiated through lexical choices and interpretations being made from the influence of these words (Roberts & Sarangi, 2005, p.633).

Considering the influence of word choices in representing the PWUD, this study is also driven by van Leeuwen's (1996, 2007) Social Actors Representation model (see

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Appendix C), in which socio-semantic categorisation is used to investigate how the PWUD are represented (Don & Lee, 2014). The Social Actors Representation model draws up a "*socio-semantic* inventory" in which analyses the ways social actors are represented and in turn establish a "sociological and critical relevance to the [model's categories]" before observing the linguistics aspects of the study (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.36). According to van Leeuwen, the lack of "bi-uniqueness of language [like agency]" is not always realised by linguistic agency but through "many other ways [like possessive pronouns or even prepositional phrase]". This is because *agency* is a sociological concept and the roles of social actors often overlap as van Leeuwen questions: In which contexts are social actors represented as "agents" and which as "patients"? Van Leeuwen then explains that this notion stems from the assumption that "meanings belong to culture instead of language" and thus can represent social action (p.37).

With this in mind, the social actor's representation model contributes to the analytical framework of this study and helps explain the underlying mechanism of how social actors and social actions are represented in news reports. These social actors (also 'participants') and timing of social practices can be recontextualised by observing how these participants (PWUD) and their actions are being portrayed, identified and represented in 'specific discursive contexts' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.160). Hence the model is employed throughout the textual analysis section, where the "socio-semantic categorisation" is responsible for explaining the underlining of representation and voices that are found to identify the PWUD in mainstream news reports as seen in Figure 3.2:

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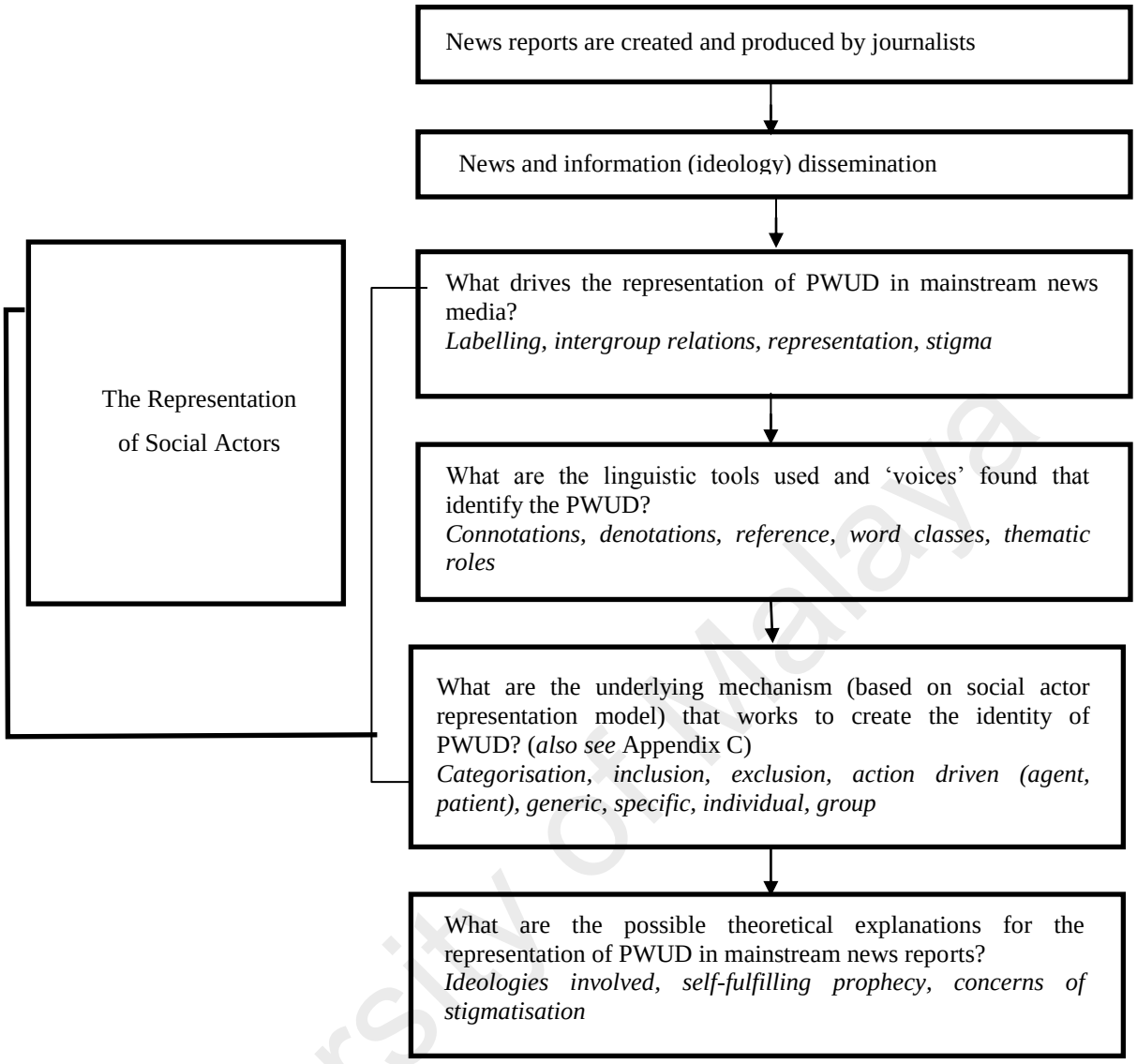

Figure 3.2: Conceptual and analytical framework based on the van Leeuwen's Social Actors' Representation model.

Additionally, reviewed literature also suggests that journalists are able to create 'reality in news' in order to form a mental representation of experience to the readers. This mental representation, in turn, would form an ideology or belief amongst the readers. Therefore, by examining the PWUDs' representations in news context, it is possible for this study to reveal how news journalists actually create identities for the PWUD, whilst exercising

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influence on their readers. As Richardson (2007, p.207) opines on the importance of context:

> "Journalists never disclose everything [they] know in news stories, even if they have the time and space to do so. [This is because] some facts are not necessary to the task at hand, even though [these facts] might contribute to a complete truth".

Based on this statement, it is necessary for this study to pay attention to the words used by journalists to depict the PWUD because attributes given to these people could indeed shape their personalities and identities in society. To begin analysing the pool of data from the mainstream media, the AntConc software is introduced to ease the onerous process of filtering popular words as seen in news articles. The software plays a role in simplifying the process of coding and analysis. After detecting frequently used words in the news reports, the AntConc software is used to determine the pattern of these news sentences. By looking at patterns, the meaning of a particular word can be determined from its surrounding context. These surrounding lexico-grammatical enriches the meaning specific to the target word. As mentioned earlier, a website called Visuwords is introduced into this study to help determine the word properties as closely as possible apart from the help of dictionaries. This website is useful as a reference tool for word concept and meanings that are associated to other words. On the other hand, the coding process is much simpler as it acquires the newspaper's name and dates to form a simple code such as: *The Star* [MS] (Jun 30 2013). [MS] denotes [Mainstream], as in *mainstream* newspaper.

Equally important, due to its massive and indeterminate properties of meanings, the examination of connotations may include and also link various meanings to a particular word. Because of this, reviewed literature suggests that connotations ought to be analysed

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with its surrounding words and context. To date, there is no accurate instrument developed yet to measure connotations. As such, this study takes on a website called Visuwords[5] in order to determine the word properties as closely as possible. Apart from the help of dictionaries, this website serves as a reference tool for word concept and meanings that are associated to other words. Whilst research design helps frame and realise manifestations of identities through theoretical approaches, the next chapter of this paper shall address the semantics aspects of the analysis and *how* labels and identities of PWUD are construed by the news media.

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[5] Visuwords (www.visuwords.com) is an online graphical dictionary that "looks up words to find meanings and associations with other words and concepts".

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4. Introduction

This chapter addresses Research Question 1. The research question is reproduced here:

i. How are PWUD represented in Malaysian English news reports in mainstream news media?

Words and sentence structures can represent and depict PWUD in a certain manner. Writers or journalists create imageries of stereotypical (or prototypical) identities through linguistic utilisation in order to present the PWUD in a different limelight. These conjured identities, in turn, form the basis of readers' interpretation and further discussed in the following subsections:

- PWUD as criminal (Section 4.1.)
- PWUD being psychologically unstable (Section 4.2.)
- PWUD from undesirable social strata (Section 4.3.)
- PWUD are victims of circumstances (Section 4.4.)
- PWUD are susceptible to death (Section 4.5.)

4.1. PWUD as Criminals

This section discusses some attributes that depict PWUD as criminals in the news reports. These attributes not only contribute to identifying PWUD as a criminal but also inculcate prejudice in general. Consider Extract 1:

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Extract 1

Drug addict nabbed over RM50,000 jewellery theft

HULU TERENGGANU: The police have detained a drug addict in connection with the theft of an assortment of jewellery worth about RM50,000, at a house in Felda Bukit Bading here on Jan 16.

The 32-year-old suspect was picked up at 11.30pm, two days later, near the housing area.

Hulu Terengganu acting police chief ASP Mohd Rosli Mohd Amir said today, the addict had allegedly broken into the house belonging to a couple when they went to perform Isyak prayers at a nearby mosque.

Upon returning to the house, the victims found their house ransacked and the jewelry missing, he said.

In a follow-up operation, Mohd Rosli said the police recovered part of the stolen jewelry at a goldsmith shop.

The jewellery, worth about RM26,000, was found to have been melted, he said.

Initial investigations revealed the suspect had three criminal records.

BERNAMA [MS] (Jan 29 2012)

In Extract 1, the PWUD's criminal actions are highlighted through a 'story-telling' process. Criminals are wrongdoers in the eyes of law and these people's actions are deplorable and felonious. The choice of verbs suggests that the PWUD had done the following; i) broke into a house, ii) ransacked a house, and iii) took jewellery. Because part of the stolen jewellery was found at a goldsmith shop, it is inferred that the PWUD also iv) sold stolen property to a goldsmith. The inclusion of the PWUD's criminal record suggests that he has experience breaking the law and these criminal acts have been done deliberately. While not explicitly stating it, these clues suggest that the PWUD had both *mens rea* (guilty mind) and *actus reus* (performed guilty acts)[6] – elements which judges look for to arrive to a guilty verdict (Carr & Johnson, 2013; Herring, 2014). The PWUD can also be seen as a causal agent who initiated this chain of events and these are done with action transitive verbs. These transitive verbs play an important role in connecting the agent with various

[6] According to Herring (2014), the *actus reus* of murder is "causing the victim's death"; whereas the *means reas* is "the intention to kill or inflict grievous bodily harm" (p.70).

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thematic relations to create a cohesive narrative that highlights key events, such as *location* (broke into a house), *patient* (ransacked a house; melted jewellery), and *recipient* (sold to a goldsmith). Highlighting a numeric value of the jewellery also provides an estimation of the severity of the offence. The loss of a huge sum of RM50, 000 (US$15,333) and damaged jewellery suggest that the offence had caused severe loss to the victim.

Occasionally, certain crimes committed by PWUD are represented as being heinous and cruel. Consider the following extract:

Extract 2

DESPICABLE: Drug-addict suspect sold services of girl to 9 men

MALACCA : Police are looking for a 26-year-old man from Jalan Sidang Hassan in Bukit Katil, here, who is alleged to have pimped his 13-year-old girlfriend.

Mohd Khairul Azli Isohod, a suspected drug addict, is believed to have sold the sexual services of his teenage girlfriend to nine men in the Melaka Tengah district.

State deputy criminal investigation department chief Superintendent P.R. Gunarajan said the man's activity as a pimp was uncovered with the arrest of the girl for allegedly offering sexual services to a 37-year-old man at a house in Taman Peringgit.

The suspect is also on the police wanted list for his involvement with other criminal offences, including rape and human trafficking, said Gunarajan.

"The suspect is believed to have been actively pimping his girlfriend since June last year.

"The suspect had been charged for rape in Nov 23 last year, where he had allegedly raped the teenage girl. He was then released on bail but had since gone missing".

Police believe the suspect has fled to Kuala Lumpur.

New Straits Times [MS] (Aug 10 2013)

The PWUD in this news report is criticised as a wicked and threatening man although he is a 'suspect'. A suspect, as defined by the Oxford Dictionaries (2015), is a person *thought* to be guilty of an offence. Notwithstanding the fact that the label 'suspect' indicates that the

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PWUD is still being investigated by the police and has not been trialled in court, this article has already cast a guilty verdict on the suspect. While news organisations are meant to be objective and impartial, here are some indicators that suggest a 'trial by media' which rile up public sentiment against the individual: First, the title itself has this adjective, 'despicable' to describe the action of the suspect. This word is commonly used to describe anything disgusting, repulsive and abhorrent.[7] The choice of this adjective in the news article suggests a violation of an existing moral standard. The PWUD has committed a harmful act by exploiting a young girl and violated cultural taboo. Possibly, the news writer for this article may find it disturbing that a 13 year old has been exploited sexually. A 13 year old is still developing sexually, and it is rare for them to engage in sexual acts at a young age. Moreover, it is a criminal offence (statutory rape) in Malaysia to be having sex with anyone below the age of 16. This piece of information about the victim's age leads to several possible connotation interpretations, such as cruelty, heinous, the loss and exploitation of the innocent children.

Second, the PWUD is also a pimp in the article as he collects money from the girl's sexual acts. The news also appears to represent the PWUD as treating the teenager as an object through the action transitive verb, 'sold' instead of 'providing sexual services'. 'To sell' is to hand over something for something else, while, 'to provide' is to make something available for use. In a metonymical[8] sense, the verb *sold* in this context draws a semantic relation between 'sell' and 'sex'. The literal relation of *sell* is usually followed by an item (object) for sale in exchange for money, as in trading of goods. A service ('sex') is neither an item nor object; but rather, a process action. Therefore, the semantic relation between

[7] The Oxford Dictionaries (2015) defines 'despicable' as an act "deserving hatred and contempt".

[8] Metonyms function to explain the "figurative senses of lexical items" and is largely involved with *proximity* of semantic and pragmatics connections that exists within respective culture" (Geeraerts, 2010, pp. 21-31).

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'sell' and 'sex' is anomalous and the 'girl' is indeed being treated as mere 'product' for profitable gains. From a thematic relations point of view, the child is seen as an *instrument* (one who has been used to accomplish an action – benefitting the PWUD).

Thirdly, more information of the PWUD's historical criminal acts not related to the main narrative are added. In addition to his "active pimping" which infers that he has been doing this for a long time, the police also said he is involved with other criminal offences "*including* rape and human trafficking". The inclusion of 'including' suggests that this PWUD is a dangerous man who has a lot of experiences with dangerous and heinous crimes. Rape is a word that evokes feelings of bodily and private violation (Sawtell, 2008; Walsh & Ellis, 2006) while human trafficking is a crime that connotes evil and a disregard for human lives (Aronowitz, 2009). While hedges such as 'believed' and 'allegedly' are used to mitigate the assertiveness of a claim, it is argued here that the inclusion of these enriching information does little to suggest that the suspect is not guilty in any way.

Apart from rape, news articles sometimes associate PWUD with violence. Consider the following extract:

Extract 3

Murder suspect shot dead by police in Kinabatangan

KINABATANGAN: A drug addict who was believed to be involved in a murder case was shot dead when he attacked policeman who tried to apprehend him in Kampung Koyah B, here yesterday.

Kinabatangan OCPD, DSP Martin Lugu said the man, known as Andis Tawan, 40, an Indonesian national, tried to attack the policeman with a knife in the incident at about 3.30pm.

He said the man had earlier stabbed to death another Indonesian national, Agus Jamal, 33, during a cock fight at a wedding reception in the village at 1pm.

"Police had gone to the location after receiving a report and had asked him to surrender. However, he refused and instead attacked the policeman who had to shoot him," said Martin. "Police also found three small plastic

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packets containing syabu and a sheath in his sling bag," he added.

Martin said Agus died at the scene.

Both bodies were sent to the Kinabatangan Hospital for autopsy.

BERNAMA [MS] (Aug 15 2013)

The news article mentions that this PWUD had allegedly committed murder which is a severe offence under Malaysian law (Act 574), and it emphasises the PWUD's violent actions which led to his death through the following expressions:

- The drug addict attacked the policeman who tried to apprehend him
- He tried to attack the policeman with a knife (likely with the intent to hurt or murder, or defend himself)
- He had earlier stabbed to death another Indonesian national…
- The police had asked him to surrender…
- He refused and instead attacked the policeman
- The policeman shot and killed him

On top of that, the narrative had constant reference to the PWUD's action ('tried attacking the police'). The action-process experiential verbs are provided through a series of constructive actions as revealed in the news i) attacked policeman who tried *to apprehend him,* ii) attacked the policeman *with a knife,* iii) the policeman *had no choice* but to shoot him. These repetitions depict the PWUD as an armed, violent and dangerous criminal. Action-process verbs (by the PWUD) such as *attacked*, *refused* and *stabbed* also suggest that the PWUD is a fierce individual who refuses to cooperate. Perhaps, his actions is due to the influence of drugs since the news has labelled him as a 'drug addict' and who carried three small plastic packets of *syabu* and a knife sheath. It is also worth noting that being in

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possession of drugs is another criminal offence according to the *Dangerous Drugs Act*, in which the police are also in authority to arrest suspected PWUD based on their discretion (Section 27, Act 234).

Some news articles provide graphic descriptions of murder involving PWUDs. Consider the following:

Extract 4

DRUG ADDICT NABBED FOR SUSPECTED MURDER

KAJANG, Oct 13 (Bernama) -- Police have arrested a man in his 30s for suspected involvement in the robbery and murder of a senior citizen in Kampung Pasir Baru, Jalan Sungai Lalang, Semenyih, here, on Sept 27.

Kajang police chief ACP Abdul Rashid Abdul Wahab said the suspect, a close relative of the victim, was detained in Semenyih at about 1am yesterday.

"We consider this case closed with the arrest of the suspect who is a drug addict," he told reporters at the Kajang Police Headquarters here today.

He said the suspect would be remanded for seven days starting today, while four men detained previously to facilitate investigations had been released.

In the incident, 64-year-old S. Danaletcheme was found covered in blood from slash wounds on the neck and head, with her head submerged in a water tank in the bathroom at 1pm.

Abdul Rashid said the woman who lived alone was believed to have been robbed by the suspect using a knife and parang found at the scene.

BERNAMA [MS] (Oct 13 2011)

The gory description of the murder is accentuated with details such as "covered in blood", "slash wounds on neck and head" as well as "using knife and *parang*" to commit the crime. The expression "covered in blood" also suggests that the victim's wound was so severe and bad until a high volume of blood oozes from the body. To add on to this imagery, the victim's head is also envisaged as "submerging" in a water tank as a result of the murder.

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Such description infers that the PWUD had slashed her head and neck and later suffocated her by forcing her head into a water-filled tank. These show how brutal and cruel the PWUD was. The victim is portrayed as an innocent and frail elderly citizen who experienced brutality. The news article also highlights the familial relationship between the PWUD and the victim. Such display of viciousness towards a family member in the news is generally frowned upon by the society and considered taboo and unnatural (L'Abate & Baggett, 1997).

Interestingly, the police mentions that the suspect is a "drug addict" and the news writer also foregrounds the label "drug addict", and this links murder to drug use even though it is not stated that the suspect was under drug influence at the time of murder. It is thus questionable as to why the news writer did not use relevant terms like 'robber' or 'murderer' or 'killer' in the headline, but instead chose to focus on his drug taking activity. Perhaps, the frequent association of PWUD to robbery and murder in journalistic practices is a continuation of an established stereotype (Mastroianni & Noto, 2008), since the PWUD is often seen to immerse themselves with crime in order to consume drugs (Walters, 2014).

When analysing news content pertinent to the PWUD, we are able to determine certain stereotypical attributes in the news reports. Consider the following information:

Table 4.1: The distinctive attributes of the PWUD, police and victims.

The PWUD	The law enforcers (commonly the police)	The victims
Addict	Peacemaker	Innocent
Suspicious	Heroic	Unfortunate
Violent	Investigative	Bullied
Abusive	Responsible	Suffered

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Merciless	Protective	Helpless
Dangerous	Responsive	Unsuspicious

Social roles do not exist in isolation when determining relationships (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 2003). For criminals to exist and be meaningful in the narrative, there must be other supporting roles. For instance in Excerpt 1, two other roles come into play: the police and the victim. Note the actions of these agents and compare them to the PWUD's actions:

- The police have detained a drug addict…
- The 32-year-old suspect was picked up…
- Drug addict nabbed…
- The victims found their house ransacked and jewelry missing…
- The victim went to perform Isyak prayers…
- The police recovered part of the stolen jewelry at a goldsmith shop.

Through the choice of transitivity action verbs, the police as are seen as trouble-shooters or good guys who solved the problem caused by the PWUD. They nipped the problem by i) catching/nabbing/picking up the suspect and ii) recovering parts of the stolen jewellery. The police are also seen as being very knowledgeable and aware of the profile of the PWUD through the statements provided to the news agency. The victims on the other hand are represented as being unfortunate because they i) had gone to pray and ii) found their house ransacked and jewellery stolen. 'Performing *Isyak* prayers' (action verb) suggests the victims are (good, law abiding) God-fearing people, while 'finding their house ransacked' (experiential verb) suggests they are powerless to prevent this unfortunate event. These 'good guy-victim-bad guy' contrastive roles contribute to the PWUD's identity of being an undesirable troublemaker. Note further that the inclusion of 'additional information'

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underlining the victims' undeserving fate when the crime was committed 'when they went to perform Isyak prayers', seems rather deliberate as this information can easily be excluded without diverting from the main narrative. Quite possibly, this was done to draw on the readers' sympathy towards the victims and draw the contrasting 'good-bad' acts. The framing of these information parts can possibly lead to the demonisation of PWUDs in general because it gives the impression that PWUD are deviants.

Indeed, these contrastive attributes conjure a typical identity for each the social actor in the news, all of which signify power and powerlessness, legal and illegal, as well as moral authority. In general, PWUD are seen as a threat to society because they cause public menace and harm. The police, on the other hand, are seen as the mediators and heroes who restore peace and harmony to the social system; whereas the victims are usually the vulnerable and ill-fated individuals who succumbed to the violence as inflicted by the PWUD.

4.2. PWUD being Psychologically Unstable

In some news reports, PWUD are portrayed as people whose emotions are compromised by drugs. In Extract 5, one such PWUD not only commits a grave offence but also is portrayed as a crazy man:

Extract 5

KUALA TERENGGANU (June 17, 2013): A 29-year-old man, who ran amok armed with an axe, purportedly after failing to find money to buy drugs, was shot by police in his left thigh to subdue him in Kampung La Hulu Besut, here, yesterday. "It caused the unemployed man to run berserk with an axe and threatened to hurt the family of his uncle who became scared and lodged a police report at the Pasir Akar police station at 6.45pm following which three policeman arrived at scene 15 minutes later.

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"When the police arrived, the suspect, who is also believed to be mentally ill, was behind the house and charged at the patrol car. He then repeatedly hammered the patrol car's bonnet with the axe," he told reporters here today.

Manoharan said when the police officers came out the car, the suspect tried to attack the officers but a lance corporal among them took out his pistol for self-defense purposes.

He said the suspect who was under the influence of drugs then became more aggressive and tried to act wild, causing the police to have no choice but to fire a shot to defend themselves.

BERNAMA [MS] (Jun 17 2013)

The PWUD's emotional instability is realised through fits of outbursts like i) "running berserk and *amok* with an axe", ii) "tried attacking the police officers" as well as iii) "repeatedly hammered the patrol car's bonnet with an axe". Adverbial adjective like 'repeatedly' indicates that the action is done over and over again in the same manner. Also, the presence of the policemen seems to irk the PWUD and causes him to charge at the patrol car and attack them. At the same time, the PWUD's action extends beyond mere annoyance and has gone 'berserk' and 'amok' during the process. To run 'amok' is to go berserk in a wild or erratic manner; also, the word amok is culturally bounded and is used extensively in Malaysia[9] to describe an individual who is insane, wild and animal-like. By acting in such a manner, the PWUD is framed as displaying abnormal behaviour. Moreover, attacking police officers is an act that is generally unacceptable in normal civil society because law enforcers are powerful people to be respected.

Another example of psychological instability is shown in Extract 6:

[9] *Amok* is a "dissociative disorder involving outburst of violence and aggression" and a "minor insult" could possibly trigger this condition. This word is also used in Indonesia, Philippines, Laos and other South-East Asia countries, to name a few. (Paniagua & Yamada, 2013)

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Extract 6

Loi Hui Chung, who held 30 students and four teachers hostage at a kindergarten here on Thursday, was a hardcore drug addict.

"Loi was known by family members and others here as being aggressive and had a habit of carrying a hammer with him".

Further checks by police also revealed that Loi, who suffered from a character disorder but had never been certified as mentally ill, was involved in several other assault cases.

Jalaluddin said Loi's family members were also aware of his aggressive behaviour but did nothing to rehabilitate or get him treated".

New Straits Times [MS] (July 9 2011)

Comparatively, Extract 6 focuses on the PWUD's traits as a 'hardcore drug addict' who suffered from 'character disorder'. The amplification of his disorder is also reflected in his trait as someone who is 'aggressive'. Repetitive use of this word highlights the severity of his condition but also reiterates the fact that he is psychological ill and dangerous. The present tensed participial clauses "being aggressive" and "carrying a hammer" show continuity in the man's actions, at the same time evoking common knowledge that it is unnatural for normal people to carry around a hammer and always feel aggressive. The representations of these clauses can be seen as highlighting anomalies that are to be feared. The news article also includes information to suggest that the family is to be blamed because they had not done anything to address the problem. The choice of framing these events makes the PWUD appear like he has little control over his emotions and acts like a child with tantrums.

PWUD's influence under drugs is also seen as causing them to become individuals without control of their actions. Extract 7 shows this:

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Extract 7

CAUGHT ON CCTV: Cops on lookout for four suspects, said to be drug users and very violent

KUALA LUMPUR: Four youths, believed to have been high on drugs, raped two women at a reflexology centre in Setapak, here, before robbing them on Sunday.

"They were very violent. After attacking the caretakers, they took turns on the two women before escaping with RM3,000 in cash and valuables," Ku said.

New Straits Times [MS] (Nov 29 2012)

In Extract 7, the PWUD are seen as 'being high' and thus has no control over their actions. It seems that the writer describes the PWUD as being 'high on drugs' rather than being 'under the influence of drugs' when committing those actions. The marked adjective ('high') suggests that the PWUD is experiencing an extreme state of euphoria and this *markedness* appears to give off the impression that the PWUD is experiencing 'feel good' state of elation; usually, without a clear conscience. However, if the phrase 'under the influence' is used instead to describe the mental-emotions of the PWUD, this alternative phrase reflects the PWUD's inability to control his actions, rather than accentuating their state of elation. Perhaps, the adjective 'high' is used to accentuate the PWUD's deviation from normal behaviour (*also see* Chandler, 2014). Unmarked words are generally highlighted to show "normality", whereas marked words shows "abnormality" or deviance from cultural norms (Nae, 2004). In the case of this news report, the writer draws on the PWUD's euphoric state of emotions ('high') and places this state of mind alongside with the heinous act of *rape* ('took turns on the women'). The simple past intransitive verb of 'took turns' shows multiple people causing harm on the victims consecutively. The victims are objectivised as passivated roles, in which appears to be the unlucky victims who suffered from the consequences of the PWUD's irresponsible actions; all of which aroused through their psychological instability (by being 'high'). Even though both 'high' and

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'under the influence of drugs' is applied in a different context, yet the same purpose of this adjectival use serves to depict the PWUD as someone who is lack of emotional functionality and could not respond properly as a normal individual.

4.3. PWUD are from Undesirable Social Status

Room (2005) reports that the use of drugs is strongly related those who are poor or hail from the lower social strata. Not surprisingly, news articles sometimes include information of the PWUD's social status. Examples include PWUD coming from problematic background with family problems, unemployment and homelessness. Consider Extract 8:

Extract 8

> KEMAMAN: A youth threatened his sister with a knife after being accused of stealing RM100 the latter had left on their living room table in an incident at Kampung Pengkalan Ranggun here on Friday.
>
> 'She then asked her 24-year-old brother whether he had taken the money and told him to return it if he had. However, the question angered the unemployed suspect and he took a knife before threatening to harm her'. The sister had to flee to save herself and the brother, who is believed to be a drug addict, was arrested at the house on Saturday night.
>
> *New Straits Times* [MS] (Jan 27 2013)

Extract 8 reports on the conflict between the PWUD and his sister with respect to the stolen money. Here, the PWUD is presented as an unemployed youth, an individual at an age who should be financially self-sustaining. This classification creates boundaries between perceived realities and social statuses (van Leeuwen, 1996), thus segregating the PWUD as 'the undeserving individuals' from undesirable social status. With further marking of words like 'believed to be drug addict', and process action verb phrase of 'accused of stealing RM100', these clauses abstracts the PWUD as a thief.

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Similarly, Extract 9 also reports:

Extract 9

State CID chief ACP K. Manoharan said in the 6pm incident, the suspect who was also a drug addict, had gone to his uncle's house to demand money to buy drugs, but was ignored by his uncle.

"It caused the unemployed man to run berserk with an axe and threatened to hurt the family of his uncle who became scared and lodged a police report at the Pasir Akar police station at 6.45pm following which three policeman arrived at scene 15 minutes later".

BERNAMA [MS] (Jun 17 2013)

Foregrounding the PWUD as a 'drug addict' before elaborating that he is unemployed brings about negative connotations of 'dependency', 'hopelessness' and also 'criminality', because an addict is a person who is physically and mentally dependent on a particular substance. Being 'unemployed', on the other hand, is unsurprising because the PWUD is likely to be desperate in obtaining money from his family, especially when he needs the money to fulfil his desire. Unemployment also implies that the PWUD is unproductive and in addition to being a drug addict, drug activities are indeed known to be counter-productive. The PWUD's unproductivity is realised through a process-action verb of 'demanding money' as his only source of income. The forceful word of 'demand' evokes a sense of entitlement, as if the PWUD deserves the money.

Not only that, the news could also illustrate the PWUD's low class membership by specifying their living areas, like in Extract 10 and 11:

Extract 10

60 drug addicts detained at kenaf farm

BESUT -- The police detained 60 men, including an Indonesian immigrant, when they raided a kenaf farm in

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Kampung Tok Saboh near Kuala Besut here early yesterday.

Mostly labourers and fishermen, they were aged between 21 and 64.Besut police chief Supt Kamaruddin Zakaria said today, the suspects tested positive for drug addiction. –

BERNAMA [MS] (July 21 2012)

Extract 11

18 drug addicts nabbed in Raub

KUANTAN (Oct 13, 2013): Police have arrested 18 drug addicts in the 'Ops Tapis' operation at the Felda Tersang oil palm plantation in Cheroh near Raub.

"All those detained were between 20 and 30. We conducted the raid after a tip-off," he told Bernama today.

"Some of those arrested were estate labourers. The rest were jobless youths who were using the area to satisfy their craving for drugs," he said.

BERNAMA [MS] (Oct 13 2013)

Both Extract 10 and 11 display similarities in its news headline. Both headlines report on the number of addicts being 'nabbed' and 'detained' at a certain place: 'kenaf farm' and 'oil palm plantation [near] Raub'. The nominal location of 'kenaf farm' and 'oil palm plantation' itself connote poverty and low-income community. Coming from these areas, it is undeniable that the PWUD are indeed living in extreme poverty and 'high risk neighbourhood'[10], wherein the crime rate is high and the majority of inhabitants of these rural areas are PWUD (Mohamed et. al., 2008). Additionally, the news marked the PWUD's occupations and social indicators as 'immigrant', 'labourers', 'fishermen', 'estate labourers' and 'jobless youths'. This in turn suggests that this group's earning power is the lowest or are 'jobless'.

[10] According to Sidhu (2005), the police identifies 'high risk neighbourhood' as neighbourhood that records a high crime index.

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The specification of definite quantifiers ('60' and '18' drug addicts) either as numerative or head of the nominal group aggregates the PWUD into a single group (van Leeuwen, 1996, 2007). Such aggregation evidently segregates the PWUD as a community by themselves; thus drawing distinction between 'them' and 'us' as normal citizens. Additionally, aggregation is also realised by the manifestation of their ages ('aged between 21 and 64' and 'between 20 and 30'). By specifying their ages, the readers would be aware that most PWUD are indeed young drug consumers— in a way confirming the nation's drug statistics (see also Fah, 2004) that most PWUD are, without a doubt, young people who should be working hard to be future leaders that drive the nation's socio-economic progress. Instead, these specified groups of people ('immigrant', 'labourers', 'fishermen', 'estate labourers' and 'jobless youths') are unemployed, odd job workers or low-income earners.

News articles also sometimes associate PWUD with other undesirable groups and do undesirable activities collectively. Extract 12 reads:

Extract 12

'The seven-storey Blue Boy Mansion, next to Corona Inn in Tengkat Tong Shin, which used to be a sought after place to live, has been invaded by foreigners over the years. There are also complaints of uncollected garbage, sub-tenants overcrowding units, drug addicts and vagrants'.

'The foreigners were overcrowding the place and some were even sleeping along the corridors'.

"Then the vagrants and drug addicts will then use newspapers, cardboard and other materials to make a bed.

Teh also said that he has seen the vagrants defecating and urinating around the area.

"The vagrants are becoming a nuisance for the residents here. We hope the authorities will look into this problem," he said.

New Straits Times [MS] (Sept 26 2012)

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The PWUD are somewhat seen to appear as numerous whose presence are usually undesirable. Their presence is often presented in groups, pluralised and collectivised: 'drug addicts', 'vagrants' and 'foreigners'. Words like 'overcrowding' and 'invaded' are also analysed as an amalgamation of image schemata and metaphorical sense between *container* and *content*, in which the PWUD (content) is construed as a large number of them continuously moving in an area (container), until the area is filled. Their migration isunwelcomed by the residents ('invasion') and evidently, against the residents' approval. There are three types of undesirable identities in this news: the 'foreigners', 'drug addicts' and 'vagrants'.

Given these roles, it is difficult to decide if the vagrants are actually PWUD (and vice versa), or foreigners are consuming drugs as well. This is because the foreigners are also vagrants ("sleeping along the corridors") and, at the same time, the vagrants and drug addicts also "used newspapers, cardboard and materials to make their beds" (this means that they, too, sleep along the corridors). Based on these points, the narrator – person interviewed – impersonalises the PWUD's identity as disapproving to the community. In order to impersonalise an identity in such a manner, the narrator assigns demeaning qualities to the PWUD in the news via *abstraction*. Abstraction occurs when 'utterance autonomisation' is inserted in the news (Theo Van Leeuwen, 1996). Here, impersonal authority of 'utterance' by one of its residents ('Teh') is inserted to objectivise the PWUD as undesirable social actors. The resident is portrayed as having the best local knowledge and represents the consensus of the entire residence.

Additionally, the disapproval of PWUD's presence as an 'unwanted', 'disgusting', and 'undesirable' person is projected through these expressions and they create the impression that they are dirt, diseased and trash-like:

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- *sleeping* on bed made of newspapers, cardboard and other materials
- *sleeping* along the corridor
- *defecating* and *urinating* around the area
- *becoming* a nuisance for the residents

These actions sum up to be the underlying reasons for the residents' 'complaints' and 'problem'. These 'problems' presents itself as an abstract reference to the PWUD, whilst implicating that PWUD is indeed the problem to the whole situation, in a metaphorical sense. Hence, by categorising these people as 'the problem', this classification creates differences that separate 'them' and 'us'.

In another news, the reference of 'foreigner' is not exempted when linked to PWUD, as the following extract shows:

Extract 13

> Kinabatangan OCPD, DSP Martin Lugu said the man, known as Andis Tawan, 40, an Indonesian national, tried to attack the policeman with a knife in the incident at about 3.30pm.
>
> He said the man had earlier stabbed to death another Indonesian national, Agus Jamal, 33, during a cock fight at a wedding reception in the village at 1pm.
>
> *BERNAMA* [MS] (Aug 15 2013)

In Extract 13, the news reports that both PWUD and victim are from Indonesia (*also see* Extract 10). Indeed, Indonesians are commonly targeted by law enforcers for illegal migration to Malaysia (United Press International, 2013). Malaysian authorities often conduct raids and immigration checks on Indonesians to see if they are illegal migrants (also see International Federation for Human Rights, 2008). Bearing this in mind, their constant apprehension by the authorities has earned them the status of illegality, trespassers,

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and troublemakers; thus connoting the identity of a rebel who is against the law for the wrong reasons.

4.4. PWUD are Victims of Circumstances

Even though the majority of news articles represent PWUD in negative harmful ways, there are news reports that feature them as victims of circumstances who suffered 'helplessness' and 'passiveness'. When PWUD are represented as victims, they are absolved from blame. Extract 14 shows such an instance:

Extract 14

> 'Alwi's heroin addiction started when he was 16. He had tried to quit several times but was unsuccessful'.
>
> 'His addiction became worse when he lost his job in 2009'.
>
> 'He had tried to wean off his addiction before by taking methadone, but was unable to withstand the withdrawal symptoms'.
>
> *BERNAMA* [MS] (Dec 4 2013)

In Extract 14, the PWUD is represented as a victim of drugs when he was a teenager and this addiction led him to lose his job. He is also represented as someone who has tried to fight the habit by quitting but was unsuccessful. The phrasal verb 'wean off' suggests a continuous, gradual effort that the PWUD has taken in order to quit drugs, while 'unsuccessful' means he failed to continue this effort. His failure is depicted from the efforts to 'quit several times'. Notice that the determiner 'several' is used, instead of 'many'. This could also possibly indicate that his consistent efforts may not be that often as expected, partly due to demotivation following from few failures.

In a similar way, another PWUD is portrayed as a victim in the following Extract 15:

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Extract 15

Loss of father leads youth to drugs

"I am from Kedah. I started taking drugs after my father passed away as I couldn't accept the fact that my father is no longer around.

"I was so depressed as I had no one to turn to as I am not that close to my mother. I have since been hooked on heroine," he said.

New Straits Times [MS] (Feb 12 2013)

Extract 15 depicts the PWUD as a frustrated individual who consumes drug because he 'couldn't accept the fact' that his father passed away. Compounding that is the fact that he is 'not that close to his mother'. He describes his depression as the motivating factor that drives his heroin addiction. Interestingly, some parallels can be drawn from the previous two articles that portrayed the PWUD as unsuspecting victims. These similarities can be observed from the intertextualisation of their experiences in the news. The inclusion of first person pronoun stance of view strengthens the rhetoric, and in turn, induces a sense of understanding and empathy in the readers, perhaps, towards the PWUD as victims of circumstances. By using this pronoun too, the news article gives the PWUD a voice.

There was an instance in the news report that associated PWUD as being children. See Extracts 16 and 17.

Extract 16

'SUKA Society (Suara Kanak-Kanak) Malaysia executive director Anderson Selvasegaram said children abusing drugs were not unusual'.

'University Malaya Medical Centre child and adolescent psychiatrist Associate Professor Dr Aili Hanim Hashim said this kind of behaviour was seen in younger children as they may have older peers who indulged in such activity'.

"Children's curiosity is aroused when they talk to friends who advocate taking drugs, not knowing that there is

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a negative side to drug use".

New Straits Times [MS] (Apr 16 2011)

Extract 17

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysian Narcotics Eradication Body (PJNM) is installing anti-drugs billboards at selected schools nationwide to prevent susceptible youth from falling prey.

'Its adviser Supt (R) Abu Bakar Long said the main reasons for students' involvement with drugs were usually family problems and getting into the wrong crowd'.

"Teenagers are easily influenced, and succumb easily to stress and peer pressure.

New Straits Times [MS] (Nov 10 2012)

The authorities in these news excerpts generally do not place blame on PWUD, instead they say that their behaviour in wanting to use drugs are caused by their curiosity ('curiosity', 'easily influenced') and external factors like 'family problems' and 'peer pressure'. Additionally, by saying children abusing drugs were 'not unusual', it is implied that this is normal. In other words, young PWUD are not to be blamed for their predicament. These individuals are vulnerable and 'susceptible' individuals who have been tricked, convinced, or coerced into drug consumption. Words like 'may have', 'is aroused', 'not knowing', 'falling prey', 'getting into the wrong crowd', 'easily influenced', and 'easily succumb', all suggest that victimised PWUD are not entirely at fault when it comes to consuming drugs. The activated roles are allocated to 'older peers', 'problematic family', 'wrong crowd' and 'peer pressure', wherein these roles appear to be the 'main reason' in the construction of the PWUD's identity.

The relative clauses in Extract 17 are added alongside with generic terms such as 'older peers, *who indulged in such [drug] activity'* and 'friends, *who advocate taking drugs'* to provide more information about specific people involved ('drug taking people'),

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whereas Extract 18 reveals prominent use of adverbs like 'usually' and 'easily' to convey that 'teenagers' and 'youth' could become a PWUD without hassle, if no precaution is taken. Additionally, adjective like 'susceptible' depicts the potential PWUD's weakness and vulnerability when it comes to drugs. This choice of adjective fits into the description of the metaphor 'prey', in which connotes the PWUD as a victim, ravaged by drugs.

4.5. PWUD are Susceptible to Dying

In this study's repository of news articles, it is prominent that the mainstream chooses to publish numerous articles on the PWUD's death. In almost all of the news reported, the PWUD dies in an unsuspecting manner, usually in attempt to escape from law enforcers. Words like 'death' and other related words leading to death suggest they are susceptible to dying. Consider the following extracts:

Extract 18

Suspected drug addict died in fall in failed escape bid

KUALA LUMPUR: A 53-year-old woman believed to be a drug addict, died after falling from her fifth floor Melati Flats balcony at Jalan Loke Yew while trying to escape a police raid yesterday.

In the 5.18pm incident, Kwan Choi Leng fell after trying to escape the police with several drug-addled friends.

"Initial investigation revealed she and her friends were on the balcony when they were spotted by a police patrol team doing rounds in the area.

"They tried to escape when the team went up to check on them. The team later found drugs paraphernalia in the unit," said Dang Wangi district police chief Assistant Commissioner Zainuddin Ahmad today.

New Straits Times [MS] (July 21 2013)

Extract 19

SUSPECTED DRUG ADDICT DIES AFTER SIXTH FLOOR PLUNGE

"KUALA LUMPUR, May 30 (Bernama) -- A suspected drug addict fell to his death from the sixth floor of an

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apartment in Taman Segar, Cheras today.

Thirty-eight-year-old Guan Wai Yuan, from Pandan Indah in Ampang, was found dead by passers-by at 3.30pm.

Cheras police chief ACP Mohan Singh told Bernama that preliminary investigations showed the man had seven previous records for drug abuse.

He did not reject the possibility that the victim was trying to escape from a narcotics CID squad that was conducting an operation in the area".

BERNAMA [MS] (May 30 2011)

Extract 20

Drug addict falls to death from hotel room

KLANG: A 39-year-old man, believed to be a drug addict, fell to his death from the seventh floor of a hotel here while trying to escape from a police raiding party yesterday.

"The suspect refused to open the door and just when the police were about to break into the room, an Indonesian woman opened it".

'Police believe the man, who had previous convictions for drugs and motorcycle theft, fell while trying to escape through a bathroom window'.

New Straits Times [MS] (Oct 10 2011)

News in Extracts 18, 19 and 20 reported the death of some PWUD. In Extract 18 and 19, the lexical items 'failed escape bid', 'plunge' and 'fell to death' described the PWUD's unsuccessful attempt to escape, which resulted in death, after their drug activities were discovered ('spotted by a police'). Naturally, if one has committed an offense, the offender would have tried to run away from law enforcers and refused to cooperate ('refused to open the door'). Because of their own haste to escape from the law enforcers, the PWUD have accidentally caused their own death due to carelessness in falling (by taking a sudden 'plunge'). When stringed together, these words in a way justify the reasons for the PWUD's attempt to escape: 'being spotted', 'escaping from narcotics CID squad' and having 'drugs

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paraphernalia found' in the apartment. Unfortunately, their escape appears to be futile because they 'died after falling' and 'fell to death'. Yet somehow, the focus of their death seemed to be directed at their own fault in 'attempting to escape'.

As seen in Extract 19, the relative clause explores the death possibility of a PWUD who was 'found dead by the passers-by' although the chief police officer mentioned that he 'did not reject the possibility' that the PWUD died probably due to his own fear of being apprehended by the narcotics officer. This case is likely to be a case of attempted escape because the narcotics squad happens to 'conduct an operation' at that time. Notably, the word 'victim' describes the tragic fate suffered by the PWUD because of his own fear, carelessness and consequences. Based on this conception, the readers could have interpreted that a person who is against the law shall eventually suffer the consequences.

It is also interesting to note that all the PWUD as described in the news, did not consider the danger of escaping from high rise buildings like apartments and hotel, especially from the 'fifth floor', 'sixth floor' and the 'seventh floor'. Perhaps, the PWUD are bold enough to escape based on either the influence of drugs ('drug addled'), or desperation in order to avoid being caught ('had seven previous records of drug abuse', 'previous convictions for drugs and theft'). Also, the fact that a PWUD has 'previous records of drug abuse' shows his lack of remorse towards his action and probably, has no qualms about consuming drugs again near future.

Such news begets impression in the readers that PWUD are prone to death because of their obsession with drugs and violation of the law. All in all, perhaps the news is trying to convey these messages that: i) doing drugs will eventually lead one to tragic consequences (in extreme cases—death), ii) PWUD would always live in fear (of being apprehended), and/ or iii) PWUD deserve to die because of their own unlawful activity.

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4.6. Some PWUD are from 'Normal' Walks of Life

The UK Drug Policy Commission (2010) provides comprehensive insights on backgrounds of the PWUD and their report identifies seven types of PWUD who are commonly featured in news reports, including professionals, non-professional workers (odd job workers, unemployed), criminals, young people, celebrities/ public figure, parents, and the public (p.24). Malaysian news reports tend to provide a significant coverage on the PWUD from an undesirable background (subsection 4.1.3.). Nevertheless, there are also a number of evident articles on PWUD from other categories, apart from the criminals and non-professional groups. Extract 21-25 feature the following backgrounds of various types of PWUD:

Extract 21

Houseman 'did not take his life'

DEATH AT HOSPITAL: Health D-G rules out work stress

KUALA LUMPUR: THE death of a houseman from drug overdose was not related to hectic working hours or stress, said Health Ministry director-general Datuk Seri Dr Hasan Abdul Rahman.

He said the ministry ruled out the possibility of the houseman being overworked, especially with the implementation of the flexi-working system, which started last September.

"I have spoken to housemen during hospital visits and they said the new system gave them more freedom and that they were capable of concentrating better at work".

The houseman, Dr Danny Lee, 29, was found unconscious at Kajang Hospital's paediatric ward at 7am on Wednesday. A post-mortem report revealed that he died of drug overdose.

Dr Hasan said the ministry was awaiting a full police report, including results from the Forensic and Chemistry Departments.

New Straits Times [MS] (Apr 13 2012)

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Extract 22

Cops nab 23 'ketum' addicts

BESUT: Police arrested 23 ketum addicts here in Kampung Pangkalan Teras in a raid yesterday (Mar 28).

In the six-hour operation that started from 5am, the addicts aged from 16 to 58 caught included four district department civil servants, two of them brothers aged 33 and 34.

"The two brothers came earliest, at 7.30am, to get their supply before going to work".

New Straits Times [MS] (Mac 29 2013)

In Extracts 21 and 22, the news depicts PWUD as professionals who are unusually involved with drugs, despite of their profession as 'doctor' and 'district department civil servants'. There is no mention of harm done towards others. As seen in Extract 21, the news reinforces the idea that it is uncommon for professionals like doctors to succumb to drug use and died as an outcome of it. This ideology is realised by intertextualising a statement by the higher authority ('Health Ministry director-general'):

> "I have spoken to housemen *during hospital visits* and they said the new system gave them more freedom and that they were capable of concentrating better at work".

Here, the Ministry opines that the stress and work factors could not have possibly caused the doctor to commit suicide because of the newly improved flexi-working system has given them more 'freedom' and 'better concentration at work' ('[reason of death] was not related to hectic working hours or stress').

On the other hand, celebrities also seemed to be under the limelight when it comes to drug use. Extract 23 informs:

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Extract 23

Actor again nabbed over drugs

REMANDED: Benjy and five others arrested at condominium in Bukit Antarabangsa

KUALA LUMPUR: ACTOR Khaeryll Benjamin Ibrahim, better known as Benjy, has again been arrested for drug abuse.

The 35-year-old was nabbed by a team of officers from the Ampang Jaya police narcotics unit at a condominium in Bukit Antarabangsa here on Wednesday.

Benjy, who is the son of actress Azean Irdawaty, was arrested along with three other men and two women, aged between 27 and 37.

The male suspects also tested positive for drugs.

Earlier, the situation outside the courtroom turned hostile when Benjy tried to attack a photographer.

He tried to punch the photographer, but hit the latter's camera instead.

In 2011, Benjy was fined RM5, 000 by the Kuala Lumpur magistrate's court after being found guilty of possessing 0.24g of syabu in his residence in 2010.

New Straits Times [MS] (Jun 28 2013)

Extract 23 portrays the 'actor' as a PWUD who is also aggressive for trying to 'attack and punch the photographer'. His actions may not be the cause from drug use but it could reflect the actor's attitude and manners towards others. In that sense, the news tells the readers about the actor's attitude as a 'spoilt' and 'hostile' person because of his background ('son to an actress'). The association of kinship tells a lot about the PWUD's upbringing; that he is from a rich family and possibly, has everything he desires since young. His financial status of being rich is also reflected with the inclusion of his place of living, namely an elite residential area in Malaysia called 'Bukit Antarabangsa'. By adding some information about his previous conviction and punishment, it looks as if the actor did not feel remorse. Furthermore, when the news reports the PWUD's arrest with inclusion of adverb 'again', the readers may expect the same incident to recur near future.

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Not only celebrities and professionals are involved with drugs, but also general members of public like students and 'rich people', as seen in Extract 24 and 25:

Extract 24

Four college students detained for drug use

"KEMAMAN: Four college students were arrested after they tested positive for methamphetamine at their dormitory in Jalan Enjin Gergaji here today.

However, no drugs were found on them or at the house".

New Straits Times [MS] (July 4 2013)

Extract 25

Police raid drug-fuelled party at luxury apartment

"KUALA LUMPUR: A drug and alcohol-fuelled party held at a luxury service apartment in Jalan Anjung Putra off Jalan Sultan Ismail here was raided by police following a public tip-off early yesterday'.

'Dang Wangi police chief Assistant Commissioner Zainuddin Ahmad said the wild party was fuelled not only with alcohol but drugs as well, based on evidence found at the scene'.

'Initial police investigation revealed that the participants would usually receive an exclusive invite to join the private party which was usually held every week'.

'Only 20 to 40 people were usually invited for the party, which would always be held at the luxury service apartment despite numerous complaints by other residents of the rowdy crowd'.

'The organiser had paid RM1,000 per night for the unit, compared with its normal rate of RM450 per night'."

New Straits Times [MS] (Feb 18 2013)

In Extract 24, the police arrested some students for consuming drugs. Young people with minimal education are probably expected to indulge in drugs rather than 'college students', as statistics confirmed that the majority of youngsters involved with drugs are uneducated or drop outs (Mohamed et al., 2008). Also, in the statistics, students who are higher educated had 'significantly lower substance misuse index'. Bearing this in mind, it is

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possible that the college students are merely trying out drugs at that juncture because there were ‘no drugs found on them or at the house’.

In contrast, Extract 25 shows drug abuse amongst rich elites who conduct their activity at a ‘luxury service apartment’. To illustrate that the event is special and extravagant, adjectives like ‘luxury’, ‘exclusive’, and ‘private’ are embedded into the news. The adjective ‘luxury’ shows that only an affluent individual is able to afford the party. After all, the party only sends out ‘exclusive invites’ as it is a closed event (‘private’). This also means that the members of this party are selected and limited to a group of people, in a way giving the PWUD a sense of privilege. Here, it is observed that the hedonistic PWUD come together as members of shared interest (drugs in this case). They are also the ’only 20 to 40 people’ who gained entrance to this event. The adverb ‘only’ reinforces the fact that this event strictly prohibits a high volume of people (not above 40).

It is important to note that the presence of these numeric descriptions can be construed as realising specific reference. Even though the PWUD are often genericised as ‘them’ from ‘us’ in the society, the information provided by the organiser in the news seemed to convey the message that this group of PWUD perceived themselves otherwise. It is observed that these wealthy PWUD actually contribute to a substantial amount of rent (‘RM 1,000 per night’). To add on, the relative clause ‘compared with its normal rate of RM 450 per night’ highlights that these individuals are so wealthy that they could afford this opulent lifestyle (‘held every week’) and do not mind on splurging a lot of money. Nonetheless, it is uncertain how these affluent PWUD will be punished equally or differently than their lower class counterparts.

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4.7. Conclusion

The findings reveal that in order to represent the PWUD with various identities, news writers or journalists gather information and utilise word classes (as semantic tools) and intertextuality as well as interdiscourse to report the news based on journalism practices and ethics. Even though journalists are bound by a set of 'journalistic ethics and practice' to produce news as objectively as possible, they still reveal certain ideologies when constructing the news (Richardson, 2007). These ideologies are then conveyed for readers' interpretation through the utilisation of various linguistic features. As discussed earlier in reviewed literature, these linguistic features include connotations, denotations, reference, word classes, thematic relations as well as intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

Most journalists are trained to write according to a standardised format and news structure. However, in real life situations, news production is not processed in the most simplified manner, as these writers are bounded by time deadlines and most of the times, manpower[11]. Due to this reason, it is considerable to observe how one specific news organisation function in their own task management, rather than generalising how one practice is equally applicable to the rest (also see Montgomery, 2013). Interestingly, when gathering the data for this study, the news reports seem to display an array of insightful views:

- PWUD are generally represented as the 'bad other'.
- Their plight, process of recovery and life after recuperation are hardly ever featured. There are some of such news, but very minimal.

[11] It is not uncommon that journalists are required to cover more than one news at a juncture (Hayes et al., 2007; Knight, 2008).

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- PWUD are usually seen as criminals, disturbed individuals who hails from undesirable social class, whereby they are most susceptible to death due to addiction, unfortunate events or even being shot dead.

The next chapter will further discuss why the PWUD are represented this way.

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CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5. Introduction

This chapter addresses the second Research Question, "What are the possible theoretical explanations for the PWUD's representation in the news media?" This section discusses various factors that influence the way PWUD are represented. Based on the data analysis, this section discusses the following viewpoints:

- Ideologies involved in shaping perceptions (Section 5.1)
- Self-fulfilling prophecies by the society and media (Section 5.2)
- Concerns of stigmatisation towards PWUD (Section 5.3)

5.1. Ideologies that Shape Perceptions

When PWUD are constantly identified as the 'bad other', it forms a set of beliefs and perception of PWUD. According to Wu (2006), ideologies are conceived as "the framework which news media often present events" and is often manifested in frames (p.19). As previously mentioned, news events are framed to "recognise patterns in order for consumers to make sense of the social occurrences" which become a standard mode of communication (Chermak, 1997).

In fact, news have been promoting individualism which emphasises a person's worth. The worth of a PWUD, in the case of this study, is determined by how the news chooses to represent them (Van Dijk, 2013b). Apart from idolising famous people and materialism, the news seems to be the advocate for certain people of interest. Criminal news are the prime focus on a usual basis (Dowler, 2003; Dowler et al., 2006). When news

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regularly highlights on the PWUD's addiction in association with crime and arrests without considering their background and life issues, PWUD become the 'bad other', this representation turns into a reason for conflict and abnormality.

Numerous groups arguably benefit from representing PWUD as bad people. News production and dissemination are core business activities of news organisations. Hence, they are concerned about i) the selection of news items, ii) chances for publication, and iii) the 'actual' preparation of news. Ideally, news value is decided based on the needs and demand of specific information from their audience (Van Dijk, 2006, 2013b). News items could be sensationalised to meet the audiences' demand and consumption. Preferably for news content, "something [or anything] perceived as [threat]" would make a better newsworthy material, as people are intuitively drawn to news that are negative or deviant in nature (Manning, 2006; Van Dijk, 2013b). Van Dijk also posits:

> "Psychoanalytically, [negativity in the news] might be seen as expressions of our own fears, and [the necessity of these type of news] both provides relief and tension by proxy participation". (p. 133)

In defence of their journalistic practices, journalists like Chermak (1997) emphasises that "violence [and] drug crimes are prioritised because they had potential to win a significant amount of news space [and is deemed newsworthy]". Drug news in specific, has the potential to progress into another significant story, especially when "large amounts of drugs or cash were confiscated" (p. 697). When "so called human interest stories" are featured, news organisations make more money by gaining readership from their readers (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2010, p.41). Apart from increasing readership, the high demand of news creates partnership opportunities between news organisations and advertising agencies. Other than government funding, commercialised newspapers are also generating

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their own revenue by allocating segments of advertisements for this purpose. These agencies would then feature advertisement in segmented sections to promote their products or even agendas (e.g. political) (Guan, 2011).

In fact, positioning PWUD as 'bad people' also benefits higher authority, namely law enforcers and people in power (e.g. politicians). Van Dijk explains that problematic stories and conflicts could reinstate society's faith in their protectors as well as to reinforce "goals and values shared within their own culture". By portraying that PWUD are bad people, society is likely to need a 'problem solver' to their predicament. As seen in this study's analysis, the police's voices dominate the majority of PWUD related news. They portray themselves as peacemakers who are serious in their responsibilities towards handling drug matters. Furthermore, the voices of these 'elites' are not only considered newsworthy, but presents the case as being more reliable in their positions as "observers [and] opinion formulators" (Van Dijk, 2013, p. 97). By promising that the authority will address drug issues, society becomes reliant on them for solutions, thus entrusting social responsibility to those people in power for action. These promises offered are usually prominently highlighted during election times; when politicians hope to garner votes and support from the nation (Van Dijk, 2006). Also, by pushing for stiffer penalties and punishment, politicians paint an image as "being tough with crime" and in return, garner support and approval from the public. The same goes to police officials whose success in demonstrating crime punishment strengthens the public's faith and security and thus increasing their support and sanction for power and authorisation.

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Furthermore, these superior voices also provide a foundation for news writers to justify the PWUD's actions in defence of their viewpoint as 'trial by media'.[12] Even though trial by news media somehow tarnishes the PWUD's images before acquittal, such proposition by the news writer could in fact reflect the high authorities' prevailing mentality towards the drug issues, especially when mainstream sources are known to be the "government mouthpieces" (Mastroianni & Noto, 2008; Nain & Kim, 2004). It is also worth noting that despite the circumstance that PWUD are often associated with crime; the PWUD's progress, recuperation and success of treatment are rarely discussed in news (Aziz, Mothar, & Ghalim, 2005). Their after-recovery contributions towards society are also often overlooked except for a few exceptions (also see *New Straits Times*, 2012e). In this aspect, the lack of coverage in their recovery and reintegration "does not matter much in the end" because eventually, the audience is more interested in "issues of violence" and threats to society (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2010, p.82).

This hinders PWUD from reintegration not because of their ability to become drug-free, but by "a wall of exclusion [and] socially stranded, largely forgotten, with little hope". As Buchanan (2004) argues:

> "Once a drug using identity is ascribed, no matter how much progress, it became clear that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to overcome the hostile levels of discrimination". (p.8)

Due to these stigmatisations, recent global efforts have been called upon to decriminalise PWUD in effort to help PWUD and not 'imprisoning them' (also see Branson, 2014).

[12] 'Trial by media' is a term coined to describe the influence of news coverage on a person's reputation that is affected by the prevalent perception of guilt or innocence, regardless of the verdict reached in court (also see Dictionary Central, n.d.).

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This intention has also benefitted the justice system whereby officials like judges, prison wardens, law enforcers and even lawyers are given the privilege of hire for their service. Even so, it is not easy engaging with various parties to provide professional services to PWUD due to "organisations' lack of interest in regards to legal aid issues given the stigma associated with drug crimes" (Tanguay & Drug Policy Consortium, 2011).

Likewise, the non-governmental organisations take interest in a similar manner as well. The increase of interest is not only seen amongst the "prison authorities, drug dependence experts and law enforcement representatives [but also] significant investments from international agencies, including the Global Fund" (ibid.) ever since the Malaysia's harm reduction services were implemented in 2005. Initiatives to 'decriminalise' PWUD are seen as potential investments to stakeholders like Global Fund; a coalition that perceives the importance in integrating recuperating PWUD into the society for progress and socio-economic development, hence strengthening "national resilience and security" (Kamarudin, 2007).

5.2. Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

Society often perceives PWUD as troublemakers and deviants, ever since the public has long been educated to perceive negativity in every drug related news (Aziz et al., 2005). Such consequence impairs stigmatisation and when marginalised people like PWUD are constantly stigmatised; they are bound to recidivate in crime and drug use for 'believing' that they possess such traits. The process of self-fulfilling prophecy can be illustrated in Figure 5.1:

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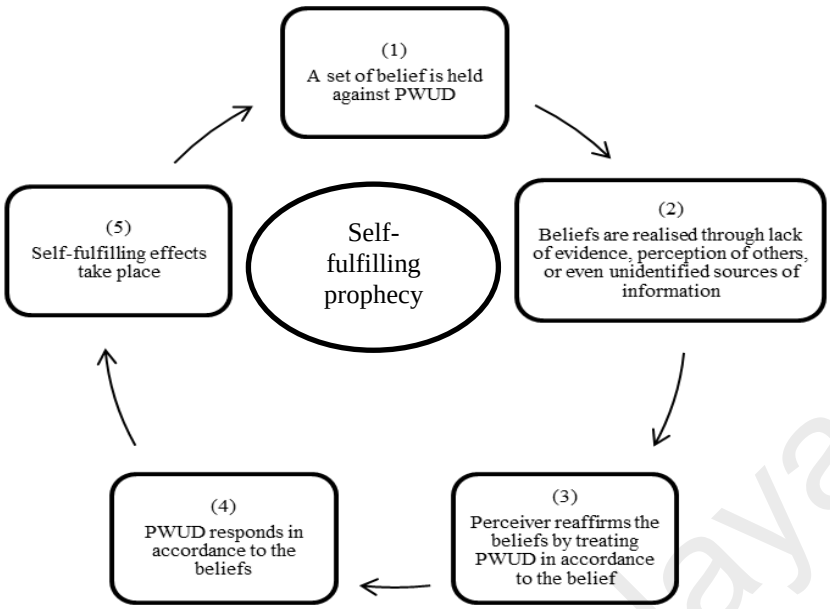

Figure 5.1: The process of self-fulfilling prophecy

As briefly mentioned in reviewed literature (Section 2.3.1), the self-fulfilling prophecy could pose potential risk of stigmatisation. The self-fulfilling prophecy ensues when an unconfirmed perspective (sometimes, inaccurate) is exerted upon the perceiver, which in turn influences the perceiver's belief, actions and treatment against its targets (in this case the PWUD) (Guyll et al., 2010). When this happens, social inequality and discrimination are fuelled, whilst decreasing the chances of reintegration for the marginalised individuals. Therefore, the stigma attached following from these events will give rise to labels and stereotypical identities. These "long term and negative effects" will ultimately broaden the gap between the "normal and deviants" in society (Davis, 1972; Reinarman, 1994; Reinarman & Duskin, 1999). In light of this, it is equally important to note that self-fulfilling prophecy relies on two types of beliefs, namely *the target based belief* and *the stereotype-based beliefs*. The former is being inferred from "personal information", whereas the latter is derived from "inaccurate stereotype about the perceived target" (Guyll et al., 2010; Madon et al., 2011). As Madon et al. (2011) discussed:

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> "Each perceiver possesses the potential to exercise self-fulfilling effect that can be combined with other perceivers' self-fulfilling effects to form a powerful, yet harmful impact on the stereotyped individuals".

According to Guyll et al. (2010), the self-fulfilling prophecy progresses in three phases. These phases explain the stigma that PWUD have to face in light of this social quandary. Firstly, a set of beliefs is held against the target (PWUD in general) and these beliefs could come from either existing societal viewpoints or a new set of beliefs (possibly adopted from unconfirmed, unreliable sources). These beliefs, at this point as *assumptions*, can be realised from one's own perception of 'others', or even unidentified sources of information from the news media (Barra, n.d.; Forsyth, 2012; Guyll et al., 2010). Then, the perceiver (i.e. public, journalists, etc.) treats the PWUD in a consistent manner that is aligned to the assumption, as when PWUD is denied employment because of the stigma attached (also see Bauld & Britain, 2010). This stigma could possibly arise from the constant projection and representation of PWUD in the news (or even hearsay) as a threat to society (Boyd, 2002; Hughes et al., 2011, Lloyd, 2010). Lastly, the assumption is realised when the PWUD acts in accordance to the belief. For example, PWUD have to resort to crime (e.g. steal, rob) in order to survive because they are deprived of basic rights for survival (i.e. no employment equates to having no income).

Interestingly, Madon and team (2011) explained that vulnerable targets are likely to succumb to the self-fulfilling effects and they project the following qualities in Table 5.1:

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Table 5.1: PWUD are susceptible to self-fulfilling prophecy

Characteristics of susceptible *targets* (PWUD)	
• Low self-efficacy • Uncertain self-views • Stigmatised individuals as defined by their out-group membership	
More susceptible to self-fulfilling prophecies	Less susceptible to self-fulfilling prophecies
• motivated to get along with perceivers • affiliate with perceivers • behave in good manner when interacting with perceivers • desire to make a good impression on perceivers • perceivers control resources they want	• motivated to defend their personal identities • aware of perceivers' expectations

Although not all of the characteristics are applicable to every individual who does drugs, this information serves to provide an underlying foundation to understanding the potential causes of how most (if not all) PWUD are being represented negatively in news media. Moreover, with intergroup segregation of 'them' (PWUD as the 'bad deviant') and 'us' (the normal people) happening in society at large, the intervention of various stakeholders and authorities could also exacerbate the self-fulfilling condition that extends to not only one person who use drugs, but a group of *people* who use drugs, as "reflection of the broad social circle" (Labarta & Dolón, 2005).

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5.3. Stigmatisation of PWUD

Studies on PWUD have long sparked global interests to curb and tackle arising drug issues and existing ones. Because drug use and abuse is an international issue and concern to all society, studies of PWUD in the international news context are omnipresent (Bell, 1985; Cassels et al., 2003; Hughes et al., 2011). For example, Hughes et al. (2011) have done a study on stereotypes of PWUD and types of drugs that exist within media reporting. Different drugs were identified (cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine, heroin) for media content analysis and from their results, the researchers found that news media portrayal towards PWUD tend to depict "law enforcement or criminal justice action" whilst specific mention of drug use like the heroin was "framed as a drug that will lead to legal problems" (ibid.).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been in operations since 1997 to help support countries across the world to promote drug abuse prevention and health care through annual campaigns such as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, in order to convince youth about the dangers of drugs, whilst urging "[PWUD] to seek treatment and Governments to see drug [abuse] as a health problem, not a crime" in effort to counteract stigmatisation (also see United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.). With stigma and specification of drug use attached to PWUD, it is unarguable that the use of any drugs as treatment (i.e. methadone) would hinder the PWUD's efforts in seeking treatment as their actions could indeed be a traumatic experience to these individuals who have to face law enforcement officers (Aziz et al., 2005; Reid et al., 2007, Yoong, 2012).

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This stigma would in turn create new identities for PWUD in the long run and segregate them as out-group members of society.[13] McLeod (2008) discussed that self-images are enhanced and created by "discriminating and holding prejudice views against the out group" thus dividing the society into two groups, namely 'us' and 'them'. This process of segregation goes through a series of social categorisation where individuals are 'put into groups' based on their evident identities (Tajfel et al., 1971). Moreover, categorisation of PWUD based on their 'deserving identity and group' and linkage to crime news would further reinforce labelling and thus stigmatisation (Craddock, Collins & Timrots, 1994; Dowler et al., 2006; Stevens, 2008).

Exaggerated information on drug related crime triggers the onset of new researches (Alexandrescu, 2014; Craddock, Collins & Timrots, 1994; Reinarman & Duskin, 1999; Stevens, 2008) that focus on the long term aspects of interdependence between structural and social factors to better comprehend the physiological and psychological of PWUD and social problems. Buchanan (2004) states that the debilitating aspects of marginalisation and stigmatisation are often overlooked and might contribute to the understanding of new insights of "political rhetoric and structural discrimination" and conceptual framework to address the possible long term problems of relapse that is affected by the social components of stigma. With this in mind, the psychological and physiological aspects of drug dependence must be understood from a social dimensional before long-term policies and practices are implemented. It is also important to understand that the link between drugs and crime related news could actually distract the readers' attention from other existing or

[13] Out-group members are individuals who are marginalised in society (McLeod, 2008). Out-group members are often discriminated by the in-group members whereby the former are deemed as people "who do not belong to the [group]" and the latter would "ill seek to find negative aspects of an out-group, thus enhancing their self-image".

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potential factors such as lack of education, employment, income, etc. that might actually contribute to crime and violence in reality (Mastroianni and Noto, 2008, p.8).

Additionally, linking PWUD to illness and diseases not only instils more fear to society but also stigmatised those who needed help. From this linkage, the PWUD are also held responsible for public health concerns (Jürgens et al., 2010; World Health Organisation, 2009) and are common people suffering from "mental illnesses" or being "mentally ill" (Buchanan, 2004; Heim, 2000; Horwitz & Scheid, 1999). Stigma also impacts the PWUD's mental health due to lack of access to medications (Heim, 2000; Lloyd, 2010), thus increasing the likelihood of deviance (and sometimes, violence) that ultimately has led to the progression of AIDS/HIV and other transmission of diseases (Jürgens et al., 2010; Latkin et al., 2010). Such stigma will in turn prevent PWUD from gaining legitimacy and access to public support and funding because of the belief that "they deserve it", all of which questions some essential components about addiction, moral, medical as well as societal issues (Llyod, 2010, Tarantola, n.d.).

On the other hand, frustration that is fuelled by stigma leads PWUD to a deeper and more complex situation whereby stereotyping and discrimination are considered as "major hindrances" that jeopardises their rights (Ahern et al., 2007; Heim, 2000; Link & Phelan, 2006). For this reason, researchers, practitioners and policy makers need to reflect critically on the effectiveness of drug education and discourses. For example, the implementation of *Dangerous Drugs Act 1952* on PWUD, family members of drug dependants or even employers, has to be reconsidered and analysed thoroughly. Enforcement authorities could abuse their power because they are protected and are given the power of discretion and arrest. The stigmatising experience imposed on this marginalised group could lead to their refusal to seek treatment, thus hampering the nation's mission to curb drug use and dilemma (Lloyd, 2010).

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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6. Conclusion

This chapter is divided into 3 parts:

i. Summary (Section 6.1)
ii. Possible alternative ways to represent PWUD (Section 6.2)
iii. Recommendations for future research (Section 6.3)

6.1. Summary

This study reveals that the representation of the PWUD in mainstream news media is realised from the strategic employment of linguistic elements and rhetoric devices that were used by news makers in order to create the multiple identities of these individuals.

From news target material to readers' 'mental representation', the notion of *being* PWUD is reliant on the fact that "the news media that public relies upon for 'truth'" is actually governed by set of language elements employed by journalist to create the 'ideal news' for consumption (Van Dijk, 1996; Van Hout & Jacobs, 2010). In the case of this study, the emerging identities of PWUD as criminal, sick, poor, victimised or even professionals are arguably detectable across the news content. The frequency of such reporting is also dependent on the news sources as different news organisations may sometimes resort to having their news adopted from news agencies (Van Hout & Jacobs, 2010, p.2). Even if the mainstream news media are mainly funded and supported by the government, the frequent publication of drug related mainstream news reports (relating to the PWUD) provides a rich database for the analysis of this study in hope to understand the

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stigma that underlies behind the representation of PWUD as well as to dissect the linguistic features that are responsible in creating these representations.

From a news media perspective, news reports related to drugs and PWUD are produced and created in order to generate profit and increase revenue apart from meeting the readers' demand for sensationalised news. The link between crime and drugs also intensifies the content, at the same time satisfying the consumers' news demand for sensational, newsworthy materials that are deemed beneficial to the news organisations and its stakeholders.

From criminal justice perspective, the common portrayal of PWUD as the 'bad other' generally evokes negative perception, suspicion and caution amongst law enforcers which in turn shifts their prime focus towards this 'outgroup community'. From this, officials who demonstrate law enforcement and punishment of PWUD are seen as 'peacemakers' who exercises their responsibilities efficiently and in turn gains support and approval from the public. More often, the treatment or punishment towards PWUD is seen as necessary and deserving because PWUD are people who violate the law and causes menace to society.

Psychologically, negative representations could be harmful to both PWUD and society in long run. Stressed out PWUD present psychological problems which is damaging to their chances of recovery and could result in recidivism (Horwitz & Scheid, 1999). On the other hand, framing representations with certain linguistic features which are either demeaning or encouraging (sometimes, sympathetic) could also affect the psychological aspect of its readers in terms of the opinion formation and the embedment of ideologies in their cognitive processing (Murphy, 2003, p.6).

From a linguistic perspective, the news reports reveal that news writers or journalists interweave news content and lexical items to disseminate the ideal news for

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consumption. These linguistic features not only construct PWUD's identities (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p.3) but also deliver ideologies (depending on news context) that serve the news purpose or agenda (Jacobs et al., 2008, p.3). This is realised by also including rhetoric devices (intertextuality, interdiscursivity) that help strengthen and bonds the language and main gist of the news, allowing journalists to frame their works as desired and according to journalistic standards (O'Keeffe, 2006, p.27). Even so, news reports of this study reveal that not all PWUD related news are published in a negative light but sometimes, in a more encouraging and sympathetic news feature. Then it becomes crucial that readers are able to comprehend the news objectively through critical reading and reserve preconceived judgment towards the marginalised (Porter, 1986, p.11) .

6.2. Possible Alternative Ways to Represent PWUD

This section provides a number of recommendations to represent the PWUD in alternative ways. Based on the findings of this study, these recommendations include, but are not limited to:

i. Frame the language used in news writing by implementing neutral terms

Language evolves over time and the use of words follow suit as well. Words that are being used decades ago may differ in current age. This includes different terms used to represent the PWUD (Society of Editors, 2012). As discussed earlier in this study, many organisations (including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and international drug agencies) have stopped using the term "drug users [and addict]" to identify these individuals. These language frames could indeed reinforce perceptions because the "cumulative impact of hearing negative and pejorative language" causes the society to

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evoke more undesirable comments and condone punitive treatments towards PWUD (ibid.). As such the Society of Editors has recommended words to use and avoid as in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Words to use and avoid in news writing. Adopted from the Society of Editors (2012).

Words to avoid	**Alternative terms to use**	**Reasons**
junkie / crackhead / smackhead / pothead	dependent drug user / service user (whichever appropriate) / [PWUD] is dependent on …	If possible, journalists should remind the readers that PWUD are not always been a *drug user*, and possess the potential to recover. *Junkie* is particularly problematic because it implies that the PWUD is a worthless and useless person. *Addict* is a compromised version of junkie but is equally degrading by separating the PWUD from the circumstances.
drugs shame	drugs tragedy	The 'shame' of addiction is a reason why people with drug problems – and their families – often do not seek help.
former junkie/addict	(Phrase) Is the PWUD's previous drug use relevant to the story?	Irrelevant references to the PWUD's drug history can reinforce perceptions that they can never overcome addiction.
reformed junkie/addict	(Phrase) Where previous drug use is relevant: recovered addict / former addict	Avoid the association of drug dependent to moral failing.
hopeless junkie/addict	Are they really without any hope?	A PWUD may at times faces difficulty in recovery; however this plight should not be reinforced in reporting, unless "their lack of hope is the specific point being made".

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As such, words selected by journalists to represent PWUD matters because specific cogent words (coupled with negative adjectives), are persuasive enough to infer moral judgment towards the marginalised and could indeed be damaging to their self-esteem. Horwitz and Scheid (1999) posit that the two important aspects of coping with stress and "negative psychological impacts" are self-esteem and sense of control over their own life. When both self-esteem and sense of control are affected by stigma, the damaging physiological and the psychological outcome on the PWUD could cause PWUD to relapse or recidivate to their old lifestyle. Therefore, news producers need to "set new benchmarks" for representing PWUD to rid of the stigma and recover from their plight following their drug ordeal (United Kingdom Drug Policy Commission, 2010) by reconstructing the PWUD's sense of self and focus on what is important in the present (recovery) (McIntosh & McKeganey, 2000). Ultimately, it depends on "how far the news media tackles the prospect of people changing" (Society of Editors, 2012), and such effort includes, but not limited to the following :

ii. Present the news content objectively and without bias

Instead of consistently referring the PWUD to repulsive identities, it is also recommended that news sources remove unnecessary associations that could possibly further exacerbate stigma towards PWUD. This includes glamorising celebrities who use drugs and those who are in and out of the drug rehabilitations. Removing the stigma also means educating the rest that any failure or relapse in drug treatment is considered as 'part of the recovering process', rather than being treated as a 'disaster' (Society of Editors, 2012, p.39). In order to remove stigma by association, appropriate presentation of news content for any drug-related news is required (Chermak, 1997). In a journalism study done by Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch (2010), they suggest that journalists are responsible to "neutralise [or

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counteract] dominant ideology" in news that PWUD are merely represented in negative manners, by introducing an alternative approach including:

- include suitable and elaborated background and context to the news reports
- report long term issues and less on events
- pay more attention to complex and unclear issues
- cover more on non-elite people and global nations

By covering these aspects, journalists are able to present their context without having to include "catastrophic representations" that dominantly favours the elite people and authorities (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2010). However, it is acknowledge that this approach could be a limitation to mainstream journalists, as mainstream news organisations operationalises with licensing issued by the authorities, thus subjecting their news reporting to heavy filtration and monitoring (Nain & Kim, 2004). Perhaps, what mainstream journalists could do to minimise the debilitating effects of stigma towards PWUD are listed as the following (Melis & Nougier, 2010; Reid, Kamarulzaman, & Sran, 2007; Society of Editors, 2012; Tanguay & Drug Policy Consortium, 2011; United Kingdom Drug Policy Commission, 2010; Walters, 2014):

- Provide knowledge and understanding to their readers about drug dependency and recovery
- Preserve PWUD's dignity by including sufficient information about their background, upbringing, social, cultural, economic and environmental contexts to avoid assumptions and misinterpretation
- Highlight their predicament and struggles in their journey of recovery
- Provide regular and more positive images of PWUD (what are they doing to recover)
- Remove negative word classes and association that causes more harm to PWUD's image
- Provide accounts by the people concerned rather than interpretations by a third party

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- Avoid any generalisation, discrimination and stereotyping of PWUD
- Discuss hopes and alternative treatment/options (e.g. harm reduction programme) available to help PWUD

With this information made available in news reports, readers are expected to be better informed about PWUD. Reviewed literature also suggests that journalists present their work in a 'systematic writing process', of which these useful steps include 'using words effectively' as effective words ensure news coherency and efficiency that converts the content into comprehensible and meaningful news, at the same time allowing alternative interpretation of PWUD.

iii. Provide alternative insights towards PWUD through decriminalisation

By exposing the PWUD's plight in counteracting with drugs during recovery process, the public needs to know that "addiction is a complex disease, where stopping the habit requires more than just willpower" (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2012). Current legislation in Malaysia oversees the fact that PWUD requires more protection and support from the public and government in order to recover from their addiction.

With various research suggesting the need for policy and legal amendments (Fah, 2004; Kamarudin, 2007; Lian & Chu, 2013; Yoong, 2012), the proposal to decriminalise PWUD has been brought to light from these drug studies throughout the recent years. As Jürgens et al. (2010) suggests:

> "The [decriminalisation] of drugs for personal use have been widely recommended and have been implemented in some jurisdictions without negative effects such as increased drug use. Policies that perpetuate the incarceration of people who use drugs exacerbate the spread of HIV, and development of alternatives to imprisonment should be a priority". (p.8)

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News organisations and journalists play a role in disseminating relevant information; at the same time imparting the notion that *decriminalisation* is indeed crucial to the development and improvement of drug related matters that have plagued the nation for decades. In doing so, journalists should once again remove negative associations when dealing with sensitive details in relation to drug treatment (e.g: methadone treatment). Because the public perceives 'methadone' as another alternative drug used in treatment as substitute, the use of this term conjures negative connotations and thus depicts an "image problem" to those who are being prescribed for this treatment. Due to this assumption, Matheson and team (2013, p.8) suggested a more generic term for replacement in "future public engagement initiatives": the *opiate replacement treatment*. More importantly, the news media should explain on the purpose of methadone as a way of helping the PWUD by "counteracting intolerable symptoms of withdrawal [and] allow them to function in best possible manner" towards their complete recovery (McIntosh & McKeganey, 2000).

6.3. Recommendations for Future Research

This section provides recommendations for future studies. Although there are numerous researchers that look at media constructions of drugs related issues (Aziz et al., 2005; Boyd, 2002; Cassels et al., 2003; Hughes et al., 2011; Tupper, 2008), the direction of this study is relatively new a shift in focus, which is to observe the way PWUD are represented through the lens of linguistics and news discourse in the Malaysian mainstream news context.

Other news genre like the alternative news stream, editorials, and letters to the editors, or even news columns, could be considered for future studies in this area. It is also important to note that featured news and hard news are not differentiated or taken into account for this study because the nature of these news reports are not explicitly stated or

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clarified under the news sources (e.g. featured news could also appear under *nation* or *general* news in *The Star*).

Secondly, future research could also include interviews with PWUD in order to gain insights and direct voices from these individuals. Based on the advice given by the AADK[14] officer, preferably an ethnography research is conducted in order to assimilate and familiarise with the lifestyle of the PWUD before attempting to interview. This is to ensure that the interview possesses validity and credibility because the PWUD may not be authentic with their experiences unless they are comfortable with the interviewer/ researcher. However, an ethnographic study consumes a lengthy period of data collection and observation, of which this current research is unable to fulfil such criterion (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, interviews could also be extended to fellow public members, NGOs activists, law enforcement officers, narcotics officers and even the PWUD's family members.

Because the "mainstream news media are inherently part of a power structure of elite groups and institutions" (Van Dijk, 1996, p.14), other prospective area of research could perhaps observed from a critical discourse analysis angle; looking at the formulation of news discourse through the manipulation and power of language imposed from relevant stakeholders, specifically the government and its counterparts.

6.4. Research Limitations

This section discusses the research limitations of this study. It is observed that the representation of PWUD are dependent on various factors including, but not limited to the influence of drug policies and legislations, news organisational practice, as well as the

[14] AADK is the acronym for *Agensi Anti-Dadah Kebangsaan*, which is translated to National Anti-Drugs Agency.

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Malaysian journalists' employment of language strategies into their news writing practice. However, this study is also bounded by several limitations. Firstly, one of the limitations is that the current study of representation only considers the perspectives of the local mainstream media due to its prominence and frequent publication in the local news scene (77 mainstream news reports). However, during data selection for this study, it is discovered that there are not many differences between the mainstream and alternative news source which featured news about the PWUD. For this reason, this research decides to narrow down the scope to solely mainstream news reports. Secondly, this study has omitted interviews with PWUD due to time constraint. To better understand and gain insights and/or direct voices from the PWUD, interviews could be useful for this purpose. Thirdly, this research does not provide an analysis of intertextuality and interdiscursivity due to word limitation of this dissertation. Further research may be done to examine how voices and modes of experience play a role in shaping realities of PWUD.

Even though the scope of this research is somewhat limited, it is hoped that it will be a useful platform for future related studies pertinent to the PWUD, their identities, plights, human rights and even reintegration after recovery. More could still be done to help these underprivileged, marginalised individuals and a more lenient approach to begin with is, perhaps, to decriminalise the PWUD in news media (Kouvonen, Asmussen, Anker, & Tops, 2006; Vicknasingam & Narayanan, 2008).

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