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MEDIA FRAMING ROLE IN SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL OPINION ON ROLE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

Problem Statement: This study investigates how four Malaysian online news media frame organizational perceptions of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) in the workplace, and how these narratives influence HR professionals' attitudes and practices, in comparison with international studies. The objectives are: (1) to examine how Malaysian news outlets frame PwD in relation to employment, and (2) to explore how these frames shape HR professionals' organizational responses.

Approach: A qualitative case study approach was adopted, combining semi-structured interviews with five HR professionals and content analysis of PwD employment coverage in four Malaysian online news portals (2020–2024). Entman's diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames guided the analysis, while international framing studies from the UK, Japan, and UN disability discourse provided comparative context.

Results: Findings show that Malaysian media predominantly employ the compassion frame, portraying PwD as dependent and in need of assistance. The empowerment frame is less common but has gained visibility in recent years. HR interviews revealed that charity-oriented frames reinforce risk-averse hiring, with PwD perceived as requiring "special allowances," while empowerment frames position PwD as untapped talent aligned with diversity and corporate social responsibility agendas.

Conclusion: Success stories and empowerment policies encourage HR leaders to consider flexible work arrangements and targeted training. International literature reflects a similar tension between compassion and empowerment narratives, though Malaysia's reliance on charity framing slows the normalization of PwD inclusion. The study contributes to organizational communication research in Southeast Asia by linking media frames with HR perceptions and workplace practices.

Keywords: *Workplace Inclusivity, Organizational Policy, Media Framing, Organizational Communication, Person with Disability.*



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INTRODUCTION

Workplace inclusivity for Persons with Disabilities (PwD) has become a central concern in achieving equitable and sustainable development. The call for inclusive employment is reinforced globally by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8, which is “to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” and SDG 10, which emphasizes reducing inequalities within and among countries. These frameworks encourage governments, organizations, and the media to cultivate enabling environments in which PwD are valued as capable and productive contributors to the workforce. Yet, despite increasing policy attention, the translation of inclusive ideals into organizational reality remains inconsistent, especially in developing economies such as Malaysia. According to a 2022 report by Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), the cumulative number of registered PwD as at 2022 was 674,548, estimatedly around 2.0% of Malaysia’s population (Department of Statistics, 2022).

In the Malaysian context, inclusivity for PwD has been prioritized under the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008, the National Policy and Action Plan for PwD 2016–2022, and the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025), which targets a 1 percent minimum employment quota for PwD in the public sector and calls for more private-sector participation. However, national labour data indicate that PwD employment remains markedly below these aspirations. Barriers stem not only from infrastructural and procedural limitations but also from persistent social perceptions that equate disability with dependency or special assistance rather than competence. Such perceptions are shaped in large part by the media, which function as key meaning-making institutions that influence how society and organizations understand disability and employability.

Media representations play a crucial role in framing public understanding of who is “employable” and what constitutes an “inclusive” workplace. Through selective emphasis and narrative cues, media outlets construct social realities that can either normalize or marginalize PwD participation. According to Entman’s (1993) framing theory, frames highlight certain aspects of perceived reality to promote particular problem definitions (diagnostic), causal interpretations and remedies (prognostic), and calls to action (motivational). When disability is framed through compassion or charity, PwD are portrayed as dependent, reinforcing paternalistic or risk-averse hiring attitudes. Conversely, empowerment frames depict PwD as skilled professionals and emphasize structural change, equality, and contribution to organizational performance. Prior research in Western contexts (Haller & Ralph, 2019; Tsutsui, 2021) shows that empowerment narratives support diversity-driven human resource practices, while charity frames sustain tokenistic or segregated employment patterns.

Despite growing international attention to disability media studies, the link between media representation and organizational behaviour remains underexplored in Southeast Asia. Malaysian media research has tended to focus on accessibility or policy advocacy, with limited attention to how news framing influences organizational attitudes and practices. Yet, organizations often draw on prevailing public narratives when developing corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies or diversity initiatives. Hence,



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understanding media portrayals of PwD employment is vital to explain how organizational actors, particularly human-resource (HR) professionals, interpret inclusivity and operationalize it in recruitment, training, and workplace policies.

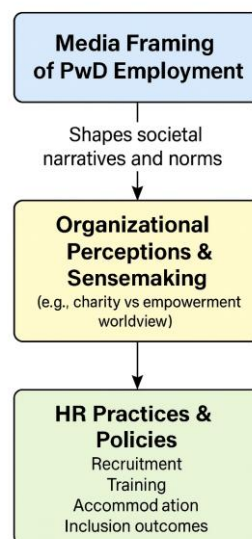
Against this backdrop, this study investigates how four Malaysian online news media, namely *The Star*, *New Straits Times (NST)*, *Free Malaysia Today (FMT)*, and *Malay Mail Online*, framed organizational perceptions of PwD in the workplace, and how these narratives influence HR professionals' attitudes and practices, in comparison with international studies. The research objectives are:

1. To examine how Malaysian news outlets frame PwD in relation to employment; and
2. To explore how these frames shape HR professionals' organizational responses.

The analysis covers news articles published between 2020 and 2024, a period marked by heightened digital transformation and corporate diversity discourse during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. By integrating content analysis of media framing with in-depth interviews among HR professionals, this paper bridges the communicative gap between public narratives and organizational sensemaking. It contributes to scholarly understanding of how symbolic representations in media translate into practical realities in workplaces, and how reframing disability in the news could foster more inclusive organizational behaviour. In short, Figure 1 below show the conceptual pathway through which media framing of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) employment shapes societal narratives, influences how organizations perceive and make sense of disability, and ultimately affects human resource (HR) practices such as recruitment, training, accommodation, and inclusion outcomes.

Figure 1

Conceptual Pathway of Media Framing and People With Disabilities (PwD)





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LITERATURE REVIEW

Originating from Entman (1993), framing theory focuses on how the media highlight certain aspects of reality to promote specific problem definitions, causal interpretations, and solutions. This interpretive process affects not only public opinion but also how organizations, including human resource (HR) departments, make sense of disability inclusion in the workplace.

Two dominant frames frequently appear in disability coverage: compassion and empowerment. The compassion frame depicts Persons with Disabilities (PwD) as dependent and pitiable, evoking sympathy or charity. Stories often highlight personal struggle, family sacrifice, or public appeals for assistance. While such narratives humanize PwD, they also risk reinforcing the stereotype that disabled people are helpless or burdensome, what disability scholars term “*inspiration porn*.” This frame, rooted in the medical and charity models of disability, can influence organizations to adopt protective or tokenistic hiring attitudes rather than structural inclusion.

In contrast, the empowerment frame portrays PwD as capable individuals with skills, agency, and rights. It emphasizes accessibility, participation, and equality, aligning with the social and rights-based models of disability. Empowerment narratives focus on opportunities and systemic change rather than personal tragedy, presenting PwD as contributors to productivity and innovation. Studies show that when media promote empowerment framing, organizations tend to associate inclusion with performance, corporate social responsibility, and diversity management (Haller & Ralph, 2006; Tsutsui, 2021).

Media narratives thus play a key role in shaping organizational perceptions and HR practices, a process often described as sensemaking (Weick, 1995). When compassion dominates, employers may internalize risk-averse views, seeing PwD as needing special accommodation. When empowerment frames prevail, organizations are more likely to implement inclusive recruitment, training, and workplace policies. This dynamic demonstrates how symbolic media representations translate into concrete workplace actions.

Internationally, disability media research shows gradual movement from compassion to empowerment. In the UK, Barnes and Mercer (2020) observed a shift toward equality-based portrayals following the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Japanese studies (Tsutsui, 2021) report similar trends as media coverage increasingly aligns with corporate inclusion efforts. The United Nations (2022) emphasizes rights-based, empowerment narratives in promoting accessibility and universal design. However, in developing contexts, compassion narratives persist. Ofori-Boateng (2018) found that Ghanaian media still relied heavily on deficit and pity frames despite emerging rights discourses.

In Malaysia, this global pattern is mirrored in a dual discourse. Compassion framing remains dominant in human-interest reporting and charity campaigns, whereas empowerment narratives have emerged more recently in coverage of employment programs and diversity policies. National policy documents such as the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008, the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025), and the Shared Prosperity



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Vision 2030 endorse workplace inclusion, yet PwD employment remains below 1 % of the public-sector workforce. Studies (Razak et al., 2018; Zainah & Zainuddin, 2020) suggest that while awareness of rights has grown, structural change is still limited. The ongoing tension between compassion and empowerment frames thus reflects Malaysia's transitional phase from welfare-based support toward rights-driven inclusion. Table 1 give the full picture of the selected international framing studies with its key findings.

Table 1

Selected International Framing Studies

Author & Year	Country	Dominant Frame(s)	Key Findings
Haller & Ralph (2019)	USA	Compassion to Empowerment	Shift toward inclusion narratives in employment and CSR contexts.
Tsutsui (2021)	Japan	Empowerment	Media aligned with corporate diversity and accessibility policies.
Barnes & Mercer (2020)	UK	Empowerment	Legal reforms promoted competence-based portrayal.
Ofori-Boateng (2018)	Ghana	Compassion	Pity and charity narratives still prevalent.
UN DESA (2022)	Global	Empowerment	Promotes rights-based, inclusive communication.

Table 2 below compared the differences between the compassion and the empowerment frames, as well as underlying model.

Table 2

Comparison of Compassion and Empowerment Frames

Frame Type	Core Narrative	Underlying Model	Organizational Implication
Compassion	PwD as dependent and deserving of sympathy	Medical / Charity	Encourages risk-averse hiring and tokenistic CSR.
Empowerment	PwD as capable and rights-bearing citizens	Social / Rights-Based	Promotes inclusive HR, equality, and DEI integration.



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METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative case study design combining content analysis and semi-structured interviews to examine how Malaysian media frame employment of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and how these narratives influence organizational practices. Sixty articles (15 each) from *The Star*, *New Straits Times*, *Free Malaysia Today*, and *Malay Mail* (2020–2024) were analyzed using Entman’s diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing dimensions, categorized into compassion and empowerment frames. Complementing this, five HR professionals from diverse sectors were interviewed to explore how media narratives shape inclusion strategies and perceptions of PwD employability within Malaysian organizations.

FINDINGS

A total of 60 articles published between 2020 and 2024 were analyzed — 15 each from *The Star*, *New Straits Times (NST)*, *Free Malaysia Today (FMT)*, and *Malay Mail Online*. Articles were coded according to Entman’s (1993) diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing dimensions, and classified into compassion and empowerment frames following Haller & Ralph (2006) and Oliver (1990). Table 1 shows the distribution of sample articles by news portal and frame type.

Table 3

Distribution of Sample Articles by News Portal and Frame Type (2020–2024)

News Portal	No. of Articles (n)	Compassion Frame	Empowerment Frame	Dominant Frame
<i>The Star</i>	15	6	9	Empowerment
<i>New Straits Times (NST)</i>	15	10	5	Compassion
<i>Free Malaysia Today (FMT)</i>	15	5	10	Empowerment
<i>Malay Mail Online</i>	15	8	7	Mixed
Total	60	29 (48%)	31 (52%)	

Source: Author’s analysis of 60 articles (2020–2024).

Overall, the analysis shows a near-equal balance between compassion (48%) and empowerment (52%) frames. While NST continues to emphasize charitable or welfare-based portrayals, The Star and FMT have progressively highlighted empowerment through narratives of entrepreneurship, vocational training, and policy reform. Malay Mail Online demonstrates an intermediate position, often blending both emotional appeals and empowerment cues. Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation of the different frames prominence.



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Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation of Compassion and Empowerment Frames

Frame Type	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
Compassion	7.25	2.22	Moderate presence with higher variability across outlets — strongest in NST and Malay Mail
Empowerment	7.75	2.45	Slightly higher mean indicating gradual discursive shift — strongest in FMT and The Star

Although the numerical difference is modest (0.5 articles per outlet on average), the pattern suggests a gradual transformation from compassion-driven narratives toward empowerment-based storytelling. The identical standard deviations indicate that both frames are applied inconsistently across newsrooms, revealing outlet-specific editorial tendencies rather than a uniform national trend. Table 5 illustrates the qualitative deduction from the headlines of the newspapers and the frames that was dominant.

Table 5

Illustrative Headlines Demonstrating Compassion and Empowerment Frames (2020–2024)

News Outlet	Headline (Year)	Frame Type	Framing Explanation
<i>New Straits Times (NST)</i>	“A beacon of hope: Dad honours son’s memory by helping disabled kids” (2024)	Compassion	Emphasizes family sacrifice and benevolence, portraying PwD as recipients of charity and emotional support.
<i>NST</i>	“Only 0.36 percent of public-sector hires last year were persons with disabilities” (2024)	Diagnostic / Compassion	Highlights inequality and low inclusion rates; frames PwD as underrepresented and needing institutional help.
<i>NST</i>	“From wheelchair to grill master: Abang Fakhruddin’s resilience wins hearts online” (2023)	Compassion	Focuses on overcoming adversity; uses inspiration narrative that reinforces the “heroic victim” trope.
<i>The Star</i>	“Empowering OKU handicraft through online platforms” (2022)	Empowerment	Portrays PwD as creative entrepreneurs adapting to digital transformation; stresses agency and skill.



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News Outlet	Headline (Year)	Frame Type	Framing Explanation
<i>The Star</i>	"Successful pilot OKU training initiative gets RM2mil" (2024)	Prognostic / Empowerment	Frames disability inclusion as a policy solution; highlights government investment in capability-building.
<i>The Star</i>	"Historic win for OKU rights" (2025)	Empowerment	Frames PwD achievement in rights advocacy; aligns with rights-based discourse and national policy goals.
<i>Free Malaysia Today (FMT)</i>	"24 persons with disabilities set to work in hotels after intensive training" (2024)	Empowerment	Focuses on employability and economic inclusion; frames PwD as contributors to workforce productivity.
<i>FMT</i>	"Eerah rises above her disabilities to sell burgers" (2024)	Empowerment / Compassion Blend	Human-interest narrative celebrating resilience, yet retains mild emotional appeal.
<i>FMT</i>	"GE15: Want our vote? Ensure the rights of persons with disabilities" (2022)	Empowerment	Calls for political recognition and rights protection; links disability to democratic participation.
<i>Malay Mail Online</i>	"Please be kind to her, says father of first Malaysian toddler diagnosed with Werewolf Syndrome" (2024)	Compassion	Centers on sympathy and public kindness; reinforces dependent, emotional framing.
<i>Malay Mail</i>	"Students with disabilities embrace opportunity as baristas in Madani Rakyat Programme" (2024)	Empowerment	Highlights capability and social participation through vocational training.
<i>Malay Mail</i>	"Nancy Shukri: Free public transport for PwDs will enhance their opportunities, accessibility" (2023)	Prognostic / Empowerment	Frames accessibility as structural empowerment supported by policy action.

Five HR professionals were interviewed from diverse sectors, as can be seen in Table 6. Each respondent had more than five years of HR experience and direct or indirect involvement in hiring or managing PwD employees.



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Table 6

Profile of Interview Participants

Respondent ID	Sector	Position	Years in HR	Experience with PwD Employment
HR1	Education (Private College)	HR Manager	6 years	Manages inclusive internship programmes
HR2	Public Service	Senior Executive	10 years	Oversees compliance with administrative civil servant hiring quota
HR3	Media and Communication	Talent Development Lead	8 years	Employs PwD in frontdesk operation
HR4	Tourism	HR Director	15 years	PwD staff to help with promotion and materials
HR5	Hospitality	HR Coordinator	6 years	Supervises training for PwD housekeeping trainees

Table 7 below gives the thematic findings from the interview with the quotes from the respondents.

Table 7

Emerging themes from the interview

Theme	General Findings	Quotes
Media Narratives Influence Perception	HR professionals acknowledged that news portrayals shape how management and co-workers perceive PwD. Compassionate news stories often influence hiring discussions by framing PwD as dependent, while empowerment stories inspire more positive inclusion attitudes.	"I read a lot about how hard people with disability work and have great attitude in the media. That shapes how I feel when I interview them la..." – HR2 "I think I find disabled people stories about making it is very inspiring. I think it also help me see their capability, not what they cant do." – HR3



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Theme	General Findings	Quotes
Persistent Stereotypes and Structural Barriers	Respondents reported continuing stereotypes that PwD require special allowances or lower workloads. Misconceptions about productivity, cost, and workplace readiness, along with physical and digital inaccessibility, limit inclusive hiring.	"Sometimes my colleagues are unsure about what kind of assistance and task we can assign to the disabled colleague. It is quite taboo, but it affects how we assign them." = HR1 "My boss honestly worry about the productivity and also if we need to pay extra." – HR4
Empowerment as Strategic Inclusion	Empowerment narratives—especially those highlighting PwD success in business or training encourage HR professionals to view inclusion as part of CSR and ESG strategy. Such frames reposition PwD hiring as a contribution to organizational diversity and innovation.	"I think media need to highlight more about disabled people contributing to CSR and ESG strategy then it change the employer perception." - HR5 "Frankly, one of the reasons we started hiring people with disabilities is because we are trying to reach our KPI for diversity goals." – HR3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reaffirm that media framing plays a powerful role in shaping how disability is understood and acted upon in society. Drawing on Entman's (1993) conceptualization of framing as the selection and salience of certain aspects of reality, the study shows that Malaysian online news media frame Persons with Disabilities (PwD) primarily through two coexisting lenses: compassion and empowerment.

In line with earlier literature, the persistence of the compassion frame reflects the endurance of the medical and charity models of disability. As Barnes and Mercer (2010) and Oliver (1990) observed in the UK context, compassion-oriented reporting situates PwD as passive dependents or inspirational victims, eliciting public sympathy but seldom altering structural inequalities. This pattern remains evident in Malaysian media, particularly in *NST* and *Malay Mail*, where disability is humanized through emotion-driven stories. Articles such as "*Please be kind to her*," (Malay Mail, 2024) or "*A Beacon of Hope*" (NST, 2024) position PwD as individuals to be pitied or helped, mirroring the deficit-oriented coverage seen in Ofori-Boateng's (2018) Ghanaian study. These narratives, though heartfelt, reproduce what Haller and Ralph (2006) called "benevolent prejudice," where admiration masks underlying assumptions of incapacity. The results



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here thus extend prior global findings, confirming that compassion framing remains a persistent communicative strategy in societies where welfare and moral duty are deeply embedded cultural values.

However, this study also reveals a discernible rise in empowerment framing, especially from 2022 onward, which aligns with the social and rights-based models of disability. Consistent with Tsutsui's (2021) work in Japan and UN DESA's (2022) global advocacy for rights-based inclusion, empowerment narratives in Malaysia increasingly present PwD as capable workers, entrepreneurs, and innovators. These frames emphasize agency, productivity, and systemic support rather than pity. Headlines such as *"Empowering OKU Handicraft through Online Platforms"* (The Star, 2022) or *"24 persons with disabilities set to work in hotels after intensive training"* (FMT, 2024) represent this shift from charity to competence. Much like the UK's post-legislative transformation noted by Barnes and Mercer (2020), empowerment framing in Malaysia coincides with broader policy reforms—including the Persons with Disabilities Act (2008), the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021–2025), and the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (SPV2030)—that emphasize participation, economic independence, and inclusive growth.

By drawing from Entman's diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frame structure, the study demonstrates how Malaysian media assign meaning to disability issues. Diagnostic framing identifies barriers such as underemployment and discrimination; prognostic framing highlights training, entrepreneurship, or government initiatives as solutions; and motivational framing encourages empathy or participation. The compassion frame tends to emphasize diagnostic and motivational dimensions—problem and pity—while empowerment framing integrates prognostic action by showing PwD as active problem-solvers. In this sense, empowerment frames reflect the *transition from moral response to policy discourse*, aligning with what Haller and Ralph (2006) describe as "progressive framing" in Western disability media.

These media trends also resonate with Weick's (1995) concept of organizational sensemaking. HR professionals interpret external cues—including news coverage—when constructing internal policies or attitudes toward inclusion. Interviews revealed that compassion narratives influence HR discussions by perpetuating the assumption that PwD require "special allowances" or protection. This corresponds to the finding of Oliver (1990) that charity discourses can reinforce dependence by emphasizing care over competence. Conversely, empowerment stories provide symbolic evidence that PwD are valuable assets within modern workplaces, resonating with contemporary diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) paradigms. This demonstrates how media discourse functions as a sensemaking device—it provides interpretive frames through which organizations understand disability inclusion as either a burden or a strategic advantage.

The interviews further suggest that empowerment framing aligns with organizational efforts to meet Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) objectives. This echoes findings from Tsutsui (2021), who noted that in Japan, empowerment narratives reinforced corporate legitimacy through inclusive practices. Malaysian HR respondents similarly described empowerment stories as aligning with business goals, enabling them to present inclusion not as philanthropy but as a form of sustainable innovation. The connection between media representation



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and corporate discourse thus illustrates a mutually reinforcing relationship: as empowerment narratives grow in visibility, they provide rhetorical and moral justification for inclusive hiring practices, which in turn can generate further media attention toward success stories.

At the same time, compassion remains culturally salient in Malaysia. The literature has long acknowledged that emotional storytelling is characteristic of Asian collectivist societies, where empathy and relational morality shape communication norms (Zainah & Zainuddin, 2020). Compassion frames resonate with audiences because they reflect communal ideals of care and social responsibility. Yet as Haller and Ralph (2006) caution, prolonged reliance on compassion risks maintaining what they term “the disability sympathy cycle.” The findings of this study confirm that while compassion narratives humanize PwD, they rarely promote equality or structural inclusion. Thus, the challenge for Malaysian media lies in balancing affective resonance with empowerment-oriented content that advances agency and rights.

Comparatively, the Malaysian context mirrors a transitional discourse like those observed internationally but with distinct local inflections. Like the UK’s shift after disability legislation and Japan’s corporate inclusion trend, Malaysia’s transformation is state-led and policy-driven. The presence of empowerment framing in *The Star* and *FMT* reflects the influence of government programmes, vocational training, and public campaigns promoting digital entrepreneurship. However, the continued prevalence of compassion frames in *NST* and *Malay Mail* reveals that traditional journalistic norms and audience expectations still shape news selection. This duality demonstrates the hybrid nature of Malaysian disability discourse, situated between developmental journalism’s social mission and contemporary global inclusion ideals.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings expand the framing literature by linking media discourse with organizational outcomes. Previous studies, such as those by Haller and Ralph (2019) and Barnes and Mercer (2020), have treated media framing as a public agenda-setting mechanism. This research extends the conversation by showing how media frames also shape organizational sensemaking, influencing real hiring decisions and policy implementation. This builds on Entman’s (1993) model by illustrating how diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational dimensions can extend beyond audience interpretation into institutional behavior.

Empirically, the five-year timeline of this study provides new evidence of Malaysia’s evolving inclusion discourse. Between 2020 and 2021, compassion frames dominated as the pandemic heightened narratives of vulnerability. From 2022 onwards, empowerment coverage grew significantly, paralleling national recovery efforts and public-sector inclusion campaigns. This aligns with UN DESA (2022) findings that empowerment narratives expand during periods of policy reform or collective crisis, when governments and organizations actively promote inclusivity as part of social reconstruction. The Malaysian media’s trajectory therefore fits within global trends yet retains its own localized texture of emotional and moral storytelling.

The coexistence of compassion and empowerment frames in Malaysian media illustrates a society negotiating between empathy and equality, emotion and rights. While



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compassion remains an essential cultural value, empowerment framing offers a forward-looking pathway consistent with Malaysia's development agendas and the global rights-based movement. The gradual dominance of empowerment narratives signals an important ideological shift: PwD are no longer portrayed merely as beneficiaries of kindness but as agents of progress, workers, and innovators contributing to Malaysia's shared prosperity.

The implications of this research are threefold. First, for media practitioners, it underscores the responsibility to move beyond sentimentalism toward narratives that empower and normalize disability. Second, for organizations and HR professionals, it provides evidence that empowerment framing positively influences inclusive hiring and CSR strategies. Third, for policymakers and scholars, it highlights the importance of coordinated media-policy engagement to sustain rights-based representation in alignment with Malaysia's PWD Act (2008) and SPV2030.

Ultimately, compassion and empowerment should not be viewed as mutually exclusive but as complementary stages in Malaysia's communicative evolution. Compassion connects emotionally; empowerment legitimizes structurally. When the media succeed in merging empathy with agency, Malaysia can advance toward a genuinely inclusive communication environment, one that sees PwD not as symbols of pity but as citizens and workers integral to national growth and human dignity.

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