The Influences of Mass Media on the Involvement of Malay Students in Public Universities

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Abstract

This paper examines the influences of the mass media on the involvement of Malay students in Public Universities with Malaysian politics. The main purpose of this study is to determine the influences of mass media on student involvement as well as the type of mass media of choice by Malay students in the university obtaining political information sources. The study involved a total of 441 Malay students aged over 21 years from the University of Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia and International Islamic University Malaysia. A uniform sampling method was used to select the respondents for this study. The results of the study found that there is the influence of the mass media on the involvement of the respondents in this study and they have a moderate interest in politics and the majority are not members of political parties. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents have registered themselves as voters. While the highest mass media usage by these Malay students to obtain sources of political information is social media, namely facebook, instagram and twitter. This indicates that Malay students use social media as their main source of political information. Therefore, the role of social media should be given attention by all parties, especially political players because the medium of political information source, that is highly preferred or closest to students is social media.

Keywords: Malay Students; Mass Media; Social Media; Involvement; Politics

INTRODUCTION

The media is a medium for disseminating information and is one of the agents of political socialization that will channel information to form values, beliefs and subsequently shape the political culture in society. Even the influence of the media on the formation of an individual's political culture is not denied the contribution or strength of its influence as discussed by Jeniri Amir (2005), Junaidi Awang Besar et al., (2013), Ku Hasnita (2007), Mazli Mamat (2015), Nur Azween and Nidzam (2008), Roslizawati and Mohd Rizal (2017), Siti Ezaleila and Azizah (2010) and Zaherawati (2008). In fact the youth of today are often exposed to the media constantly through smart phones and internet access facilities making media, especially social media becoming synonymous with young people. The use of internet among students particularly when accessing information related to their study needs or assignments indirectly enables them to access social media regularly.

Post General Election (GE) -14, significant changes have taken place, including the proposal for the age requirement with regards to the eligibility to vote from

originally 21 years old now to 18 years old that was approved on 16 July 2019 (Sinar Harian 2019). This situation is able to change the existing political landscape because in the GE-15 there will be more than 30% new voters who are eligible to vote . This new group of voters has sparked some polymics as to whether this group of voters has matured or otherwise. In fact, there are allegations that young Malays are still not ready to be involved or mature and rational voters. This situation is closely related to the process of political socialization that they went through. However, they are many countries that have adopted a democratic system allowing their citizens to vote as early as 18 years old except some countries are still in the process of lowering the existing age limit such as Singapore, Kuwait, Oman, Tonga, Lebanon and UAE.

This process of political maturity is closely related to the development of political socialization that these young people run through. The knowledge orientation of , perception, awareness and evaluation of this group will be formed through the process of political socialization. Some political agents functions as agents who channel values, form beliefs and subsequently the process of political maturity of an individual is formed. While it comes to young people, the university students have proven their role in influencing the country's political landscape. Student involvement in politics are often a concern of the general public. In fact there are a number of views given either in a positive or negative form. From a positive point of view, society considers the involvement of students in politics are to the benefit the students themselves, such as gaining experience and direct exposure to politics. On the other hand, the negative perspective is, students should not be involved in political party as it disrupts the focus on their studies and causes students to be in acrimonious factions corresponding to their respective political ideologies. In addition, performance in academics could be declining if the students are overly centred on political involvement. However, in general, students are defined as those who have mature thinking, competitive and au fait in the professional field compared to their peers elsewhere (Mohd Nasir, 2008).

Junaidi et al. (2013) defines students as a part of a group of young people aged 18 to 23 years whom are at the zenith in the education system. While Muhammad Ali (2009), thinks that students are a group of students who are following the educational process in an organized and planned manner in higher education. In this regard, these students are parts of the youth group which is an essential asset in the context of development. In fact the youth the majority population in Malaysia (Haslinda et al., 2012). In conjunction with, the various definitions that have been put forward with

regards to students, indeed this is one of the important population groups in advocating to the survival of the country. The involvement of students in politics has a specific purpose and changes according to the current political progress.

Meanwhile, the youth , whether they are students or not, will also experience the process of socialization in shaping their political orientation and so are translated into the form of their behavior patterns. In this case, an individual's political involvement is influenced by agents of socialization. This socialization process is the process of inculcating values to form political beliefs before shaping individual behavior and group behavior patterns (Kavanagh, 1987). Hayman (1959) defines political socialization as a process of applying political values that pertain from generation to generation. This political socialization likewise analyzes the factors that influenced an individual's attitude and behavior. Sigel (1965) stated that political socialization refers to the learning process of political norms and treatment received by the political system from generation to generation. While Langton (1969) defines political socialization as a way for people to convey political culture from generation to generation. According to Langton, there are three main dimensions in the process of political socialization, namely, nurturing or learning, ego personality and role performance.

Dawson and Prewit (1969) detailed that political socialization is a form of continuity of the process of political orientation from an old generation to a new generation. The role is continued either through formal or informal institutional channels. This socialization process starts from early childhood to adulthood. Political socialization occurs in two conditions, namely directly and indirectly. The process of socialization directly refers to learning through ensuing, imitation of skills, attitudes and political beliefs. Although the process of socialization indirectly refers to the imitation done without going through a formal process because sometimes this process of socialization occurs without being noticed by the individual involved. Rush and Althorff (1972) argues that political socialization is a process in which an individual adapts to the political system. Such an individual will determine how to either perceive or take responsibility for the political phenomena around him. After perceiving politics, the individual concerned will determine the political actions in the political system around him.

The political involvement of an individual depends on the socializing agents that are around them. According to Almond and Verba (1965) political culture refers to

195

political orientations which includes attitudes towards the political system as well as attitudes towards the role of one self in the political system. A society cultivates political values through awareness, knowledge and feelings in the society itself. Hutheesing and Lim (1982) divided attitudes into three, namely, first affective, about feelings or individual political interests . The second is cognitive which covers knowledge of political matters and the third is active in relation to participation in a political activity as a result of an accepted process. This socialization process also depends on other factors such as the stage of development of an area, cultural norms, gender, social class and political experience. These socialization agents bring politics into society and influenced individuals. These agents are interrelated with each other and have their own influences on the individual.

Various agents of socialization contributes to the development of an individual. Among them is the role of the media as an important agent in the socialization process . This is because the development of technology has considerably changed the social life of society. The media, including the internet, has opened a democratic space for society not only to access information but also to interact either in conveying views or criticism. Access to this media is easier and cheaper as well as becoming a routine to the audience or readers especially during prime time. The uneducated or tecnologically illiterate as well as the elderly are highly dependent on the mainstream media. (Junaidi et al. (2013). Media is also one of the new strategies in influencing thinking and socialization change. Psychological Warfare is a discipline of media studies.It can also be seen as an orientation of thinking that says that the media has the ability of psychological warfare against its target group.If mastered well, this knowledge of media warfare can be an effective instrument in building the reputation and credibility of a person, group , organizations and political parties either to build target groups that are external or internal.

In addition, the length of time of exposure to social media also affects individual behavior (Abd Halim and Zarin 2009). Studies in several developed countries have found that internet users are more open to a variety of political views and also celebrate differences of opinion (Mokmin, 2004). Currently, the operators of such blogs who actively share political information are mostly those who do not support Barisan Nasional (BN) as stated by Suhaimee (2008). Not surprisingly, the mass media affected the results of the General Election (GE) since 1999 until the latest in 2018. Therefore, it is the purpose of this study to determine the source of political information chosen by

196

students at Public Universities and student support expectations against or for certain political parties. According to Mohd Fuad et al., (2012), students are now actively fighting for political issues as well as current issues in the country and this indeed shows a good start for a democratic country.

Although there have been many studies on the role of the media, studies that examine the influence of the media using inferential analysis (regression) on the political involvement of young people are still limited. Although since GE-13, social media have become the main medium for political parties to approach the public in conveying information and changed political landscape. Furthermore, in GE-15 once again social media became the main medium that must be utilized by all candidates and parties competing in influencing young voters especially external voters who reside elsewhere. Thus this study proves and further explains the relationship and influence of the mass media as the main source of information for students with regards to their political involvement.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The change in the media landscape in Malaysia has made the medium of information delivery no longer dominated by mainstream media, but social media has become an alternative medium of information sources. Today's generation spends a lot of time with social media with the convenience of technology they have. More than 68 percent of Internet users in Malaysia are on social media (Noor Afia, 2017).

This percentage shows that Malaysian society relies heavily on internet sources including social media in addition to mainstream media. This source of information not only contributes to new knowledge but can have an impact on an individual's behavior change (Muhammd Zaini Rizal and Novel Lyndon, 2021). However, the extent to which this source of information affects individual behavior, especially in the aspect of political behavior, because the study of the influence and impact of the media on political involvement is still limited.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Currently, studies on student involvement in Malaysian politics are relatively limited compared to other political studies. One of the most recent studies on student involvement in Malaysian politics is by Fauzi and Ku Hasnita (2015). This study focuses on the resurgence of students movement in Malaysia during 2013 GE. Upon the University Colleges Act (AUKU) enforcement , student movement declined and weakened. However, the student movement got a new lease of life when AUKU was amended in 2012 to paved the way for students to be actively involved in the 2013 GE. In 2018, once again AUKU was amended by repealing Section 15 (2) (c) which previously prevented students to engage in political activities on campus. In general, student movement in Malaysia does not aim to gain political power but rather to regain the power of university autonomy that has been lost since the AUKU came into force. Junaidi Abu Bakar's (1993) study focuses on political students and AUKU. This study focuses on various important matters concerning AUKU such as the government's rationale for enacting AUKU, the impact of the implementation of this act on academic freedom, awareness and attitude of students towards AUKU. However, the study respondents only involves students of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and did not extend to students at other universities.

White et al., (2000) explores the barriers that exist with the political involvement of youth. Among the obstacles emphasized is the limited opportunities for young people to participate in the political process consistently. They do not know the proper method for them to participate in politics prior to attaining eligibility to vote in elections. Second, the views of young people have not yet been heard by politicians. Based on this argument, there is a perception that politicians often reject the views put forward by the youth because they are considered childish and unrealistic. In addition, this study presents some of the main problems of youths that need to be tackled such as education, employment, finance, discrimination, crime, health and others.

Martin (2012) focuses on political engagement among youth in Australia. Martin reiterated a study once conducted by Dalton (2008) on youth political involvement in America , testing whether it obtained the same results as Dalton. In the study Martin compared election -based political engagement with non -election -based political engagement. Findings show that youth in Australia are more involved in non - election -based politics and less involved in election -based politics than older people.

This shows the same result that Dalton obtained. However, Martin's study does not measure political involvement in several other important elements, namely positions in political parties, participating in party meetings, etc. Tamanna's (2015) investigates the issue of youth political perceptions in Bangladesh. The study revealed that many students from private and public universities are not interested in the politics of their country and the majority are reluctant to discuss politics with their friends and families. It also shows that urban youths have negative perceptions about current politics and they are wary of getting involved in politics. Although they were not overly interested because of the existing political isolation, they still had a strong patriotic spirit. Most youth want to see a change in current politics. They want effective, dynamic politics but are not interested in rigid political engagement.

Siti Noranizahhafizah et al., (2015) centred on student involvement in campus elections at Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris. The results of the study found that more than 50 percent of students, especially female students, are not involved in campus politics either as candidates, Committee Members or ordinary members. In fact, those who are actively involved in politics are the same individuals that were active in the activities of student associations and student organizational bodies will also be involved in campus elections either contesting or campaigning for the candidate of their choice. Mohd Nasir (2008) concentrates on students' perceptions of the 2008 GE. This study analyzes the importance of voting, registering as a voters, the impact of GE results on daily life and interest in politics. In addition, the aspects of student acceptance of each individual, regardless of ethnic background, discernability to be the Prime Minister of Malaysia is also given attention in the study. Nevertheless, the respondents of this study were not designated among students at universities that are known to be active in politics such as students of Universiti Malaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Mohd Fuad et al., (2012) emphasized on various important things concerning Indian students ahead of the 2013 GE. Matter such as sources of political information, views on Malaysian politics, characteristics of political parties supported and perceptions of politics found that Indian students are still pro-establishment even in the 2008 GE, the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) suffered a decline to the point of being deemed irrelevant to be a party representing the Indian race. However, the study only focuses on Indian youth and does not involve all ethnic groups such as Malays, Chinese, Sabah and Sarawak bumiputeras while these ethnic groups are the largest contributors to the number of votes in the GE in Malaysia.

199

While, Thock's (2012) study focuses exclusively on Chinese student activists. The study founds that Chinese student activists were influenced by the reform movement brought about by Anwar Ibrahim. The Chinese student activism movement focuses on justice and change in Malaysian society. However, this movement was blocked by the university administration through AUKU. Students consider AUKU as oppressive and restrict the freedom of idealism, thus causing dissatisfaction with the government. After graduation, these students have decided to use the Non-Government Organization and Pakatan Rakyat platforms to continue their struggle and agenda. As a result, Pakatan Rakyat has become the choice of highly educated youth and in the 2008 GE, some of these former activists have succeeded in becoming State Assemblymen or Members of Parliament on Pakatan Rakyat tickets. Another study on Chinese Youth by Mohd Ridhuan Tee (2008), focused on the perceptions of Chinese students with a special focus on the United Malays National Organization. The study involved respondents from Public Institutes of Higher Learning and Private Institutes of Higher Learning. This study also uses two methods, namely quantitative and qualitative that can add values to the findings of the study. However this study only involved Chinese students and did not involve students from other ethnicities. In contrast to the study by Muhamad Ali and Ahmad Faiz (2005) which examined students' trust in the government. This study has unraveled some important questions such as students' perceptions of politics according to gender, year of study, race, educational background, major and so on. This study involved respondents from various ethnicities from major universities in Malaysia.

Sarjit et al., (2012) examined the politics of the Siamese minority community in Kedah and Kelantan, especially the involvement of Siamese youth in political parties. The study examines several important aspects, namely membership in political parties, positions held in political parties, attendance in political programs and involvement in political activities. However, this study does not directly examines the level of support of Siamese youths towards the ruling party, especially in GE 13. Zainah Anwar (1990) in her study focused on the rise of Islamic inclined views among government-sponsored students studying in England in the 1970s. This study found that the rise of Islamic inclined view has had a negative impact on society resulted in labeling, which transpires as Parti Islam Se-Malaysia represents the genuine Muslim Malays while the United Malays National Organization represents the secular Malays.

Mohd Fuad et al., (2012) explained that the majority of respondents acquire political information through traditional sources such as television, radio and newspapers. Information from internet access is increasingly gaining the attention of youth, although at a moderate level. Lee Kuok Tiung and Mohd Safar (2015) explained that the fierce competition in the new era of media landscape in Malaysia has prompted the average newspaper to reform in the publication of their newspaper content. Even the emergence of new media and smartphones commenced fierce competition, particularly due to the response to it usage by younger generation and the middle class. The study revealed that more groups supporting Pakatan Rakyat are accessing the internet to obtain political information. However, this study still focuses on the majority community only, specifically the Malays, Chinese and Indians but ignoring the Orang Asli youth.

Meanwhile, Roslizawati and Mohd Rizal (2017), in their study on student involvement in political protests at the Public Institute of Higher Learning and Campus Elections 2016, initiated that the influence of social media is one of the main external factors influencing students' thinking to engage in campus political action.In contrast to the study by Sivamurugan (2014) which focused on the voting behavior of students in the GE based on the perceptions and leadership of political parties. This study of Sivamurugan (2014) has proven that mainstream media has become less important to students compared to alternative media such as social media to obtain political information sources. Apart from that, students also expressed dissatisfaction with BN's efforts in tackling corruption because to them, the government's efforts led by BN have not yet shown results in combating corruption. Meanwhile, from the point of view of political party leadership, the results of the study found that students are very attracted to leadership through role models and leaders who are honest, ethical, knowledgeable and authoritative.

Wyngarden's (2012) study focuses on the political involvement of youths through social networking channels such as facebook. Wyngaeden stated that facebook is one of the most important mediums among youths involved in politics such as expressing feelings and chatting regarding politics. The results show that the definition of politics among youths on facebook somewhat different from the definition made by scholars of politics. On Facebook where youths formulates politics as a matters that relates to government, community figures and issues. He also explained that there are several functions of youth political engagement using facebook, namely expressing

beliefs, releasing strong emotions, initiating discussions, conveying information or increasing awareness and motivation. This is referred to as the third wave of communication influencing the lifestyle of the younger generation. The media supports the younger generation obtaining   information and knowledge they need rapidly, consequently they become a society that has and understands and well informed, thereupon they create a network of fellow communities or networking societies. Hence, the younger generation is now known as the cyber generation or digital generation (Najmuddin, 2015).

Junaidi et al., (2013) explored the political perceptions and usage of the internet among students at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. In general, the internet and social media play an important role in influencing the political behavior of students. The majority of respondents have a positive political perception of the efforts undertaken by the government. For example, 99.5 percent agreed with the 1Malaysia slogan was supported, appreciated and manifested by voters. In addition, 93.5 percent agreed that BR1M's assistance gained the people's support for the Federal Government. In addition, 86 percent of respondents obtain political information from the internet and blogs. Students also obtained information from the print media from both pro-government and opposition parties. Among those who received attention were Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia, Sinar Harian and Harakah.

In the new Malaysian political landscape, the political culture that influences society is a more democratic and this comprehensive political culture transcends ethnic and religious boundaries. This is confirmed in a study (Fatimah & Ali, 2015) in which new media are now a popular channel with regards to democratic systems used. In fact, in this case, society prefers the dicussions of current issues that are more dominant and not just racial issues. Among the issues emphasised is the question of justice, freedom, government transparency, leadership, and wellbeing to those who are entitled to welfare funds (Muhd Nadzri & Ghazali Mayudin, 2008). In terms of obtaining information on this matter the benefits of the existence of new media in obtaining political information have been utilized as much as possible by the community and opposition parties (Ilyas Abdullah et al., 2019). The perception and pressure thrown at the mainstream media makes the new media more society centric and is taken advantage of by the opposition parties in the best possible way. Moreover, Ilyas Abdullah et al., (2019) stated that frustration with the government -owned or government -controlled mainstream media

has also triggered an alternative media boom due to the narrow political space and various forms of restrictions experienced by opposition parties.

If we look at several studies on the role of the media impending of GE14, it also shows that the role of the media is still relevant in influencing the political orientation of an individual. A study by Jasmi Mohd Nasier et al., (2018) on media and political literacy in Sabah ahead of GE-14 found that the political literacy of voters in Tawau is due to the role played by the media which includes electronic media, print media, and social media. This is demonstrated by observing the understanding, and the ability of voters in the area who are able to analyze a political issue that exists in the area or at the national level.

As gleaned from the existing literature on the topic, many studies of student involvement in politics with regards to campus politics , students' perceptions towards politics, and students' main sources of information related to politics. However, the extent to which the information affects student engagement has received little attention. Therefore, this study through inferential analysis has identified the influence of mass media on political involvement.

METHODOLOGY

The study design for this research is surveys . Questionnaires were used to obtain data from the study respondents. The study involves a total of 441 Malay students aged 21 years and above from four universities, namely, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia. The selection of respondents in this study was done by stratified sampling. The data obtained were then analyzed descriptively and inferentially using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 27 (SPSS-27). Descriptive analysis was performed to describe frequency and percentage. While inferential analysis is done to identify the relationship and influence of the mass media on political involvement. Generally, students from this university are selected due to the location of the university which is located around the Klang Valley which is the most developed, economic and administrative center of Malaysia (Malaysia, 2015). These universities were also universities that is often the focus of political parties to measure the level of support and influence of their respective parties (Mohd Shuhaimi, 1995).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Background

This study was conducted in four Public Universities involving a total of 441 respondents, namely, 223 people (50.6%) men and 218 people (49.4%) women. The respondents of this study consisted of 144 students (32.7%) from science faculties and 297 students (67.3%) from social sciences faculties . Respondents consisted of students aged 21 to 27 years old who are studying at their respective universities. They were divided by place of upbringing, a total of 226 students (51.2%) respondents grew up in urban areas and 215 people (48.8%) grew up in rural areas. All respondents are Malay students. Malay students was chosen because the Malay ethnicity is the majority ethnics in Malaysia and the highest race representing the majority in the constituency compared to other ethnicities. In peninsular Malaysia, the parliamentary constituencies with a majority of Malay voters in the 1999 GE constituency were 98 constituencies (68.1%), compared to 25 constituencies (17.4%) with ethnic Chinese majority and 21 constituencies (14.6%) mixed. Meanwhile, in the 2004 GE, Malay -majority areas continued to increase to 114 areas (68.7%), compared to 24 Chinese -majority areas (14.5%) and 28 (16.9%) mixed areas (Amer Saifude, 2009). In addition, by GE-14 in 2018, it is estimated that 155 Malay/Bumiputera majority seats, 24 Chinese majority seats and 43 mixed seats. Therefore, the Malay community is the dominant and integral ethnic group in the socio -political framework of Malaysia. Any change or threat that occurs to the politics of the Malay community will affect the political development in Malaysia as a whole (Ilyas Abdullah, 2021).

Interest in Politics

Based on the findings of this study, it was discovered that only 41.0% of the 441 respondents have an interest in politics. While 48.3% had a moderate score of 10.7% and were disinterested in politics. Thus, the respondents of this study are mostly students who are in politics.

Table : *Interest in Politics*

Level of Interest	Percentage (%)
High	41.0
Moderate	48.3
Low	10.7

Political Party Membership

With regards membership in political parties, this study found that respondents who are members of political parties are 72 students (16.3%) and those who are non members of any political party are 369 students (83.7%). This situation shows that the majority of respondents are not members of any political party. This situation is closely related to the enforcement of AUKU which previously prohibited students from engaging in politics. Although the ban was repealed in the 2012 and 2018 amendments, the effects are still visible and cultural in students. Table 2, is a breakdown of political party membership among respondents.

Table 2: *Respondents' Political Party Membership*

Political Party Membership	Percentage(%)
Yes	16.3%
No	83.7%

Mass Media

Mass media is a medium used to interact and communicate between one individual with another individual. This communication means the spread of knowledge or ideas that can evoke communal feelings by determining the level of boundaries in society. Table 3 below is a source of political information of the respondents.

Table 3: *Sources of Political Information (Mass Media)*

Political Information (Mass Media)	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
Print Media (Mainstream Press)	39.3	46.9	13.8
Electronic Media (TV/Radio)	49.2	40.6	10.2
Alternative Media (Social media/FB/Blog)	59.0	32.4	8.6
Political Party Media (Party Press)	35.8	46.0	18.2

Based on Table 3, it is clear that electronic media such as television and radio as well as alternative media such as whatsapp, facebook and blogs have a high frequency, which is 49.2% and 59.0% respectively. This situation is due to the sophistication of current technology which provides many facilities to interact and share information quickly and cheaply to all areas. Currently, social media can be accessed through mobile phones and with such facilities information is easier to obtain just at the

205

fingertips. Prior to this technological boom, political information sources relied on traditional media such as television, radio and newspapers for political information sources.

In this situation, all parties, especially political parties should be wise to take this opportunity because the space for information sharing is unrestricted. If previously, the freedom of the media and the obstruction of the opposition party to share information to the public was disputed because it was alleged that there were obstacles from the ruling parties. This situation demonstrate the mainstream press only dominated by information from the ruling party. However, the findings that show that social media is more dominant as the choice of students in obtaining information can be a negative traits if this group accepts its information in totality without due consideration. This is because there is no denying that there is information that authenticity can be questioned because everyone can share information with no regards to the truth and accuracy of facts.

Political Involvement

Involvement in politics is the responsibility of every citizens of the country to ensure that the government is democratically elected. Despite not being a member or members of a particular political party, but at least as a responsible and patriotic citizen one must be involved in the process. By being involved as a voter, one harnesses one's power as a citizen in determining the future of the country. In this study, the level of involvement of respondents is based on involvement in political activities.

Table 4: *Level of Respondents' Involvement in Politics*

Level of Participation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	15	3.4
Moderate	101	22.9
Low	325	73.7

Based on Table 4, the involvement of respondents in politics is determined based on the frequency of respondents engaging in talks, campaigns, meetings and so on. In general, it was discovered that the majority of respondents were disinterested in political activities because 73.7% of respondents were at a low level of participation compared to a high level participation. Only 3.4% of respondents were actively

206

involved. This is because the majority of respondents are distinterested in getting into the political aspects despite having good knowledge in political affairs. Among the reasons for students to be less involved in politics is due to their negative perceptions and beliefs towards political leaders and parties (Muhamad Ali and Ahmad Faiz, 2005), They believed that their voices and ideas are not heard by political leaders (White et al., 2000) and they rather focus to academics alone. Therefore, it can be concluded here that the level of respondents' involvement in politics is at a low level.

The Influence of Mass Media on Political Involvement

Correlation analysis was conducted to identify the relevance of media as a communication tool to political involvement. This analysis is necessary to determine whether the media has a significant correlation with the level of political involvement. The results of the correlation analysis are as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: *Media Relevance to Student Political Involvement*

Correlation	1	2
Mass Media Agents	1	
Level of Involvement	0.718**	1

Based on Table 5, it is discovered that there is a significant relationship between the mass media and the level of political involvement of respondents with a correlation coefficient value of r = 0.718 **. The level of relationship between the mass media and the political involvement of these respondents is at a strong level. Thus, these findings show that the mass media which is the fastest and cheapest tool to obtain information sources which is related to the level of student engagements. Furthermore, all respondents in this study were found to have used the mass media to obtain information and communicate with other individuals. In addition, the findings of this study also show that social media such as facebook, twitter and instagram are the main choices of respondents to obtain political information.

Table 6: *The Influence of Mass Media on Student Political Involvement*

Socialization Agents	Beta
Mass Media	0.402
R = 0.434 Adjusted R Square = 0.186	

Table 6, is the result of a simple linear regression test analysis which aims to identify the influence of mass media on respondents' involvement in politics. Based on Table 6, it is discovered that the mass media obtained a Beta value, 0.434 and the value of the contribution or influence of the mass media on political involvement is .0188 or 18.8%. These findings explain that the mass media has a significant impact on political engagement. This is because, the mass media is the main source of information for students in shaping their knowledge, beliefs and political actions.

Technological sophistication is a major contributor to the influence of mass media on respondents. Dawson and Prewitt (1969) stated that the mass media is an important element in conveying information and is able to influenced the political orientation of an individual. Similarly, Abu Hassan Hasbullah (2010) who also has the same opinion about the influence of mass media on politics. According to him, the mass media, especially social media, began to show a great influence in shaping the thinking of the community because the information channeled could be received easily and quickly by the community.

Further analysis found that respondents often obtain political information through social media such as, facebook, instagram and twitter. A study by Ab. Halim and Zarin (2009) also showed that a period of high exposure to mass media such as social media will affect the users of such media. Similarly, Ahmad Munawar and Mohd Nor (2011) who found that the more frequent the usage of mass media, the higher the influence of the media on the individual. While Junaidi Awang Besar et al. (2013) also found that the internet and social media play an important role in influencing political behavior.

Therefore, the findings of this study concludes that mass media is the most dominant socialization agent influencing respondents 'involvement in politics. Mass media socialization agents are now increasing their influence as thebroadband penetration rates grows. In 2014, the broadband penetration rate in Malaysia was around 67.1% and the government is working to further increase the broadband penetration rate to at least 75% by the end of 2015. Along with high broadband penetration, it is possible for the community, especially the young, to benefit more in terms as opportunities to obtain various information through the mass media. High information penetration further increases the rate of knowledge literacy among the society in relation to current issues. Information resource facilities provided by the university such

as free Wi-Fi also boost the sharing of information through the media, especially social media. So it is not surprising that the influence of social media is increasing day by day and has become a trend in society now to use this medium to share and obtain information. Thus, this finding further reinforces that the mass media is an agent of political socialization that shapes values, beliefs, and political behavior, especially among young people.

CONCLUSION

The 2008 and 2013 general elections were the beginning in which BN received strong wins opposition from the Opposition and was finally defeated in the GE-14. The election results have also opened the eyes of many on the importance of gaining the support of young people, especially students, leading to the amendment of the AUKU. Although the data of this study is the data of the study prior to GE-14 but this data provides significant findings about the importance of students in the country's political landscape. In general, this study found that the highest number of Malay students use social media and blogs to obtain political information.

Through the sophistication of technology available information is indeed rapidly spread and difficult to control although there is some information in social media its authenticity is doubtful. Dissemination of information without any restrictions, plus there are parties who try to manipulate it for personal gain, causing the public to be easily confused thus making it difficult to distinguish between genuine and false information. Therefore, it is not surprising that Malay students choose the Opposition party as the party of choice because their source of political information is social media and blogs. Even if seen in the run-up to GE-14, issues that are closely related to young people are the cost of living, oil prices, and repayment of PTPTN which gave strength to the Opposition party in attracting the support of youth to them. This situation has directly affected the young because the issue of PTPTN is very closely related to their lives. The failure of the government to provide explanations and make justifications promptly has exacerbated the situation. However, the results of GE-14 have proved that the issue has won in gaining support and votes in the election.

Therefore, all parties need to be smart to ensure that youth obtained a good political knowledge and awareness before the GE-15. Although young people are not

209

mature enough to be involved in the electoral process, this situation is not an excuse to deny young people but all socialization agents starting with families and schools need to wisely apply the values of knowledge and political awareness since young. Even in this case, the media which is the more dominant agent contributing to awareness to provide more accurate, rational and fair information so that young people can judge for themselves and learn about the country. Mass media also needs to be fast and helpful by providing fresh and more extensive information in various spaces so that every social space lined by young people is filled with useful information.

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