YOUTH POLITICAL DEPENDENCY IN SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE KAJANG STATE ASSEMBLY IN SELANGOR

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ABSTRACTS

This research paper discusses the influence of political socialization dependency in social media, especially among the youth that may cause changes in their political culture, especially in Kajang State Assembly (DUN Kajang), Selangor. The internet political campaigns can be seen since the 12th general election (GE-12) when it managed to influence the voters and led to the failure of the Barisan Nasional (BN) to retain their over 50 years of majority of two-thirds of parliamentary seats. This development has been linked to the critical attitude taken by the youth towards the Federal Government due to their over-dependence to political information in social media which is believed to be dominated by the pro-opposition. Thus, the main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between political socialization dependency in social media and political culture change among the urban youth; while analysing in detail which demographic factors that may influence it. Cluster random sampling method was used involving 432 respondents in DUN Kajang. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS v23) has been used for descriptive statistics analysis such as frequency, percentage and mean score, along with Pearson correlation, linear regression and ANOVA analysis particularly in determining differences and identifying relationship between the variables. In general, the findings show that youth political dependency in social media for political purposes has negative, but weak and statistically non-significant relationship with political culture change. However, ethnic factor has been proven to significantly influence the political culture change. Variables such as political socialization dependency in social media and political culture change are basically correlated to each other. Hence, the next step for future research is to further compare the effects of political socialization dependency in social media among the urban and rural youths, so that accurate generalisation can be deduced.

Keywords: *youth, dependency, social media, political socialization, political culture change*

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini membincangkan sejauh mana tahap kebergantungan golongan belia kepada media sosial bagi tujuan sosialisasi politik mempengaruhi perubahan budaya politik di Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN) Kajang, Selangor. Kempen politik melalui internet telah dapat dilihat semenjak Pilihan Raya Umum Ke-12 (PRU-12) apabila dikatakan telah mempengaruhi pengundi sehingga membawa kepada kegagalan parti Barisan Nasional (BN) untuk mengekalkan majoriti dua

pertiga kerusi parlimen. Perkembangan ini juga telah dikaitkan dengan sikap kritikal golongan belia itu sendiri terhadap pihak kerajaan pusat disebabkan kebergantungan yang tinggi terhadap maklumat politik di media sosial yang dipercayai dikuasai oleh pro-pembangkang. Sehubungan itu, objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan di antara tahap kebergantungan kepada media sosial bagi tujuan sosialisasi politik dengan pengetahuan politik dan perubahan budaya politik di kalangan belia bandar; dalam masa yang sama menganalisis secara terperinci apakah faktor demografi yang mungkin mempengaruhinya. Kaedah persampelan rawak kluster telah diguna pakai yang melibatkan 432 orang responden di DUN Kajang. Perisian Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS v23) pula telah digunakan bagi menganalisis dapatan kajian secara deskriptif melalui analisis kekerapan, peratusan dan skor min. Manakala analisis inferensi seperti korelasi Pearson, regresi linear dan ANOVA sehala telah diaplikasi bagi menentukan perbezaan dan mengenal pasti hubungan di antara pemboleh ubah. Secara keseluruhannya, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa kebergantungan belia terhadap media sosial bagi tujuan sosialisasi politik mempunyai hubungan yang negatif, namun lemah dan tidak signifikan dengan perubahan budaya politik. Walau bagaimanapun, perubahan budaya politik ini secara signifikan dipengaruhi oleh faktor etnik. Pemboleh ubah seperti tahap kebergantungan kepada media sosial bagi tujuan sosialisasi politik dan perubahan budaya politik adalah saling berhubung di antara satu sama lain. Justeru, langkah yang seterusnya bagi kajian pada masa hadapan adalah bagi melakukan analisis perbandingan terhadap kesan kebergantungan di media sosial bagi tujuan politik ini di kalangan belia bandar dan luar bandar, agar generalisasi yang lebih tepat dapat diperolehi.

Kata Kunci: *belia, kebergantungan, media sosial, sosialisasi politik, perubahan budaya politik*

BACKGROUND

Former Prime Minister Najib Razak admitted that the 13th General Election (GE-13) was the first social media election in Malaysia (The Star, 2013) which has been dominated by the youth. This was due mainly to the campaign focus of political parties at that time which was very intense and inclined towards social media or cyber space. According to Gadi Wolfsfield, Segev and Elad Tamir Sheafer (2013), the role of social media in the form of collective action will not be understood without taking into account the political environment, and the significant increase in the use of new media are more likely to occur after the activities of political protest, and not vice versa. This phenomenon of political propaganda campaigns and information dissemination via the social media not only to continue after GE-13, but the trend tends to become embedded within the society, when at least 63.3% of Malaysians are exposed to continuous uncertified political information and propaganda through the internet via their smartphones (Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia

[SKMM], 2015).

The phenomenon of political campaign war through cyber media is actually not something new in the country. Tong Yee Siong (2004), has associated increasing political participation in the new media started in 1998 after the controversial dismissal of Anwar Ibrahim from the cabinet and United Malays National Organization (UMNO) party, although internet network has already begun in Malaysia as early as 1995. However after 1999, cyber media usage trends for the purpose of politics looked to have reached its peak until its momentum hiked again around 2003 (June-E Tan & Zawawi Ibrahim, 2008).

Whether related or not, this increase seems to happen around the period of the release of Anwar Ibrahim, when his appeal to set aside the conviction of sodomy offence was allowed in 2004 (Utusan Online, 2004). According to June-E Tan and Zawawi Ibrahim (2008) and Hafni Zuhairi and Muhamad Najmi (2015), the choice of new media at that time was because it is free from censorship law, allowing the free flow of issues or information that do not get the attention via mainstream media and encouraging political issue discussions in a more interactive manner. Hafni Zuhairi and Muhamad Najmi (2015) further concluded that the cause of the failure of Barisan Nasional (BN) to retain the two-thirds majority during the 12th General Election (GE-12) in 2008 was because they failed to counteract the cyber space main issues at that time.

Mohd Fuad Mat Jali, Junaidi Awang Besar, Rosmadi Fauzi, Amer Saifude Ghazali and Novel Lyndon (2012), also expressed the same view that the influence of the internet on voters is significant in the 12th General Election (GE-12), which has led to the failure of BN in retaining the majority of two-thirds of parliamentary seats. Both these views proved linkages that are consistent with the survey conducted by June-E Tan and Zawawi Ibrahim (2008) which found out that over 60% of voters whom did not vote at the GE-11 (2004) were planning to vote at GE-12 (2008) after becoming avid readers to socio-political blogs and alternative media that are mostly critical of the BN Government.

However, BN was seen trying to rival the dominance of the opposition in the cyber world when the Najib has made it clear that the cyber media is going to be his focus to garner back the support of the people (Hafni Zuhairi & Muhamad Najmi, 2015) immediately after he succeeded Tun Abdullah in April 2009 (New Sunday Times, 2009). Groups of pro-BN cyber troopers also slowly began to be set up and arranged to face the Pakatan Rakyat cyber campaigns in a series of by-elections and Sarawak State Election (PRN) at that time. The highlight of the clash between these two different ideological groups of cyber troopers was during the

GE-13, which saw the majority of BN continues to deteriorate, but yet managed to seize back the administration of Kedah and Perak.

In brief, substantial studies has shown that the social media, not only opened up a wider opportunity for political socialization among the youth, but it also has been linked to some of the election results in Malaysia. Clearly, these social media phenomenon and the increase of internet penetration has not been much of help for the ruling party's political mileage. However, careful considerations must be taken into account as whether these changes in political culture are the general effects of internet and social media boom, or as in the case of Malaysia, was heavily influenced by certain demographic factor(s). Therefore it is essential to investigate and understand this matter further in detail, with the help of contemporary literatures and empirical findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Dennis Kavanagh (1976), the best definition for political culture is a simple explanation for the determination of environment (in the form of clear orientation) for emotions and attitudes when the political system operates. Among the agents of change in the political culture are the mass media, ideologies, political mobilization, political parties, outside influences and also the foundations of the community itself such as family and friends (Kavanagh, 1976). Francis Fukuyama (2014) further suggested that the political culture change is also a process of political development, similar to biological evolution from several aspects. Just as certain species failed to adapt when the environment changes, so do the political institutions will also decay when it demonstrably failed to adapt to the inevitable changes. To put it in a simple term, political decay can always be seen as the result of political culture change. However, the transition may occur in extreme and violent conditions because there is no guarantee that the current political institutions will accept the new situation in orderly, peaceful and continuous manner.

Recent studies has also shown that political culture change is also driven by demographic factors such as gender, ethnicity, education background, age and income (Lane & Wagschal, 2012). However, for the scope of this study, only gender, educational background and ethnicity factors were given the special focus to obtain a better understanding of demographic impact on the political culture change of the youth. According to Lane & Wagschal (2012), gender plays an important role especially in terms of the orientation towards gender equality issues. Women are found to be more likely to support feminism and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights than their male counterpart, which have also been associated with individualism traits in the post-materialist political

culture (Lane & Wagschal, 2012).

This view is also supported by Barabas *et al*. (2014), Bourdeau & Lupia (2009) and Kourvetaris (1997) who discovered that the political knowledge of women and men acquired during the socialization process of politics does not make a significant difference when it involved matters such as gender equality. In fact, almost every influential political parties in Malaysia such as UMNO and PAS do have their very own women and youth wings, which have a specific purpose of carrying out the targeted political socialization and dissemination of political knowledge by deploying different approaches from the men (Z. Azmi, 2001). This is because the differences of gender influence in the aspect of political culture change has been linked to the political knowledge and opinions gained during the horizontal aspect of political socialization process (Winter & Bellows, 1992).

In addition, education factor also has considerable influence on the process of political cultural change in which groups with better educational backgrounds are more likely to be involved in the process of political socialization and possess better political knowledge. This is mainly because the level of education correlates positively to the social class status and may determine the whole process of political socialization (Kourvetaris, 1997; Magstadt, 2009). For example, Kourvetaris, (1997) and Magstadt (2009) agreed that those who come from lower social class status will demonstrate lower level educational background and tend to be apolitical or less concerned about politics. While those with better educations are more knowledgeable about politics and exposed to the new ideas because of their rich access and resource during the process of political socialization. This was also supported by Lane & Wagschal (2012) in their study which found out that those with better educational background are also inclined to post-materialist political culture.

Interestingly, numerous studies have also shown that ethnic plays a great deal and significant agent of political culture change. This is simply due to the fact that each ethnic group has a set of unique social cultures, distinguishable and always been the target in political communications (Lane & Wagschal, 2012). As such, the behaviour of each ethnic in politics will also be different especially in their characters and partisan support which are heavily influenced by the ethnic or tribal considerations as the result of internalization that occurs during the vertical aspect of political socialization process (Winter & Bellows, 1992; Kourvetaris, 1997). For example, during a study conducted by Lane & Wagschal (2012), they discovered that voters from certain ethnicities are more likely to support and only vote for political parties representing their ethnic interests, rather than mixed-race political parties. The same is also true for Malaysia where

communal politics still dominates the political campaigns, and the people are more likely to vote along their ethnic line (Mohd Fuad Mat Jali *et al*., 2014), thus resulting in the GE-13 labelled as 'Chinese Tsunami' (Sinar Harian, 2013).

In respect, Malaysian conservative political atmosphere began to experience substantial changes when the era of social media "exploded" around the year 2008, which allows the liberalization of the political socialization and the formation of public or political opinion to happen in a fraction of a second. The younger generations, especially those aged less than 40 years relatively never felt the hardships of life and war are likely to inhibit the value of post-materialist and tends to be critical of the government. Ideologies, political stability and continuity are no longer the main considerations of these young people because their political motivation today revolves along which are the stronger influence that can matched their interest primarily based on perceptions dominating the social media. These developments though may have a positive impact to the freedom of speech and the spirit of pluralism in democracy, but without a sophisticated political system, these sudden significant changes in political culture in a country of multiple races and religions such as Malaysia may pose considerable risks to the political stability and public order (Fukuyama, 2014).

In discussing further these transformations, according to Brian Girvin (1989), changes in political culture are happening in three different levels; namely micro, meso and macro. Macro-level political culture is the general culture embraced by all parties in a country without much disputes, such as the acceptance that Islam is a religion for the Federation of Malaysia. Meanwhile the micro-political cultures will always experiencing challenges, changes and conflicts. Usually the changes that occurred in this micro level are adjusted at the meso level, i.e. with the solution of restructuring the rules of the game; these changes will also give an impact to the macro-level political culture in the long term. The sound changes will strengthen the macro political culture of a country while changes that cannot be adapted at the meso level will result in the destruction of old political culture and create the conditions for a new political culture based on the values and notion of the revolution that happens (Brian Girvin, 1989).

The influence of globalization that the social media bring about has also seen much impact especially in shaping up a new political culture transformation in the country. Through social media, current global political opinion and developments trends in other countries can easily and quickly be shared and absorbed. This development also allows the sharing process and transfer of political culture or better known as the third

process or final purpose of a state (Gettel, 1913). Through this process, international public opinion is formed, commercial relations and form of communication and relationship shall bind together the whole civil world into one union. Thus it is important to see whether the influence of conservative political culture still plays a major part especially in DUN Kajang or such changes only limited to urban areas with high internet penetration.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research survey through the method of web-based questionnaires utilising the channels of social media applications such as *WhatsApp* and *Facebook* have been carried out in order to investigate the relationship and influence of the youth political dependency in social media on the political culture change in DUN Kajang. The sample consisted of youths aged between 15 to 40 years living in the constituency of Hulu Langat district and State Legislative Assembly (DUN) N.25 Kajang. The determination of the age group of youth for this study is based on the youth age category definition of between 15 − 40 years by the Youth Association and Youth Development Act 2007 (Institut Penyelidikan Pembangunan Belia Malaysia [IPPBM], 2017). This definition is also in accordance to Election Commission (EC) definition which stated the youth as voters between 21 and 40 years of age. Thus the selection of respondents was based on random cluster sampling or probability method using clusters of age range between 15 to 40 years.

According to the latest data (until 2010) from IPPBM, the total youth population in Hulu Langat stands at 446,800 people or 41.9% from the total population in the district. Official electoral record of the Election Commission (EC) updated up to 26th January 2014 (Bernama, 2014) otherwise shows that the number of registered voters for the DUN Kajang are 39,278 people, with 15,668 registered voters are young people aged between 21-40 years (The Malay Mail, 2014). Based on the schedule for determining the sample size of a given population (Ho, 2013) and the calculation of the minimum sample size proportions by Yamane (1967) (as described by Glenn D. Israel, 2013), for a total population of between 250,000 to 500,000, the sample size of the minimum sample of respondents should be between 378 to 384 people. However, for the purpose of reducing the probability of sampling error and improve the accuracy of findings, the researcher has managed to obtain a total of 432 respondents. This research was then conducted in two phases: a pilot study and the actual study.

The full survey was officially done in a month involving 799 respondents consisted of social media users around Kajang and Klang

Valley. However, after the first phase of data sorting, the total number of respondents that corresponds to the age range of the youths was reduced to only 539 people, or about 67.5% response rate. The next level of data cleaning process is then performed to ensure that only the respondents who answered at least one of the objectives of the study were analysed, which brought about the final number of respondents to only 432 people. It should be noted that this final data cleaning processes might have greatly impacted the final data analysis as the true percentage representing gender and ethnic of the 432 final youth respondents may not reflect the same ratio as the youth district population and the voter's data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of measuring the level of youth dependency on social media for political socialization has been carried out to determine the type of media that is most popular among them to participate in political activities. This descriptive analysis is also to look at the influence of the other conventional media in the same scope and aspects.

Table 1.1: Level of youth dependency and type of media used for political socialization

	Newspaper		Television		Radio		Internet/ Social Media	
N	430		430		429		431	
Min	2.66		2.68		2.30		4.40	
Mode	4		4		2		5	
		%		%		%		%
Least Important	103	23.8	108	25	130	30.1	3	0.7
Not Important	111	25.7	103	23.8	139	32.2	12	2.8
Neutral	67	15.5	66	15.3	73	16.9	22	5.1
Important	127	29.4	123	28.5	80	18.5	165	38.2
Most Important	22	5.1	30	6.9	7	1.6	229	53
N	430	99.5	430	99.5	429	99.3	431	99.8

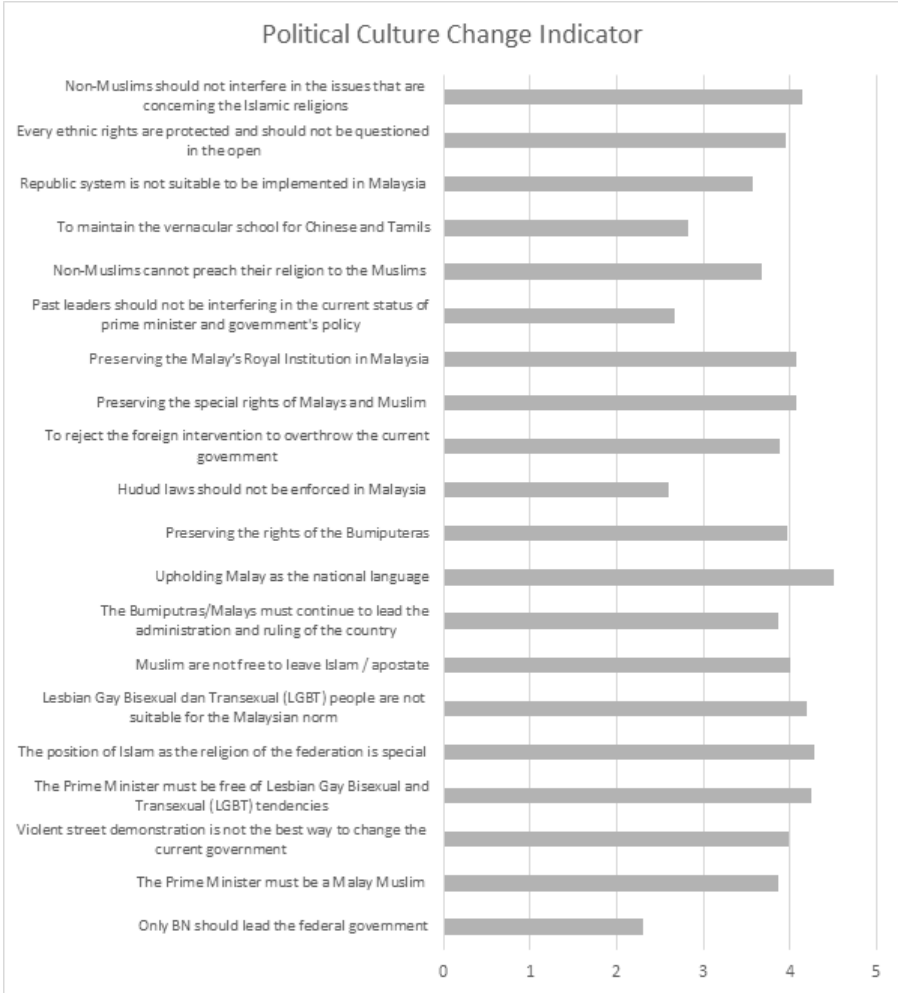
Table 1.1 shows that the social media has the most high of mean score of 4.40 (the most important score is 5 and the least important is 1); while radio is the medium least used for political purposes with the mean score of only around 2.30. These findings thus confirm that social media may already replacing the conventional role of the mass media such as newspapers, television and radio as an effective agent of political socialization for the youth. As such, this also affirms the previous studies

findings that the youth prefers a free, fast and interactive mode of media for political knowledge (Jun-E Tan & Zawawi Ibrahim, 2008; Fatimah Akmal & Ali Salman, 2015; Norshuhada Shiratuddin *et al*., 2016), and it is only logical that in the future, greater efforts and resources should be concentrated through the social media in order to build up more effective communication to effectively reach out to the youth.

The Influence of Youth Political Dependency in Social Media on the Political Culture of DUN Kajang, Selangor

Further analysis was conducted to determine if there is any significant change in the conventional political culture resulting from the influence of the youth political socialization in social media. Measurements were made to detect whether any of the respondents are looking for political culture changes (scale approaching to score of one – negative/left tendencies) or maintain the status quo (scale towards score of five – positive/right tendencies), with the score of three (3) marked as the intermediary point. There are 20 items or statements of general political culture or popularly known as 'Social Contract' of Malaysia (Awang Sariyan, 2014; Pusat Maklumat Rakyat [PMR], 2017) presented to each of the respondent to measure the changes as shown in Chart 1:

Chart 1: Political culture change scores



It is clear from Chart 1, only four (4) statements of conventional political culture are indicating left shifts; i.e. with the mean score below the level of the intermediary point. Namely those statements are "Only BN should lead the federal government" with the mean score of 2.30, "Hudud laws should not be enforced in Malaysia" with the mean score of 2.60, "Past leaders should not be interfering in the current status of prime minister and government's policy" with the mean score of 2.66 and "To maintain the vernacular school for Chinese and Tamils" with the mean score of 2.83. This finding is quite interesting since it gives us some signs of the current youth aspirations who wish to see changes in the federal administration of the Malaysian government, implementation of Sharia law, abolition of vernacular education and a much stronger opposition to the current federal administration.

Meanwhile, the mean scores for the other 16 statements are inclined towards maintaining the status quo (mean scores above the intermediary point). This finding tells us that even for urban youths who depends so much on the new media for political socialization, the medium itself does not really affect much of their expectations and political belief system which has been shaped since almost 60 years ago. These descriptive findings also showed that post-materialist tendencies which are often associated with the youth (Gibbins, 1989) cannot be clearly seen among the urban youth in DUN Kajang who actively participates in politics through the social media. In addition, the aggregate mean scores from the Chart 1 also prove that the youths are actually agree with 80% of the materialist or conservative political culture. This however does not simply means that the majority of youth are supporting the conservative ideology party such as UMNO or PAS, but it just demonstrates that these youth do not wish to see changes in the 'social contract' (Awang Sariyan, 2014; PMR, 2017) just yet.

Furthermore, this materialist trend can also be explained by analysing the demographic composition of the respondents, who the majority were ethnic Malay Muslims. Although DUN Kajang's ethnic composition is quite balanced especially between the Malays (48.50%) and non-Malays (50.57%), but this has not been able to be reflected in the final result of respondent data as preliminary cleaning processes has eliminated significant amount of non- Malay respondents due to their age and non-response. As mentioned in the earlier in this article, this factor may impact the final analysis and results. Therefore, it is quite vital to deploy further investigations into the aspects of correlation between political dependencies in social media with the political culture changes along the line of ethnic groups.

Table 1.2: Pearson correlation analysis to determine the relationship between political dependencies in social media and political culture change

		Political dependency in Social Media	Political Culture Change
Political dependency in Social Media	Pearson Correlation	1	-.02
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.74
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	9.42	-.71
	Covariance	.02	-.00
	N	432	411

Political Culture Change	Pearson Correlation	-.02	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.74	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	-.71	195.96
	Covariance	-.00	.48
	N	411	411

Pearson correlation analysis as shown in Table 1.2 depicts that there is a negative relationship, but weak and not statistically significant between the political dependencies of youth in social media and the political culture change, ($r = -0.02$, $N = 432$, $p = 0.74$). The reverse relationship indicates that the higher the rate of youth political dependencies in social media, the higher the prevailing changes in political culture will happen. This negative relationship is also associated with the existence of horizontal political socialization process in the social media which is incongruent with the conventional political socialization agents such as schools, families and conventional mass media (Winter & Bellows, 1992); thereby affecting the whole direction of political cultural change of the youth.

The weak and non-significant negative relationship between political dependencies in social media and political culture change among youth are also influenced by two major factors; i.e. the ethnic composition of final respondents and the Asian values (Saravanamuttu & Loh, 2006; Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, 2010). As what has been expected, the majority Malays and Muslims chose not to budge from the traditional political cultures known as the social contracts (Awang Sariyan, 2014; PMR, 2017) that have given them certain advantage since the era of independence. Conveniently, these political cultures are also in line with the Asian values (Saravanamuttu & Loh, 2006; Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, 2010) that emphasize on the stability and fluid transition of government leadership. This value exists due to the tendency of the Asian community itself that put forth the welfare of the public above their private interests, along with the utmost respect for the authorities and the importance of maintaining social harmony (Saravanamuttu & Loh, 2006; Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani, 2010). This is where the stark contrast exist between materialist and post-materialist political culture, which the latter exhibits individualism and self-expression as opposed to common interest (Gibbins, 1989).

However, the results are expected to show quite a different outcome if the ethnic composition of the respondent changes and for this purpose, further analysis has been carried out as shown in Table 1.3:

Table 1.3: Linear Regression Analysis to Determine the Relationship between Demographic Factors and Youth Political Culture Change

Linear Regression					
R	Rİ	F	df1	df2	Sig.
0.50	0.25	48.47	3	428	0.00

Coefficients

	B	T	Sig.
(constant)	1.06		
Education	-0.05	-1.93	0.05
Gender	0.02	0.91	0.36
Ethnic	-0.12	-11.99	0.00

According to Table 1.3, the R value or multiple correlations coefficient is .50, which gives a good level of prediction. The analysis also indicated that the demographic factors such as ethnic, gender and education background can explain 25% of variability in the dependent variable or political culture. F-ratio values in Table 1.3 also shows that the regression model is a good fit of data as antecedent variables were statistically and significantly predict dependent variables, for $F(3,428) = 48.47$, $p < 0.05$. However only ethnic variable is statistically and significantly predicts the political culture, with $F(3,428) = 48.47$, $p < 0.05$, Rİ = .25.

Thus, the results shown in Table 1.3 confirm that the change in political culture among the youth who depends on social media for political socialization are significantly predicted by the ethnic factor. One-way Anova analysis results in Table 1.4 supported this argument, which showed that there is a significant difference at the level of $p < 0.5$ in the score of political cultural change for four ethnic groups with $F(3, 407) = 91.96$. Further post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test also demonstrates the mean score of ethnic Malays are significantly different from the non-Malays. Therefore, these findings indirectly prove that the communal or racial politics still dominate the country albeit the rapid liberalization of political socialization process through the social media.

Table 1.4: The Difference in Youth Political Culture Change

Anova					
			df	F	sig.
Political Culture Change	Between groups		3	91.96	0.00
	Within groups		407		

Tukey HSD									
Political Culture Change			sig.			sig.			sig.
	Malays	Chinese	0.00	Chinese	Indian	0.81	Indian	Bumiputera Sabah/ Sarawak	0.00
		Indian	0.00		Bumiputera Sabah/ Sarawak	0.00			
		Bumiputera Sabah/ Sarawak	0.00						

These findings also suggests that the "Chinese Tsunami" or "Urban Tsunami" phenomena during GE-13 (Junaidi Awang Besar *et al*., 2014 and Mohd Fuad Mat Jali *et al*., 2014) is a manifestation of political cultural change especially among the non-Malay youths, especially in DUN Kajang. And this might also help to explain why Malay dominated political parties such as UMNO or PAS has slim chances in winning the non-Malay election seats. As a result, most of the urban electoral seats which have significant non-malay voters are dominated by the non-malay dominated DAP-led opposition pact especially in the last GE-13 (Mohd Fuad Mat Jali *et al*., 2014; SPR, 2014).

CONCLUSION

In general, the findings from the descriptive and inference analysis have demonstrated that the higher the level of youth dependence on social media for political socialization, the higher the chance that their political knowledge is going to be influenced by the perceptions that dominate the medium (Barber, 1972; Kluver *et al*., 2007); which in turn will lead to an increase in the rate of political cultural change. Additionally, the political culture changes that resulted from the dependency on social media has also reinforced its position as the contemporary agent of political socialization and political culture change (Normah Mustaffa, Wan Amizah Wan Mahmud, Fauziah Ahmad, Maizatul Haizan Mahbob & Mohd. Helmi Abd. Rahim, 2013; Fauziah Ahmad & Dafrizal Samsudin, 2017).

It is also important to note that ethnic factors are the important factor to predict the direction of youth political culture change. This is clearly evident when analysis findings show that ethnic Malays and non-Malays exhibits contradicting political culture which are influenced by different forms of agendas. This is augmented by the fact that racial politics are still the popular campaign approach by political parties who are now mastering the advantages of social media to extend further their agenda especially among the younger generations.

This has also lead to the question of effectiveness among the government information machinery, especially in reaching out the non-Malay audience. The current situation of free expressions and liberal views in social media have not only resulting in broad imbalance of agendas and political knowledge among the Malay and non-Malays, it might also impacted their political preferences and opinions. Therefore, a holistic approach should be taken by all parties, irrespective of political and ethnic affiliation, especially in explaining issues that concerns on the interests of the national agenda.

In this case it is quite important for us to look back at the structure and role of the education system as it looked to have created more rifts in polarity between the ethnics, especially among the Malays and non-Malays, rather than promoting the unity itself. The polarity gap that's getting bigger between these two major ethnics will influence their future expectations and beliefs in the nation political system, since their source of political knowledge is no longer of the same language and agenda. These developments in turn, may lead to the worsening of relationship between races in this country especially when the people are no longer having the same political aspirations for the future, and to some extents, mutual respect for each other anymore. It is just unimaginable if those changes that pave the way to political decay process are only applied to certain ethnic group and this ultimately could lead to racial conflict in the country or worse, a civil war.

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