



The Watchdog Role of a Journalist in a Politically Corrupt Nation: A Case Study of
Malaysian Journalists

ALICIA YEOH LEE SIAH

A RESEARCH PROJECT
SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE BACHELOR OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
FACULTY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

APRIL 25

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ABSTRACT

Political corruption has become more rampant in recent times in Malaysia and this issue has often gone unnoticed. Therefore, the media has a duty to disseminate information particularly the truth about this societal evil. The aim of this research is to find out the effectiveness of watchdog journalism in reporting political corruption in Malaysia. The researcher also touched briefly on the effects of political corruption in the country. Additionally the researcher intends to find out the perception of the public towards the effectiveness of watchdog journalism in our country. Besides, this research discusses the challenges of watchdog journalism and also solution to further improve watchdog journalism in our country. It should be stated however that one of the findings of this work is that majority of the respondents stated that watchdog journalism in Malaysia is not very effective. This could be attributed to the various restrictions on the journalism practise in the country.

DECLARATION

I declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal. This paper contains 11,823 words.

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Date : 25th APRIL 2011

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I would like to thank everyone that have helped and motivated me along the process of completing this Final Year Project. I am also greatly thankful to my adviser Ihediwa Samuel Chibundu who had guided me in my quest to improve and complete this project

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ALICIA YEOH LEE SIAH

Approval Form

This research paper attached hereto, entitled “The Watchdog Role of a Journalist in a Politically Corrupt Nation: A Case Study of Malaysian Journalists” prepared and submitted by Alicia Yeoh Lee Siah in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Communication (Hons) Journalism is hereby accepted

SUPERVISOR

DATE: _____

SUPERVISOR’S NAME: MR. IDHEWA SAMUEL CHIBUNDU

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Political corruption usually takes place at high levels of the political system and the illicit act involves political decision makers. It occurs when the politicians and state agents, who are entitled to make and enforce laws on behalf of the people, are themselves corrupt. Additionally it occurs when a political decision maker abuses the political power that they are entrusted with, to sustain their power, status and wealth.

This act does not only lead to the misallocation of resources but it also affects the manner in which decisions are made. It could also be defined as the exploitation of the political institutions and the rules of procedures. Furthermore it affects the institution of government and the political system and it commonly leads the institution to crumble.

Political corruption derives from moral and cultural characteristics of individual societies. It has been argued that the reason of corruption is the carry-over into present-day political behaviour of cultural values inherited from a patrimonial past, like negotiations, gift-giving and unconditional solidarity with extended families, clans and other communal groups (de Sardan 1999:25).

This will then cause a lot of harm to society, such as when it leads to illegal logging of tropical rain forests and the non-observation of building codes designed to ensure public safety. Moreover corruption may also lead to insecurity of lives of citizens, speculative politicians, and administrators vacillating between huge opportunities, grave risks and much double-pressure.

There are many effective ways in which journalism can serve to curb corruption. Most spectacular among them is when corrupt bureaucrats or public office-holders are put on trial and prosecuted or forced to resign after their misdeeds are exposed to public light. A good example is reporting, in which it may prompt public bodies to launch formal investigations into allegations of corruption.

Furthermore, news accounts disseminate the findings of public anti-corruption bodies, thus reinforcing the legitimacy of these bodies and reducing the ease with which interested parties who hold power can interfere in their work. On the contrary when journalists' exposes this illegal act the various bodies such as the courts, police and anti-corruption task forces are also put on check for corruption. This will lead to a reform of these bodies and the long-term effectiveness will strengthen the potential of the media to act as a check on the activities of corrupt officials.

Corruption may also cripple a nation if it is left unmonitored. This harrowing fact is explored in "Fighting Corruption My Mission" by Tunku Abdul Aziz the president of The Kuala Lumpur Society for Transparency. The consequences are that there will be the existence of public goods and services in inferior quality. Hospitals that we frequent might be prescribing expired drugs, the schools our children go to might have a canteen that serves poor quality and sometimes maggot-ridden food.

While those who give bribes will be able to secure tenders to supply certain products and services of poor quality, yet we are still expected to pay more for the inferior quality of the goods and services because the giver usually passes on the cost to the public by increasing the purchase price of the goods.

Furthermore unnecessary projects would also mushroom in a corrupt nation such as having huge plastic plants all over the place and weird-looking drains by the side of the road, all in the name of beautification. However, potholes, narrow roads, congestion and poor rubbish collection services which need to be looked into are ignored.

Discrimination would also take place when a person offers a bribe to a public official and that bribe is received, the giver will be awarded special treatment compared to other people in the same situation who have not offered a bribe. Moreover environmental degradation may take place because hills and forest reserves that should remain untouched get ripped because of corrupt officials. There are environmental laws but sadly there is lack of enforcement which results in careless execution of development projects.

Corruption also affects a country's economic goals as corruption decreases national wealth by channelling taxpayers' money which is already scarce, on high profile but uneconomical projects. For instance dams are built instead of the cheaper and more effective alternative of managing demand for water. In addition, billion-dollar tunnels are built so that tree-covered hill will continue to be logged.

This is done at the expense of less impressive but more needed infrastructure such as upgrading rundown schools, free hospitals services for the poor, and the supply of power and electricity to rural areas. Human rights will also be violated and it undermines democracy. If democracy is undermined then there will be no room for development

1.2 Statement of problem

Malaysia's position in the Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has dropped from twenty three (23) in 1995 to fifty six (56) in 2009. In an article from *The Star* dated August 17, 2009, Home Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein was disappointment over the statement by MACC director of investigations Datuk Mohd Shukri Abdull to stop investigating politicians. In addition to that he urged that the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) do not neglect its responsibility to curb corruption by ceasing to investigate politicians, but work with the Opposition and Barisan Nasional to curb corruption.

1.3 Objective of study

The objectives of study are as follows:-

1. To find out the effectiveness of watchdog journalism in Malaysia
2. To determine the effects of corruption in Malaysian society.
3. To examine the perception of the Malaysian public towards corruption.

1.4 Research question

The three research question in this study

1. Are journalist effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia?
2. What are the effects of corruption on Malaysia society?
3. How does the Malaysian public perceive political corruption?

1.5 Methodology

This study will apply quantitative research way of methodology. This means that content analysis and survey methods are used to generate data for this project. This is to ensure the accuracy of the results as well as help in giving a better feedback.

According to Kerlinger (2000), content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.

Firstly, content analysis being systematic means that the sample selection must follow procedures and each item must have an equal chance of being included in the analysis. Furthermore, the evaluation process must also be systematic and all content under consideration is to be treated in exactly the same manner. Additionally there must be uniformity in the coding and analysis measures and in the length of time coders are exposed to the material.

The content analysis is also objective and that the researcher's biases should not influence the findings. Operational definitions and rules for the classification of variables should be explicit and comprehensive so that other researchers who repeat the process will be able to obtain a similar conclusion.

Quantification also plays a major role in fulfilling the objective because it aids researchers in the quest for precision. Additionally quantification allows researchers to summarise results and report them briefly and it gives researchers additional statistical tools that will be able to aid in interpretation and analysis.

The researcher will be referring to *The Star* newspaper on how they exposed corruption allegations towards the former Menteri Besar of Selangor Datuk Khir Toyo in order to highlight to the nation the flaw of politicians here in Malaysia. In addition to that, the researcher will be looking into journals and books that will further explain the role of journalist in monitoring our political leaders and also give the researcher a better understanding of the subject matter.

The advantage of survey (questionnaires) research is that they can be used to investigate problems in realistic settings. The data obtained will be helpful to survey researches that have already existed. Moreover a large amount of data can be collected with relative ease from a variety of people. Also, surveys allow researchers to examine many variables and to use a variety of statistics to analyze the data.

The questionnaire would focus on the public's opinion on the effectiveness of watchdog journalism in reporting political corruption but due to time constraint the researcher would not randomly select members of the public but rather target a certain group to represent the various members of the public.

The researcher would target students mainly from the journalism course as they should be aware of the ways news are being reported and the roles of journalist. The researcher would also target students who are well aware of the responsibilities of journalists and the media. Therefore 100 questionnaires will be distributed to students of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

Besides, another 50 questionnaire are distributed to working adults who keep up with current issues. 25 questionnaires are distributed to respondents working in the private sector and the remaining 25 are distributed to the respondents in the public sector. The researcher distributed the questionnaire in Sekolah Menengah Sentosa targeting the teachers as representatives of the respondents working in the public sector.

Out of the 150 questionnaires distributed 135 will be analysed. Twenty five (25) are from the public sector, ninety (90) from the undergraduates of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman and twenty (20) from the private sector. Two (2) open ended questions posted by the researcher will be discussed in Chapter 3.

1.6 Theoretical framework

Social responsibility theory is a normative theory which states that the media must be free of government control but in exchange must serve the public. (Baran, 2006). Additionally social responsibility stated that the core assumption of this theory is a cross between libertarian principles of freedom and practical admissions of the need for some form of control of media (McQuail, 1987).

In battling political corruption the media should accept and accomplish its obligations to inform the society on the illicit act. The obligation can be met by setting a high standard of professionalism, truth, accuracy and objectivity.

Additionally the media ought to give various points of views and the right of reply regarding politicians who are corrupted and are mishandling public funds on their own expense. The responsibility of a journalist to the public is to inform them of the misdeeds of politicians, and those in positions of authority.

Journalists are responsible to inform the public regarding the misdeeds of government officials through deceitful ways for their own purposes thus Malaysian newspapers highlight these fraudulent cases in order to inform the public and carry out their watch dog role. *The Star* reported that the former Menteri Besar of Selangor Datuk Khir Toyo is alleged to have funded a trip to Disneyland for his maid and children by paying it with public funds and was probed by the MACC.

The newspaper also exposed that the former Menteri Besar was also charged with a mansion deal fraud involving two plots of land and a house in Shah Alam worth millions of ringgit. Despite denying both allegations the public trust will now be shaken and they would be more careful in electing their political leaders in coming elections.

Walter Lipmann, in *Public Opinion* (1922) argued that the people do not deal directly with their environments as much as they react to “pictures” in their heads. He also believed that the real environment is altogether too big, too complex and too fleeting for direct contact in which we are not equipped with so much detail, so much variety, so many variations and combinations. Although we have to act in that environment, we have to reconstruct it on a simpler model before we can manage with it. (Lippmann 1922, p.16).

Bernard Cohen later refined the theory by stating that the press is significantly more than a supplier of information and opinion. Cohen felt that it may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about. (Cohen, 1963, p.13).

On the other hand Maxwell McCombs, (2001) states that even if the influence of the media agenda can be significant, it alone does not determine the public agenda. It is also argued that information and cues about object and attribute clarity provided by the news media are far from the only determinants of the public agenda.

However this important influence of the news media has no way to reverse or abolish the basic assumption of democracy that the people at large have enough wisdom to determine the course of their nation, state and local communities.

In particular, the people are quite able to determine the relevance of certain issues advanced from the news media that are related to them and to the larger public arena. Thus the media sets the agenda only when citizens perceive their news stories as relevant.

The mainstream paper did not sensationalise the news reporting of the alleged case of Datuk Khir Toyo's involvement in land fraud and also the allegations that he funded his personal holidays with the peoples' money during his tenure as the Selangor Menteri Besar. Instead it was reported as it is that he was charged for the suspected crime and that he would be sentenced accordingly if convicted but the newspaper did not further comment on the matter.

The paper instead wrote another article of the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak stating that the prosecution of former Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Khir Toyo for land fraud is not a case of selective prosecution or a gimmick by the Government and the Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission (MACC). The commission has scrutinised the facts in the case before reporting it to the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC), which then decided there were enough grounds to take the case to court, Najib said.

They would make the people think that the government is efficient enough in eradicating politicians who are corrupt and are not serving the people well. It would also show that the Malaysian Government is not tolerant of such behaviour as the public opinion on how they perceive the government is crucial.

In a nutshell attitudes and behaviour are usually influenced by understandings, for example what a person knows, thinks and believes. Hence, the agenda setting role of the mass media implies a potentially massive influence whose full dimensions and consequences have yet to be studied and appreciated. (McCombs, 2001)

Therefore the importance of objects in the mass media is linked to the formation of opinions by the audience. With the increasing prominence of public figures in the news, for example more people will move away from a neutral position and form an opinion after having knowledge of many of the authorities and government officials are involved in corruption. (ibid).

1.7 Significance of study

This study will help reveal the degree of corruption in the country and the dangers that result from this social evil by public office holders. This becomes vital because many Malaysians are not aware of the high level of corruption in the country. Also, it can help the Malaysian public to understand better the roles of journalists to the society and to know if they have been living up to expectations. On the other hand, this research could serve as a yardstick to a more detailed research on this topic. It will go a long way in finding a solution on how to salvage the country from this ugly truth.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ingie Amundsen, (1999) depicted corruption as a disease that eats into the cultural, political and economic fabric of society, and destroys the functioning of vital organs. In his journal he also quoted Transparency International in which they stated that corruption is one of the greatest challenges of the contemporary world.

It undermines good government, fundamentally distorts public policy, leads to the misallocation of resources, harms the private sector and private sector development and particularly hurts the poor. Corruption is normally understood, and referred to, as the personal wealth seeking behaviour of someone who represents the state and the public authority, or as the misuse of public goods by public officials for private ends.

Amundsen also used Colin Nye's classical and most widely used definition to further explain his paper. Nye defines corruption as a "*behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence*"(Nye 1967:417).

Moreover at the state level civil servants, functionaries, bureaucrats and politicians, hold position of authority to allocate rights over (scarce) public resources in the name of the state or the government. In a nutshell, corruption is when these individuals are misusing the public power they are bestowed with, for private benefits.

Furthermore vice is when these individuals are abusing the public power they are entrusted with for personal benefit. This unlawful act occurs when the person responsible accepts money or some other form of incentive and eventually proceeds to misuse his official powers by returning undue favours. As an example, it is an act of corruption when a state official takes bribe to provide some public service that is supposed to be free of charge of demands more than the official cost.

All in all, the participation of state officials 'in corruption is also emphasised in an alternative definition, where corruption is seen as *“a form of secret social exchange through which those in power (political or administrative) take personal advantage, of one type or another, of the influence they exercise in virtue of their mandate or their function”* (Méry cited in de Sardan 1999:49).

Corruption may result in the poor becoming poorer. According to UNDP's resident representative to Malaysia, Richard Leete, corruption especially hurts those who are least able to defend themselves. “The poor therefore pay higher proportion of their income compared to the rich. Their property rights become insecure and they are most likely to suffer from poor services.” (Tunku Abdul Aziz, 2005).

He also believed that the poor people are not able to fight the system, compared to those with the means to influence decisions to their benefit. Consequently, the poor remain stuck in an unending cycle of poverty and deprived of services that they should be entitled to under the constitution.

Tunku Abdul Aziz Ibrahim once said that “it is very sad commentary on our culture when people think corruption is all right and necessary and as long as we have this attitude; corruption will continue to plague us and our country”. He emphasised that people do not have to give in to corruption if they do not want to and it is extremely important for people who are corrupted to have a conscious stand and remember that according to our laws, we are not allowed to give bribes.

Furthermore, he holds steadfast to the principle that people should understand the impact of corruption and they should want to do something about it. Again, he believes that the people just need to be convinced that if they do something about it, they will not be victimised.

Rick Stapenhurst in his journal ‘The media’s role in curbing corruption’ believes that by reporting corruption cases the journalist may be able to compel public bodies to launch formal investigations into the allegations of the unmoral act. (Stapenhurst, 2000: p.3). Additionally he argued that journalists are able to disseminate the findings of public anti-corruption bodies reducing enabling interested parties who are in power to meddle in their work. When these flaws are exposed by journalists various bodies of the state are also put in check.

On the hand, when the journalist exposes flaws and even corruption within the various bodies (the courts, police and anti-corruption task forces) corruption is being monitored. When the media is successful in acting as a counterweight against corruption this would be the result of public pressure which led to the reform of these bodies.

Stapenhurst also noted that at times corrupt cases or ethically questionable behaviour does not result in immediate investigations, prosecutions or resignations but the reports would stimulate the anger of the public, which exercises another form of approval which may be the basis of electoral defeat during the elections or a change in the governmental office.

Furthermore, hard-hitting journalism will also expose flaws in policy, laws or regulation that may be reasons to corruption, thus creating pressure to reform. He also believes that journalists' stories play a critical role in reinforcing the effectiveness of public corruption bodies even when the stories in question are not, investigative reports that reveal wrongdoings of some kind.

Mohd Azizudin Mohd Sani, (2009) in his book "The Public Sphere and Media Politics in Malaysia" pointed out that the media is essential in the modern world of democracy because it can notify the people and influence their decisions in private and public life. It may also seek to lay down an agenda for the nation to pursue. Additionally a free press helps to preserve and promote democracy by safeguarding the independence of its institutions, including itself, and ensuring their accountability.

He also quoted Alexander Meiklejohn (1965) in which Alexander stresses on two functions of freedom of the press in a democracy. The first is the formative function, where a free press permits the flow of information necessary for citizens to make informed decisions and for leaders (public servants) to stay abreast of the interests of their constituents (the electorate). The second is the critical function, where the press in particular serves as the people's watchdog, ensuring independent criticism and evaluation of the government and other institutions that may seize democratic power.

Media is critical in today's society because the media perform a number of vital functions in our lives. The most primary function of the press would be surveillance or a source of information. Second, they serve an agenda-setting and interpretation function. Third, they assist us in creating and maintaining connections with different members of society. Fourth, they aid in educating and socialising us.

Fifth they persuade us to buy certain items or accept certain ideas and lastly the media entertains us. The time we spend consuming the media is astonishing and the amount is ever increasing. For better or worse, we are closely linked to the media. We are currently living a media culture and its influence is unavoidable. (Mohd Hamdan Adnan 2003 as cited in Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani 2009).

“The role of the press in a democratic society cannot be understated. The press is in the frontline of the battle to maintain democracy. It is the function of the press to report corruption, dishonesty and graft wherever it may occur and to expose the perpetrators. The press must reveal dishonest and inept administration. It must also contribute to the exchange of ideas. It must advance communication between the governed and those who govern. The press must act as the watchdog of the governed.” (Nadirayah 2002, 24)

This shows the news media should serve the watchdog role of democracy and is able to carry out its duty to protect the people's interest; this has led several scholars to consider the role of the press as that of “the Fourth estate.” The press must also be capable of exposing failures of, and abuses by government and government officials as this ability provides the best democratic safeguard against malfeasance and misfeasance by government. (Stewart 1975, Blasi 1977).

Democratic development relies on the press being permitted to perform this “checking” function effectively and the aim of preventing the press to play this role may be the main reason for the government censoring the press or restricting its freedom. The acts of omission and commission, of corruption, waste, inefficiency and negligence on the part of the authorities, can be exposed by it.

. One of the essential elements identified by Samar Fatany a Jeddah-based radio journalist that is of relevance here in Malaysia is that journalist should hold steadfast to the truth and that its first loyalty is to the people and its essence is a discipline of verification. Additionally journalism also must maintain independence from those covered and it must preserve as an independent monitor of power.

In new and old democracies, the idea that the media plays a role as the public’s eyes and ears, and is not just a passive recorder of events is today widely accepted. There is without a doubt that the myth of the courageous journalist faithfully pursuing the trail of wrongdoing remains very much alive, both in the media as well as popular lore. (Sheila Coronel, 2008)

Corruption and the watchdog role of the news media, Sheila Coronel also asserts that the government cannot be held responsible if citizens are ill informed about the actions of officials and institutions since watchdog reporting cover a wide range of different types of journalism. On a daily basis, the watchdog press monitors the day –to–day working of government, thus helping citizens assess the efficacy of its performance.

Additionally reporting that goes beyond what officials or their spokesperson say, to examine performance, is also a form of watch dogging. A watchdog press also ensures that individuals and institutions who are supposed to serve the public remain transparent and are held accountable. Therefore the key to good governance is a vigilant press. She also stated that watchdog reporting covers an array of topics from sex and personal scandals to financial wrongdoing, political corruption, enrichment in public office and other types of wrongdoing.

They can also be categorised according to who initiates the revelation and this sometimes are the results of leaks from interested parties such as government investigators, rival businesses, politicians or opposition political parties whereas others are triggered by whistleblowers inside an organisation. Some allegations are investigated first by advocacy groups and campaigners, before being taken up by mainstream news organisations.

Sheila Coronel also reasons that watchdog journalism has high hopes for what it is capable of, especially in the control of corruption and by exposing wrongdoing. The press prompts investigations of those involved in malfeasance and catalyses changes in law and regulations. It also helps shape public opinion against corrupt governments and generates public hostility against those who abuse their office.

Maxwell Mccombs, 2001 stated that the power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, is a wide and well-documented influence. In addition to that people do not only obtain factual information about public affairs from the news media; readers also learn how much importance a topic is based on the emphasis placed on it in the news.

Basically newspapers would provide a host of cues about the importance of the topics in the daily news as an example lead story on page one, other front page display, large headlines, etc. While television news also offers numerous cues about salience such as the opening story on the newscast and length of time devoted to the story.

These cues will be repeated day after day effectively to transmit the importance of each topic. In other words, the news media can set the agenda for the public's attention to that small group of issues around which public opinion forms. (McCombs, 2001)

He also pointed out that social scientist examining the agenda-setting influence of the news media on the public usually focuses on public issues. Furthermore the agenda of news organisations is found in its pattern of coverage on public issues over some period of time, a week, a month or an entire year. Over this period of time, whatever it might be, a few issues are emphasised, some receive light coverage, and many are seldom or never mentioned. (ibid).

Chapter 3

Findings and Analysis

3.1 Public Sector

Part I-Personal Particulars

1)

Age	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45
Male	4	1	0	3
Female	4	4	5	4
Total	8	5	5	7

Table 1: Age

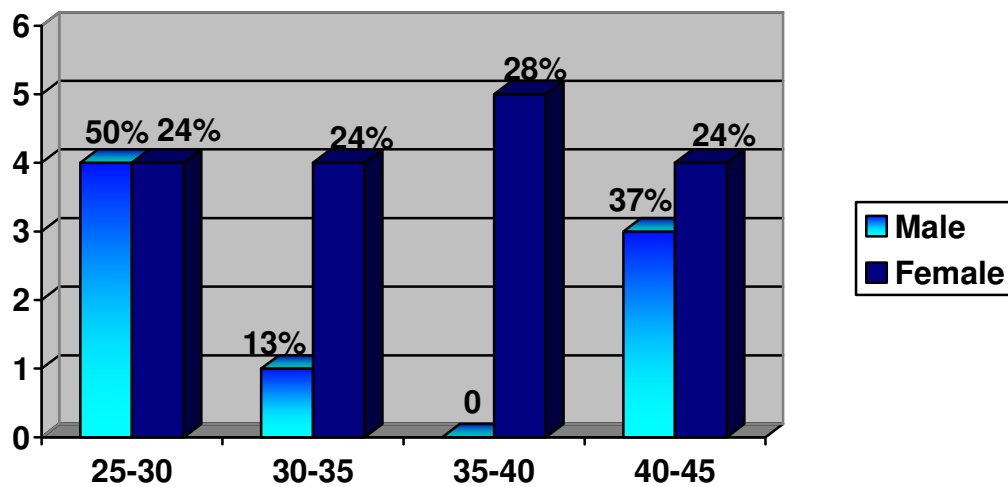


Figure 1: Age

The chart above shows the categories of age of the respondents. Four (4) respondents both male (50%) and female (24%) are 25-30 years of age. While only one (1) male (13%) represents the age group of 30-35. On the other hand four (4) females (24%) were categorised in the age bracket of 30-35 and there is a huge gap between the male and female respondents of the age group 35 - 40 as there were five (5) female (28%) but no male respondents. The bar chart also shows that three (3) male (37%) and four (4) (24%) female at the age of 40-45 have corresponded to the questionnaire.

2)

Sex	Male	Female	Total
	8	17	25

Table 2: Sex

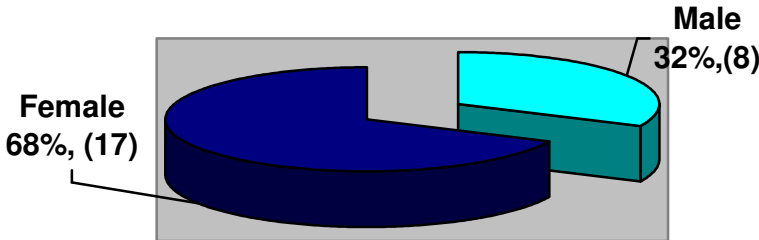


Figure 2: Sex

There were seventeen (17) female respondents which make up 68 % of the pie chart. On the other hand there were only eight (8) male respondents which constitute 32% of the pie chart.

3)

Education level	Male	Female	Total
Graduate	8	17	25

Table 3: Education Level

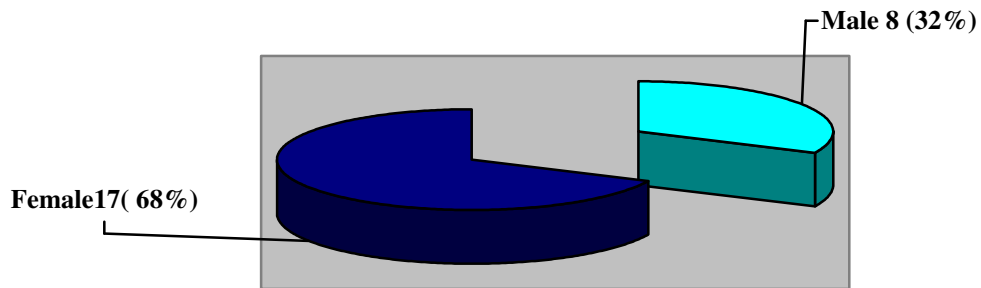


Figure 3: Education level

All twenty five (25) respondents are graduate teachers currently teaching at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Sentosa. Eight (8) are male teachers (32%) while the remaining seventeen (17) are female (68%).

4)

Job Sector	Male	Female	Total
Public Sector	8	17	25

Table 4: Job Sector

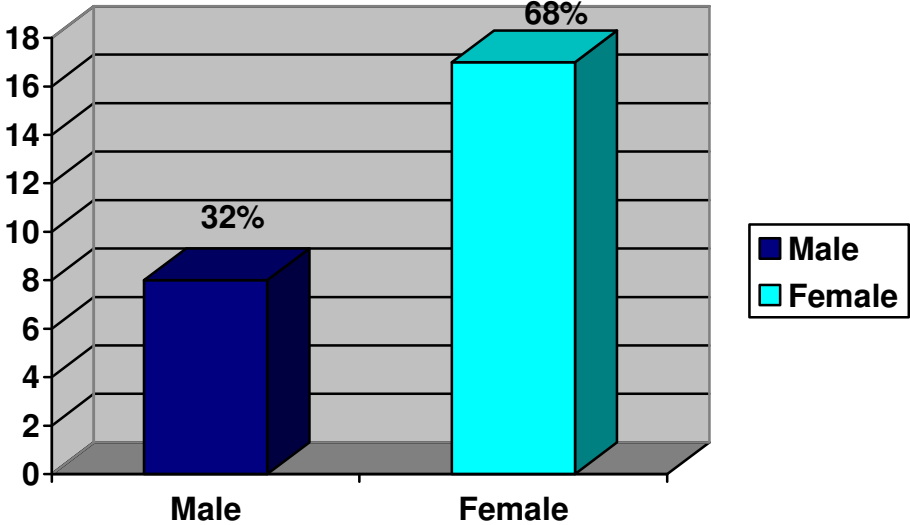


Figure 4: Job Sector

The graph above shows that there are seventeen (17) female (68%) and only eight (8) male (32%) representing teachers from the public sector. In total there are twenty five (25) teachers responding to the questionnaire.

Part II – General

5)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	3	11	14
No	5	6	11

Table 5: Effectiveness of journalist as watchdogs to society

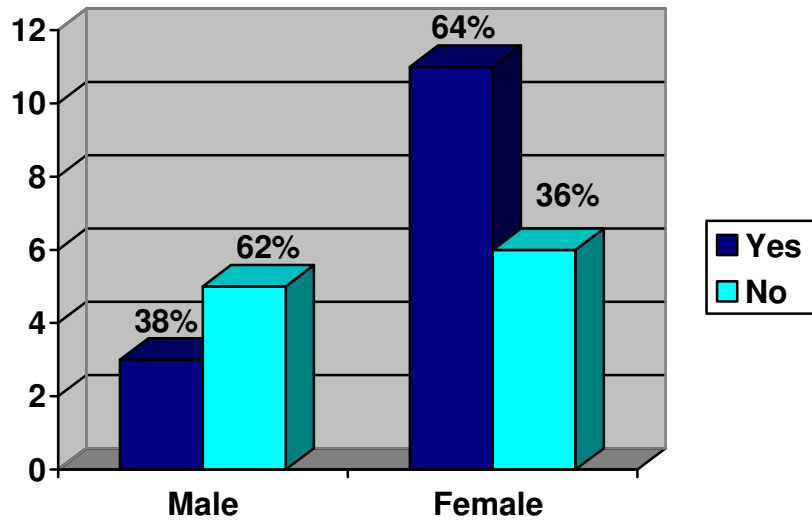


Figure 5: Effectiveness of journalist as watchdogs to society

Most of the male respondents felt that journalists are not effective watchdogs of the society. This is proven when out of eight (8) respondents; five (5) male respondents (62) chose to answer NO while only three (3) (38%) ticked YES in the answer box. On the contrary eleven (11) female respondents (64%) felt that journalists are effective watchdogs of the society and the remaining six (6) (36%) thinks otherwise and ticked NO in the answer box.

6)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	1	2	3
No	7	15	22

Table 6: Freedom of speech to expose political corruption

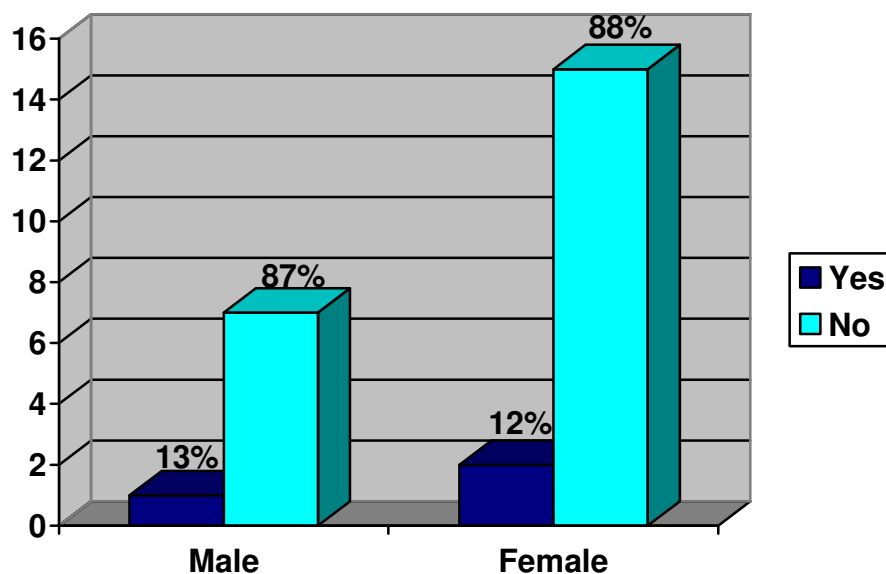


Figure 6: Freedom of speech to expose political corruption

All of the respondents feel that journalists are not given sufficient amount of freedom to expose political corruption. One (1) male (13%) answered that journalist are given freedom of speech to expose political corruption while seven (7) other males (87) think likewise. Fifteen (15) females (88%) felt that there is no freedom of speech to expose political corruption while only two (2) females (12%) felt that journalists are given freedom to expose political corruption.

7)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	5	11	16
No	3	6	9

Table 7: Malaysians preparedness for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption

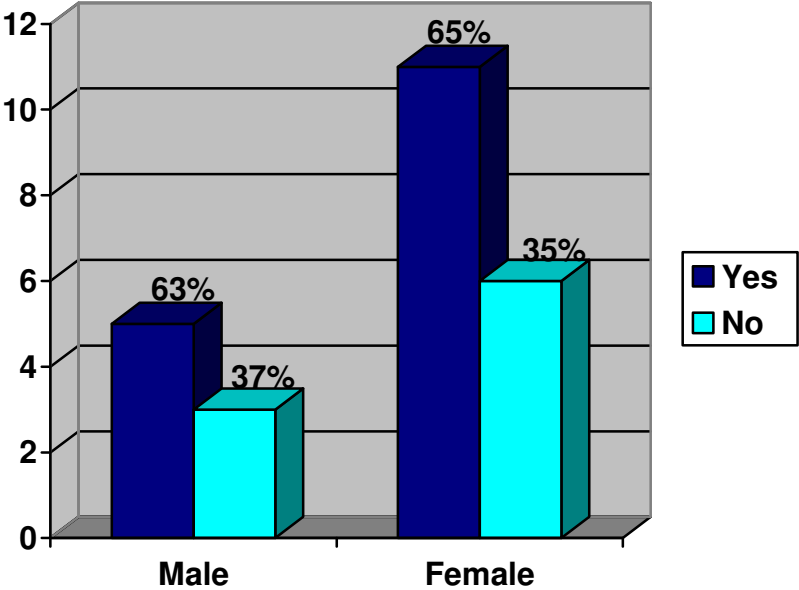


Figure 7: Malaysians preparedness for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption

The bar chart indicates that within the public sector they are prepared for more press freedom that allows more exposure on political corruption. Five (5) males (63%) and eleven (11) female (65%) feel that Malaysians are ready for more press freedom while three (3) males (37%) and six (6) females (35%) are sceptical of a freer press that will enable more exposure of political corruption.

8)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Laws & regulations (ISA)	6	16	22
Self Censorship	1	0	1
Journalistic Ethics	1	1	2

Table 8: Main challenge of journalist in reporting political corruption

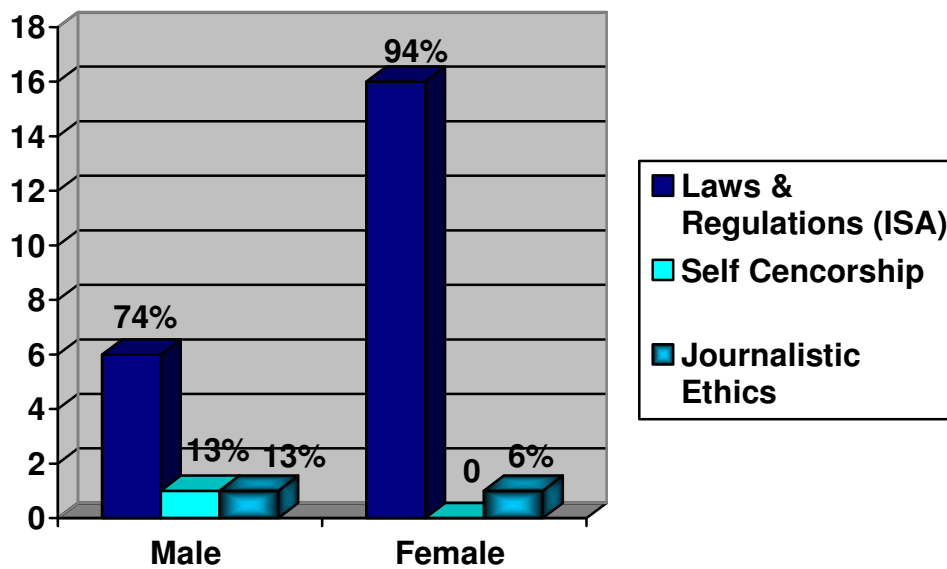


Figure 8: Main challenge of journalist in reporting political corruption

Out of twenty five (25) respondents, six (6) male (74%) and sixteen (16) female (94%) feel that the main challenge of journalist in reporting political corruption are laws and regulations. Example the Internal Security Act (ISA). Only one (1) male respondent (13%) considers that self censorship is the obstacle to reporting political corruption. Besides, one (1) male (13%) and one (1) female (6%) believe that journalistic ethics are the main challenge in reporting political corruption.

9)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	7	13	20
No	1	4	5

Table 9: Laws and regulations affecting effectiveness of watchdog journalist

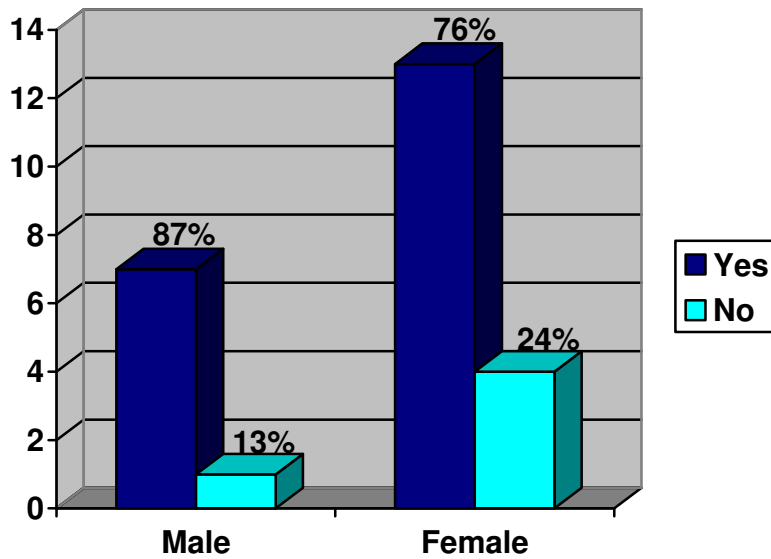


Figure 9: Laws and regulations affecting effectiveness of watchdog journalism

A high number of respondents from the public sector think that laws and regulations in this country are affecting the effectiveness of watchdog journalism. In the bar chart above it shows that seven (7) male (87%) and thirteen (13) females (76%) have the perception that watchdog journalism have been affected by laws and regulations imposed in this country. One (1) male (13%) and four (4) female (24%) think that laws and regulations do not affect watchdog journalism.

10)

Category	Male	Female	Total
High	5	14	19
Low	3	3	6

Table 10: Perception on the level of political corruption in Malaysia

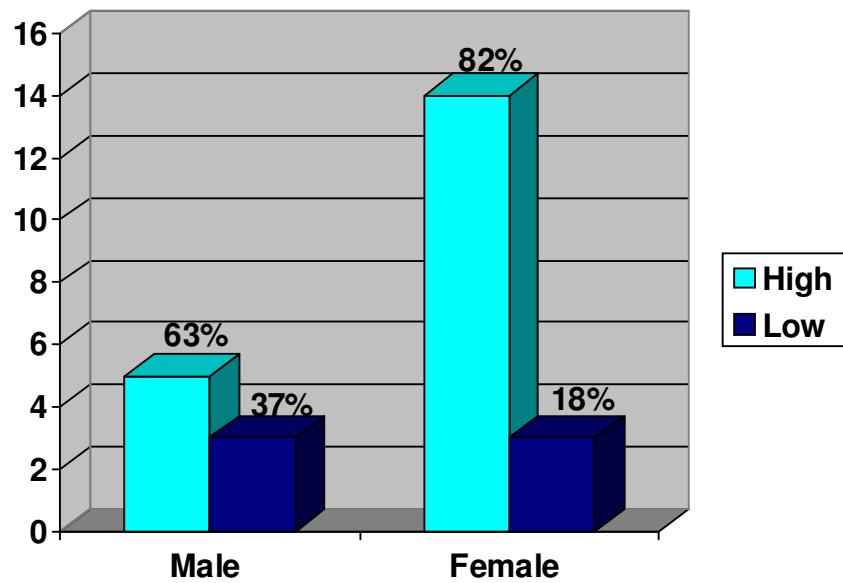


Figure 10: Perception on the level of political corruption in Malaysia

The bar chart above clearly shows that the respondents perceive political corruption to be high. Five (5) males (63%) and fourteen (14) females (82%) have the perception that political corruption is high in Malaysia while only three (3) males (37%) and three (3) females (18%) perceive political corruption as low.

Part III – Social Responsibility of a Journalist

13)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	3	8	11
No	5	9	14

Table 11: Journalist as effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia

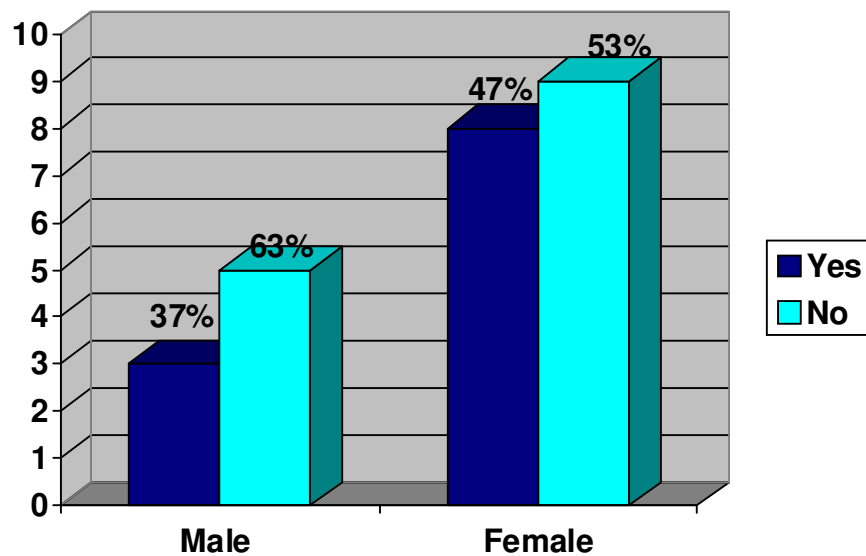


Figure 11: Journalist as effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia

Three (3) males (37%) and eight (8) females (47%) feel that journalists are effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia. While five (5) males (63%) and nine (9) females (53%) consider journalist are not effective in curbing political corruption in this country.

14)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Agree	2	7	9
Disagree	2	7	9
Not Sure	4	3	7

Table 12: Social responsibility of the Malaysian Press

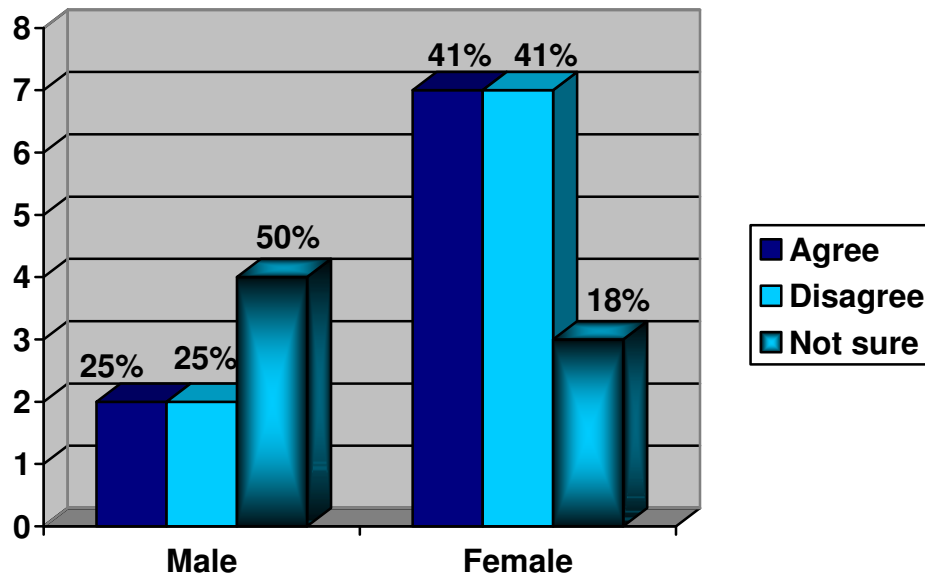


Figure 12: Social responsibility of the Malaysian press

The above chart shows that two (2) males (25%) and seven (7) females (41%) agree that the Malaysian press should be socially responsible to the people. On the other hand a similar number of respondents disagree to these statement two (2) males (25%) and seven (7) females (41%). Four (4) males (50%) and three (3) females (18%) are unsure whether the press should be socially responsible to the people.

15)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	2	1	3
No	6	16	22

Table 13: News of political corruption receive enough media attention

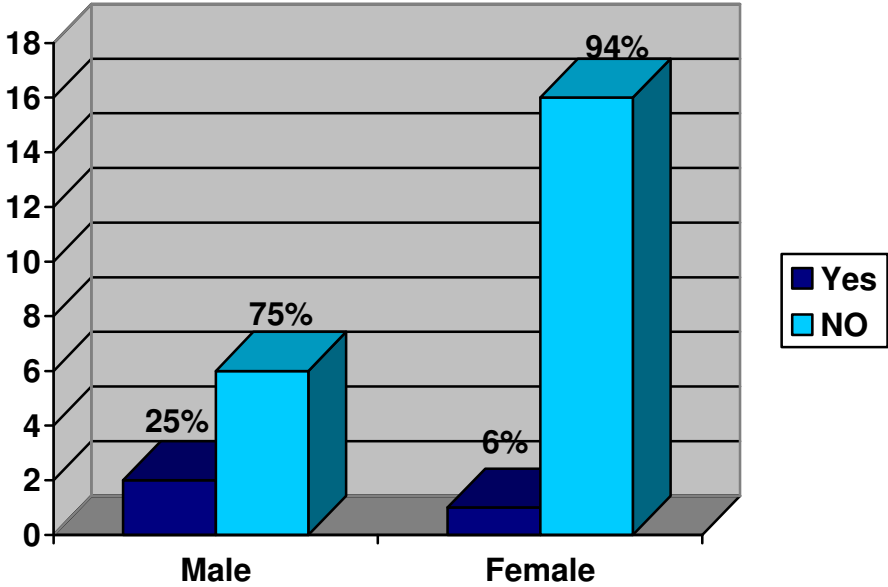


Figure 13: News of political corruption receive enough media attention

Most of the respondents feel that news of political corruption receives enough media attention. This is clearly shown in the graph above where six (6) males (75%) and sixteen (16) females (94%) chose to tick NO in the answer box. Two (2) males (25%) and a female (6%) felt that there is enough coverage of political corruption in the news.

16)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Fair	5	6	11
Poor	3	11	14

Figure 14: How well do Malaysian journalists fair in reporting political corruption

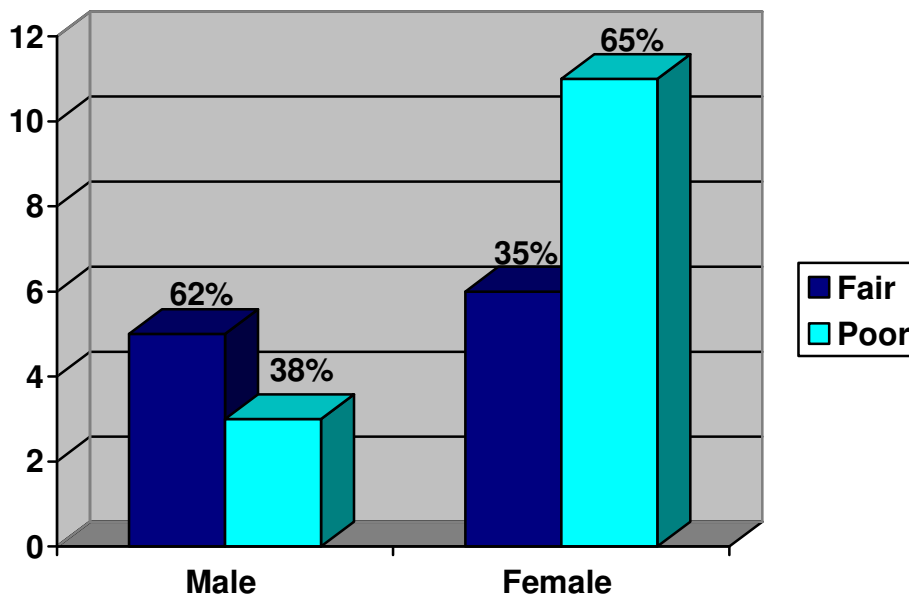


Figure 14: How well do Malaysian journalists fair in reporting political corruption

Five (5) male (62%) and six (6) female (35%) respondents feel that Malaysian journalists are only at the average level (fair) in reporting political corruption. While the remaining three (3) males (38%) and eleven (11) females (65%) respondents feel Malaysian journalist do not perform well when reporting on political corruption.

IV - Agenda setting of the press

17)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	1	4	5
No	7	11	18
Others	0	2	2

Table 15: Journalist being bias in reporting cases of political corruption

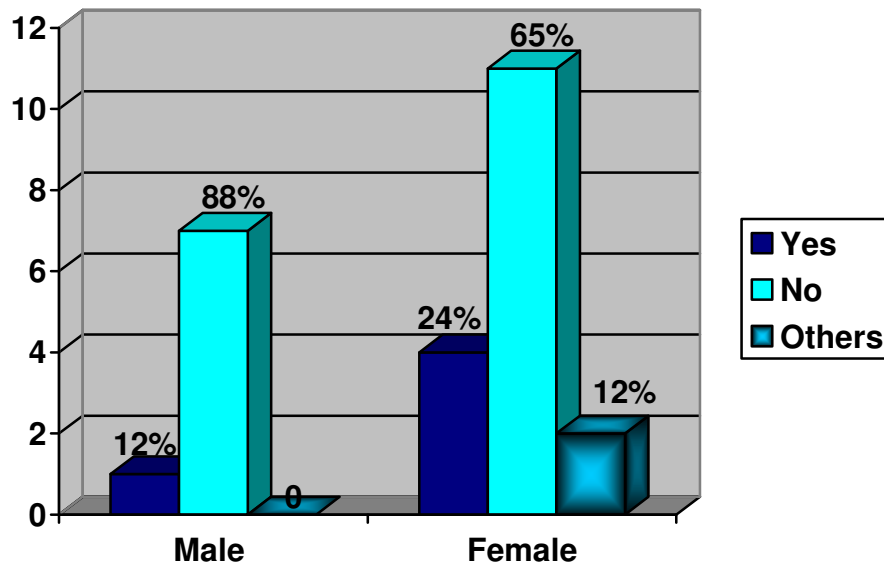


Figure 15: Journalist being bias in reporting cases of political corruption

Most respondents felt that journalists should not be bias in reporting cases of political corruption. Seven (7) males (88%) and eleven (11) females (65%) felt that the press should not be bias. On the other hand one (1) male (12%) and four (4) females (24%) consider the press as being bias. Two (2) female respondents (12%) are unsure.

18)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	6	11	17
No	0	3	3
Others	2	3	5

Table 16: News of political corruption in newspapers had been framed by the media

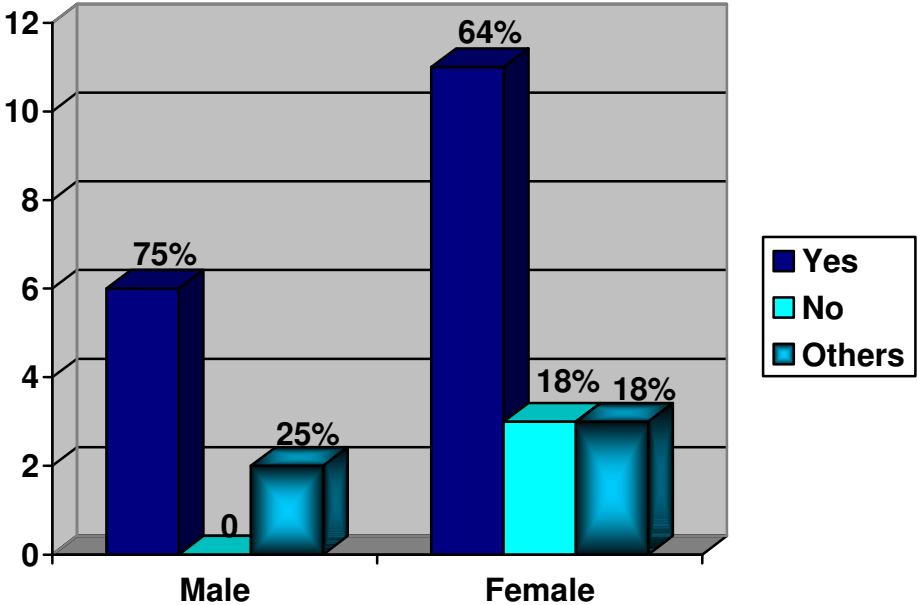


Figure 16: News of political corruption in newspapers had been framed by the media

Six (6) males (75%) and eleven (11) females (64%) feel that news of political corruption has been framed by the media. Three (3) females (18%) and no male respondent felt that the news is not being framed. While two (2) males (25%) and three (3) females (18%) have other perceptions.

19)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	7	12	19
No	1	4	5
Others	0	1	1

Table 17: Political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media

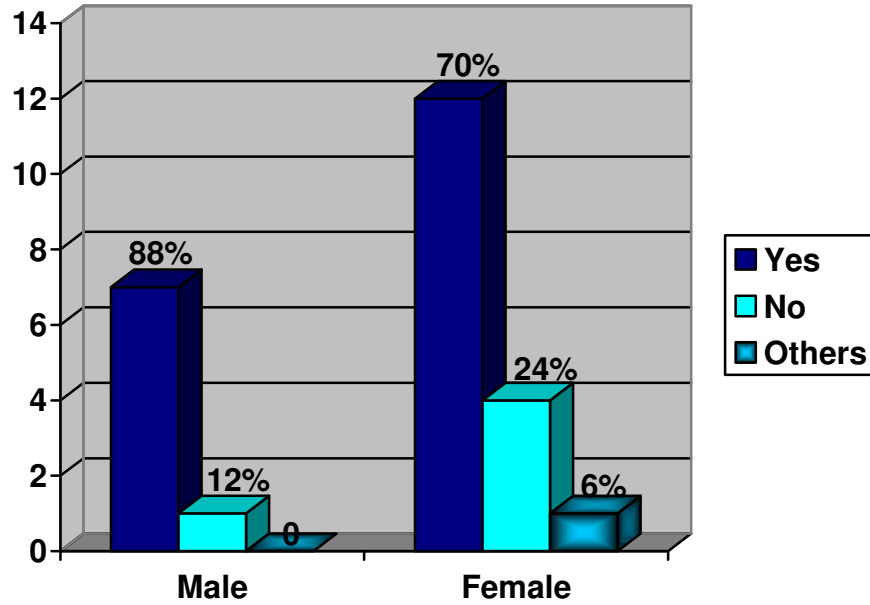


Figure 17: Political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media

Seven (7) males (88%) and twelve (12) females (70%) reckon that political corruption is receiving little attention by the mainstream media. Conversely only one (1) male (12%) and four (4) females (24%) felt that political corruption gets enough attention by the mainstream media. One (1) female respondent (6%) commented that this issue occurs because journalists are not given enough freedom to expose political corruption therefore they pay little attention to political corruption.

20)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Agree	4	10	14
Disagree	4	7	11

Table 18: Malaysian press making us to believe that political corruption is not common in the country.

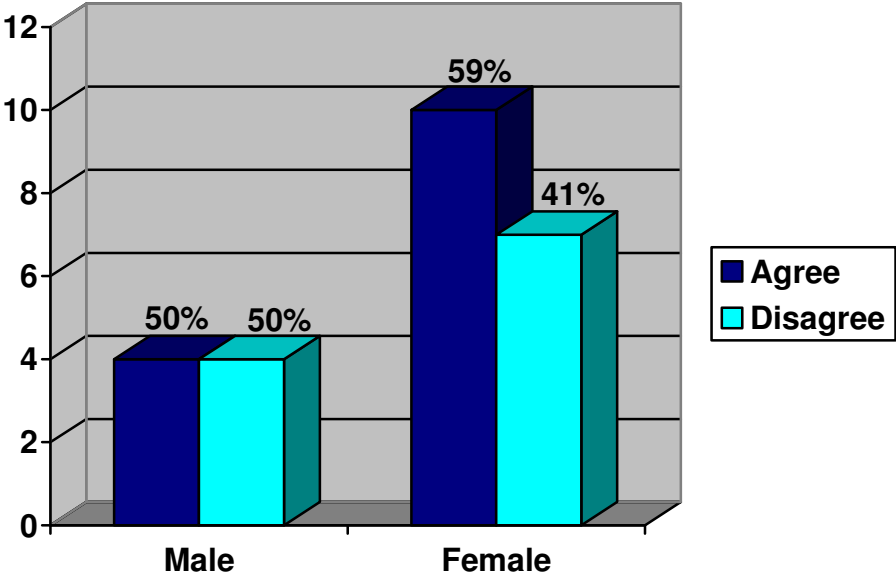


Figure 18: Malaysian press making us to believe that political corruption is not common in the country.

Four (4) male respondents (50%) agree that the Malaysian press is making us to think that political corruption is not common in our country conversely four (4) other males (50%) disagree to this statement. On the other hand ten (10) female respondents (59%) agree that the press are making us believe that political corruption is not rampant in this country while seven (7) others disagree (41%) .

3.2 Undergraduate

Part I – Personal particulars

1)

Age	Male	Female	Total
20-25	22	65	87
25-30	0	3	3

Table1: Age

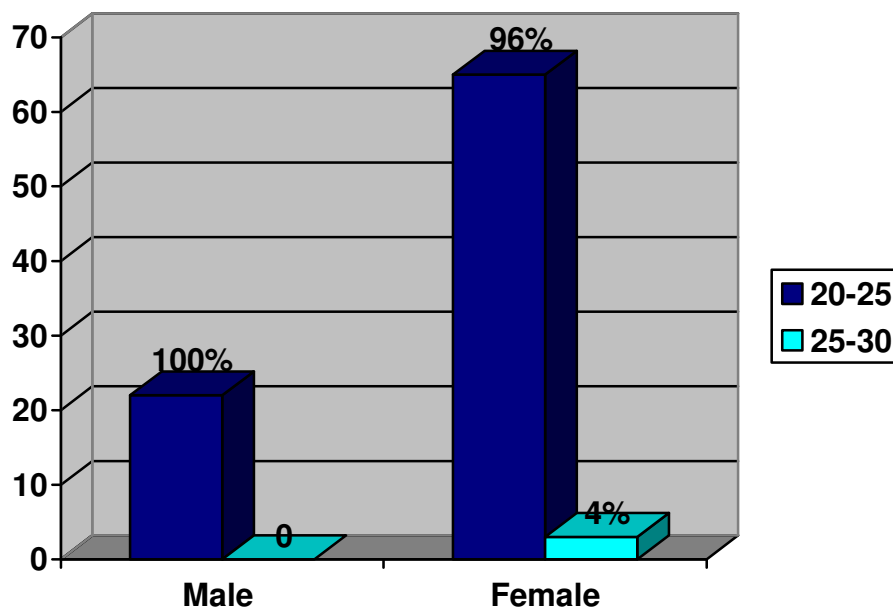


Figure 1: Age

There are twenty two (22) males (100%) and sixty five (65) females (96%) aged 20-25 years. Only three (3) females (4%) are at the age of 25-30 years old. In total there are eighty seven (87) students within the age bracket of 25-30 years.

2)

Sex	Male	Female	Total
	22	68	90

Table 2: Sex

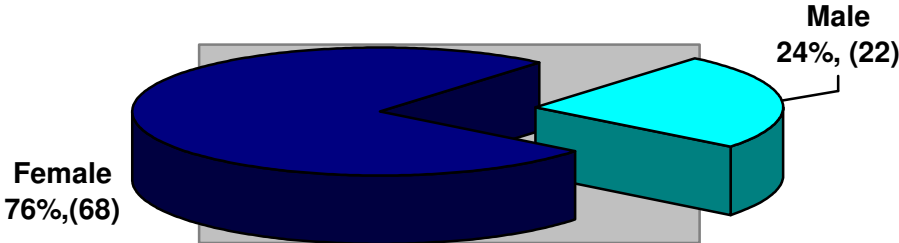


Figure 2: Sex

The pie chart above shows that there are a higher percentage of female respondents compared to male respondents. Generally 76% of the respondents (68) are females and only 22 % are males (22).

3)

Education level	Male	Female	Total
Undergraduate	22	68	90

Table 3: Education level

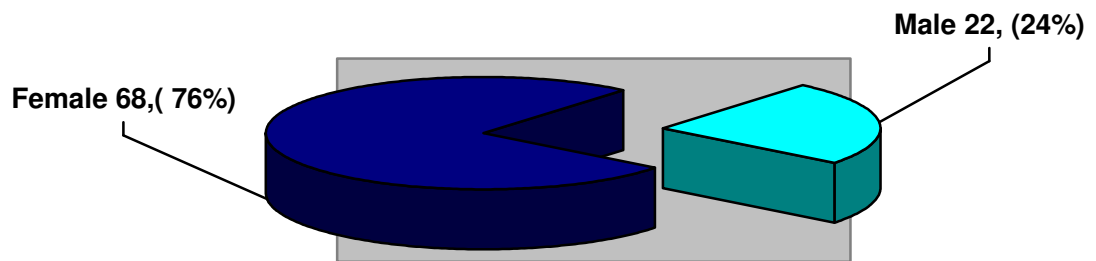


Figure 3: Education level

Twenty two (22) males and sixty eight (68) females’ undergraduates’ responded to the questionnaire regarding on ‘the watchdog role of a journalist in a politically corrupt nation: A case study of Malaysian journalist.’ In a nutshell ninety (90) undergraduates responded to the questionnaire.

Part II – General

5)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	10	35	45
No	11	26	37
Others	1	7	8

Figure 4: Effectiveness of journalist as watchdogs to society

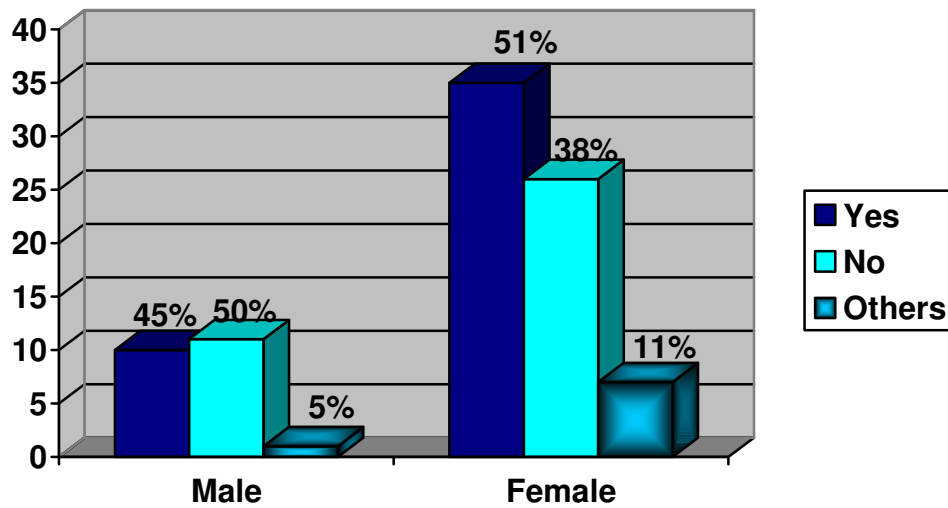


Figure 4: Effectiveness of journalist as watchdogs to society

Ten (10) males and thirty five (35) females think that journalists are effective watchdogs of society. On the other hand eleven (11) males and twenty six (26) females felt that journalists are not effective in watchdog journalism. One (1) male and seven (7) females chose to tick on the answer box OTHERS.

6)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	2	6	8
No	20	60	80
Others	0	2	2

Table 5: Freedom of speech to expose political corruption

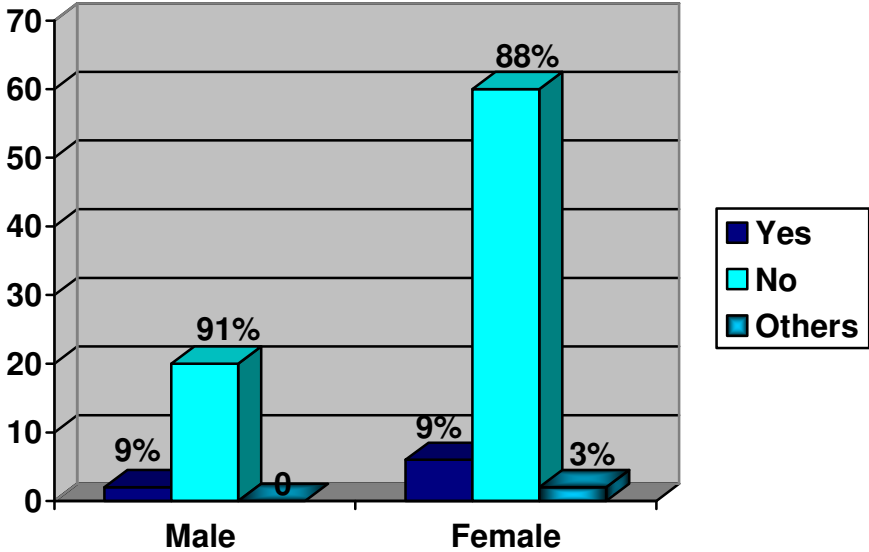


Figure 5: Freedom of speech to expose political corruption

Majority of undergraduates have the opinion that there is no freedom of speech to expose political corruption. It is clearly shown in the chart above that twenty (20) males (91%) and sixty (60) females (88%) felt that there is no freedom of speech to expose political corruption. Only two (2) males (9%) and six (6) females (9%) think that there is freedom to expose political corruption. While two (2) females (3%) had other opinions such as the press only enjoy partial freedom.

7)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	12	29	21
No	8	37	45
Others	2	2	4

Table 6: Malaysians preparedness for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption

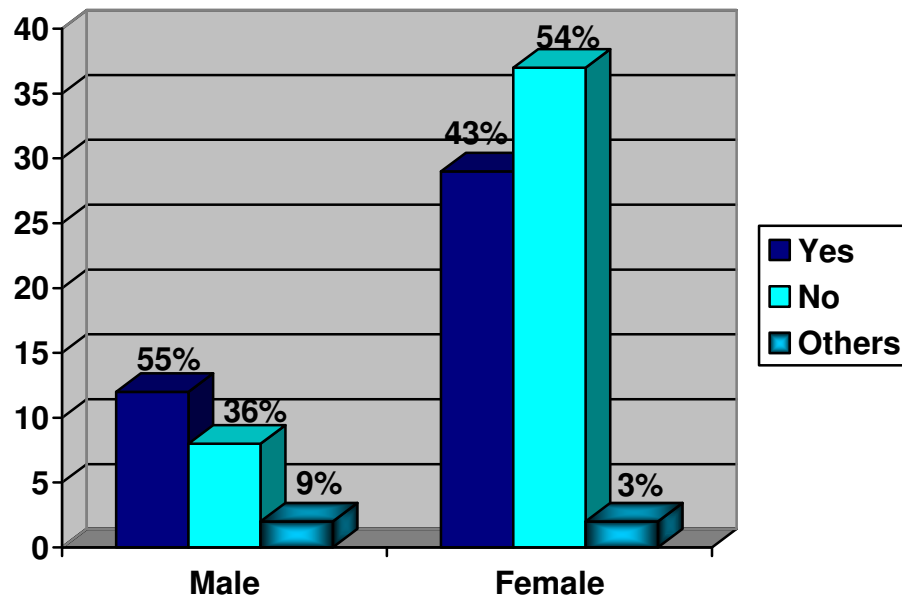


Figure 6: Malaysians preparedness for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption

It is clearly shown in the chart above that twelve (12) males (15%) felt that Malaysians are prepared for more press freedom in order to allow more exposure on political corruption. Only twenty nine (29) females (43%) share the same opinion while a majority of thirty seven (37) females (54%) think that Malaysians are still not prepared for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption. Additionally only eight (8) males (36%) felt that Malaysians are still unprepared for more freedom of speech. Two (2) males (9%) and two (2) females (3%) have other opinions.

8)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Laws & regulations	17	53	70
Self censorship	0	10	10
Journalistic ethics	1	3	4
Others	4	2	6

Table 7: Main challenge of journalist in reporting political corruption

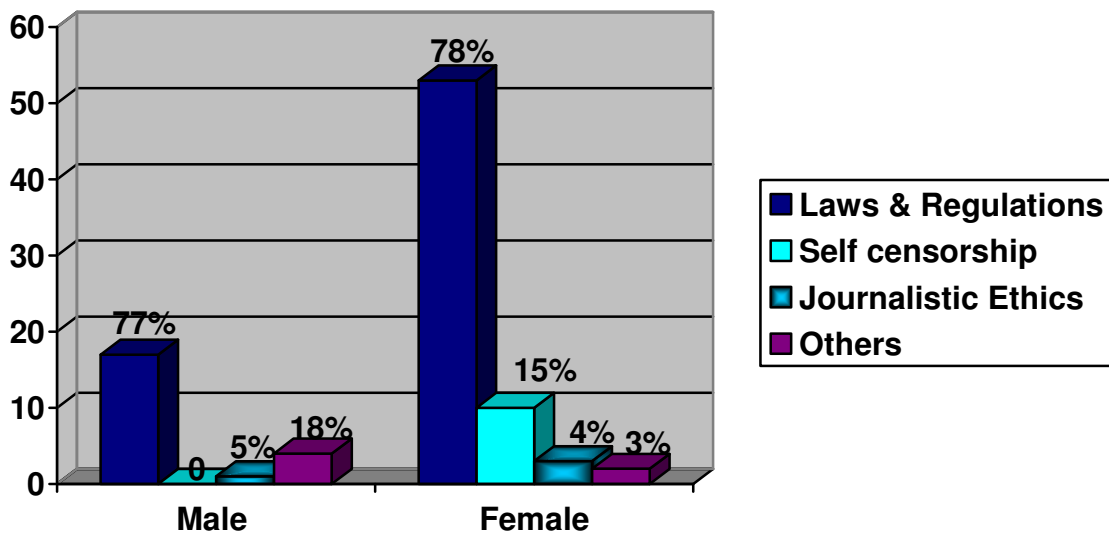


Figure 7: Main challenge of journalist in reporting political corruption

The main challenge of journalists in reporting political corruption would be the laws and regulations in which seventeen (17) males (77%) fifty three (53) females (78%) felt that laws and regulations are the main challenge of journalists in reporting political corruption. No male respondents felt that self censorship is an obstacle for journalists in reporting political corruption while ten (10) females (15%) think otherwise. One (1) male (5%) and three (3) females (4%) feel that journalists are challenged by their journalistic ethics. Conversely four (4) males (18%) and two (2) females (3%) felt that there are other challenges such as media ownership restricting journalists to report political corruption.

9)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	21	62	83
No	1	6	7

Table 8: Laws and regulations affecting effectiveness of watchdog journalism

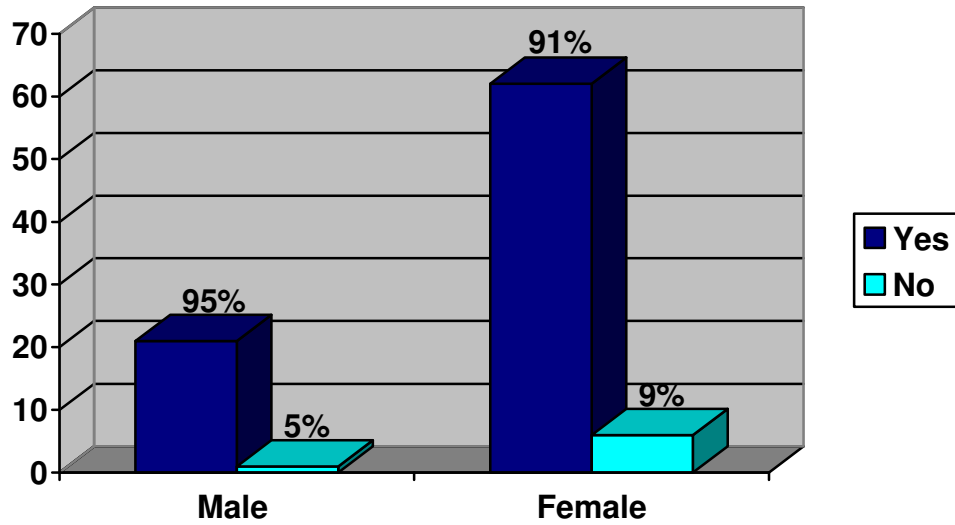


Figure 8: Laws and regulations affecting effectiveness of watchdog journalism

Twenty one (21) males (95%) sixty two (62) females (91%) that laws and regulations are affecting the effectiveness of watchdog journalism. While one (1) male (5%) and six (6) females (9%) felt that laws and regulations do not affect the effectiveness of watchdog journalism.

10)

Category	Male	Female	Total
High	21	57	83
Low	0	5	5
Others	1	6	7

Table 9: Perception on the level of political corruption in Malaysia

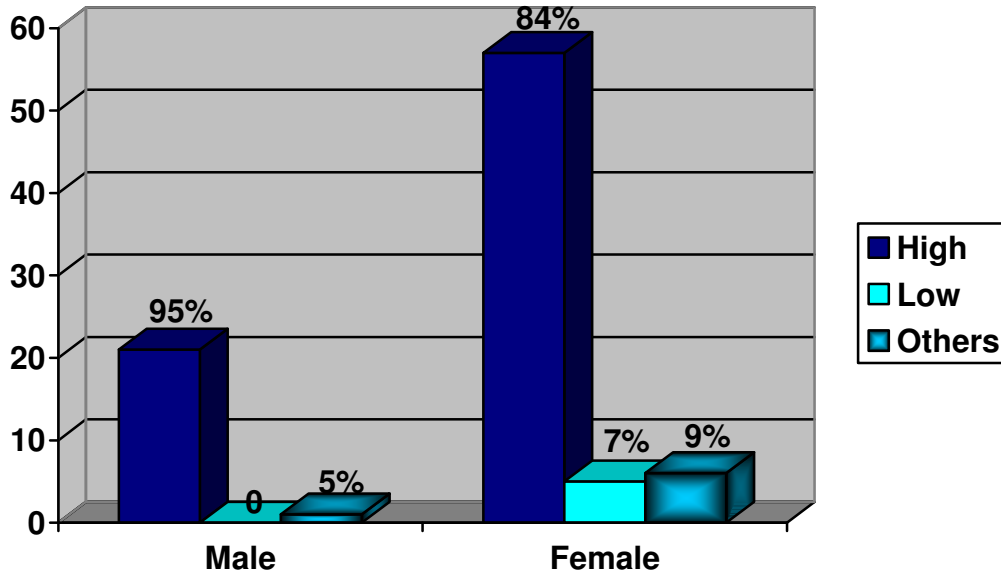


Figure 9: Perception on the level of political corruption in Malaysia

Most of the undergraduates in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) have the perception that the level of political corruption is high in Malaysia. An overall of twenty one (21) males (95%) and fifty seven (57) females (84%) have the perception that political corruption is high in Malaysia. While no male and five (5) females (7%) respondents felt that political corruption is low. One (1) male (5%) and six (6) females (9%) have other answers such as the political corruption is still at an acceptable level.

Part III – Social Responsibility of a Journalist

13)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	4	20	24
No	15	44	59
Others	3	4	7

Table: 10 Journalist as effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia

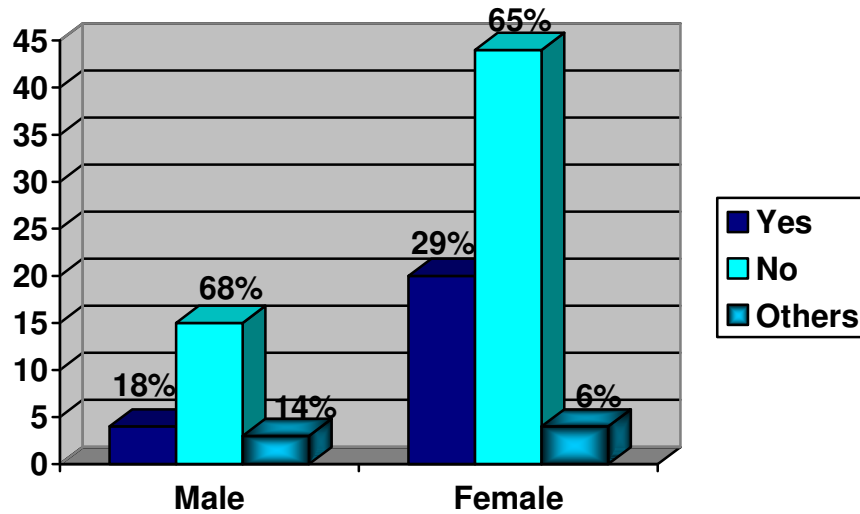


Table: 10 Journalist as effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia

A total four (4) males (18%) and twenty (20) females (29%) felt that journalists are effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia. On the contrary fifteen (15) males (68%) and forty four (44) females (65%) think that journalists are not effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia. Three (3) males (14%) and four (4) other females (6%) think that the effectiveness of journalist in curbing political corruption depends on the situation.

14)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Agree	5	37	42
Disagree	5	9	14
Not sure	12	22	34

Table 11: Social responsibility of the Malaysian press

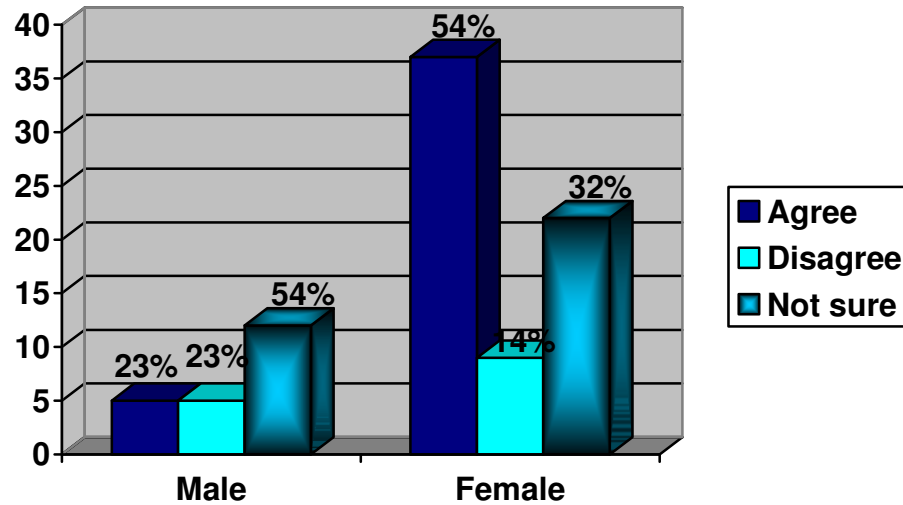


Figure 11: Social responsibility of the Malaysian press

The bar graph above shows five (5) males (23%) and thirty seven (37) females (54%) felt that the Malaysian press is socially responsible to the people. On the contrary five (5) males (23%) and nine (9) females (14%) agree to this statement. While twelve (12) other males (54%) and twenty (22) females (32%) are uncertain whether the Malaysian press is socially responsible to the people.

15)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	3	20	23
No	19	46	65
Others	0	2	2

Table 12: News of political corruption receive enough media attention

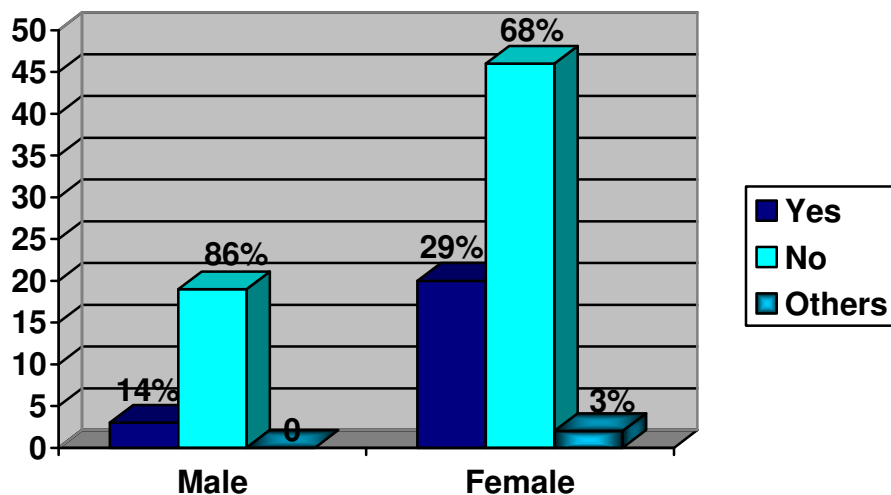


Figure 12: News of political corruption receive enough media attention

It is clearly shown in the chart above that there are three (3) males (14%) and twenty (20) females (29%) who felt that news on political corruption is receiving enough media attention. On the other hand, nineteen (19) males (86%) and forty six (46) females (68%) think that news on political corruption receive insufficient media attention. Only two (2) females (3%) had other opinions.

16)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Excellent	0	1	1
Good	1	1	2
Fair	10	38	48
Poor	10	24	34
Others	1	4	5

Table 13: How well do Malaysian journalists fair in reporting political corruption

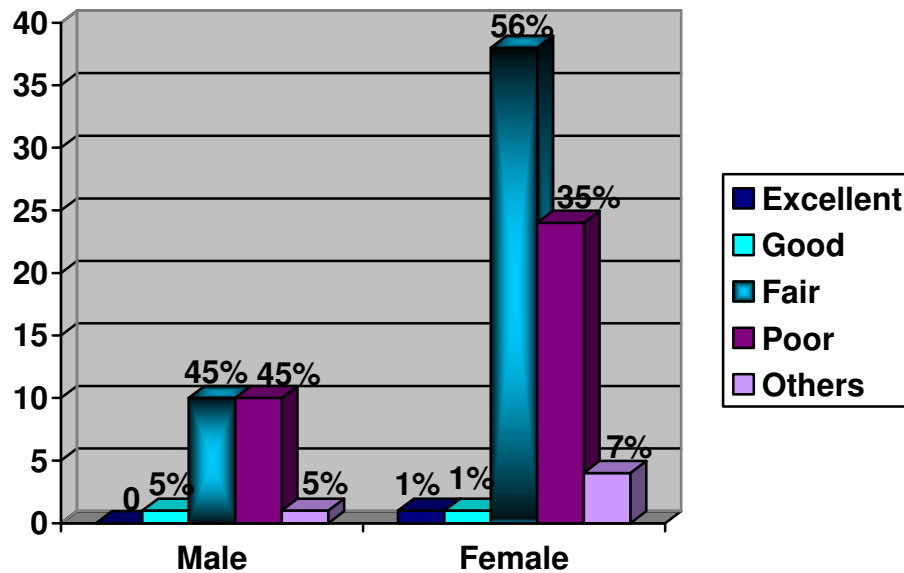


Figure 13: How well do Malaysian journalists fair in reporting political corruption

Only one (1) female (1%) felt that Malaysian journalists are excellent in reporting political corruption. Additionally a male (5%) and a female (1%) respondent think that Malaysian journalists are good in reporting political corruption. A total of ten (10) males (45%) and thirty eight (38) females (56%) felt that Malaysian journalists are only at the average (fair) level when reporting on political corruption. Ten (10) males (45%) and twenty four (24) females (35%) think that Malaysian journalists are poor covering news regarding political corruption. One (1) male (5%) and four (4) females (7%) had other perceptions.

Part IV – Agenda setting of the press

17)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	1	6	7
No	20	61	81
Others	1	1	2

Table 14: Journalist being bias in reporting cases of political corruption

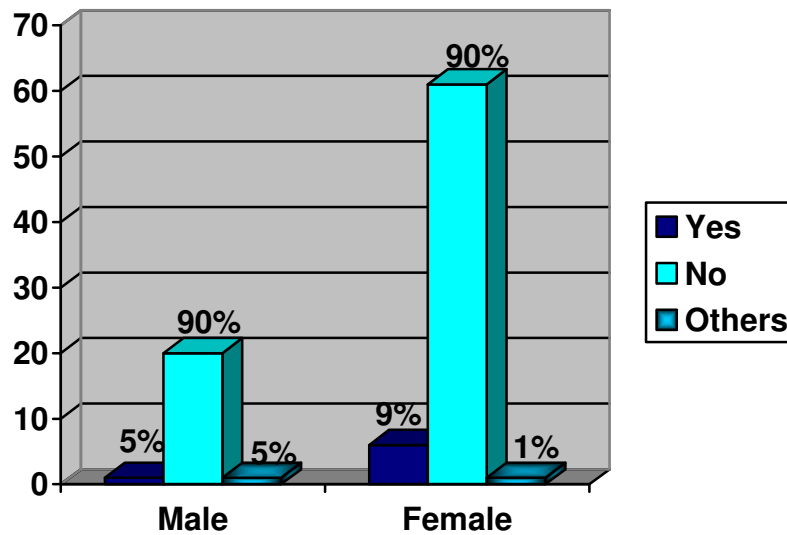


Figure 14: Journalist being bias in reporting cases of political corruption

It is shown in the chart above that one (1) male (5%) and six (6) females (9%) think that journalist should be bias in reporting cases of political corruption. While a majority of twenty (20) males (90%) and sixty one (61) females (90%) felt that journalist should not be bias while reporting news on political corruption. A male (5%) and a female (1%) ticked OTHERS in the answer box.

18)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	16	48	64
No	3	17	20
Others	3	3	6

Table 15: News on political corruption in newspapers had been framed by the media

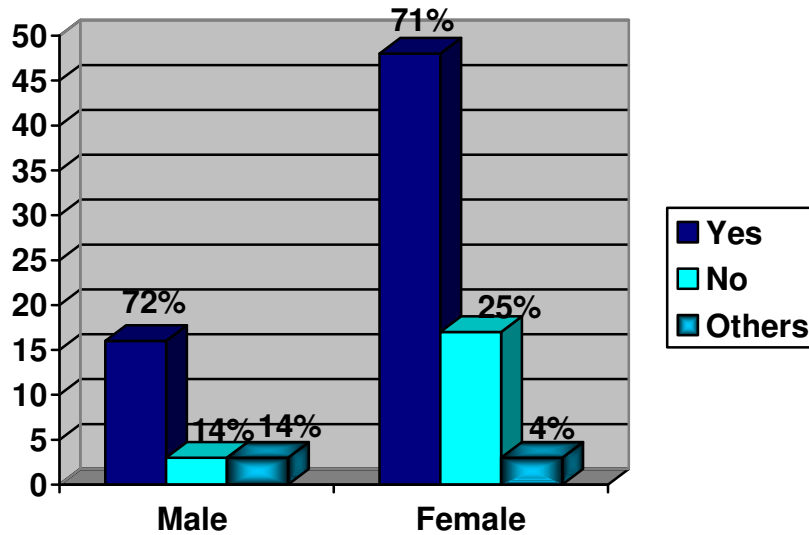


Figure 15: News on political corruption in newspapers had been framed by the media

The bar chart above indicates that sixteen (16) males (72%) and forty eight (48) females (71%) have the idea that news on political corruption in newspapers are framed by the media. While three (3) males (14%) and (17) females (25%) felt that news on political corruption are not framed by the media. Three (3) males (14%) and three (3) females (4%) had other perceptions.

19)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	14	48	62
No	6	15	21
Others	2	5	7

Table 16: Political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media

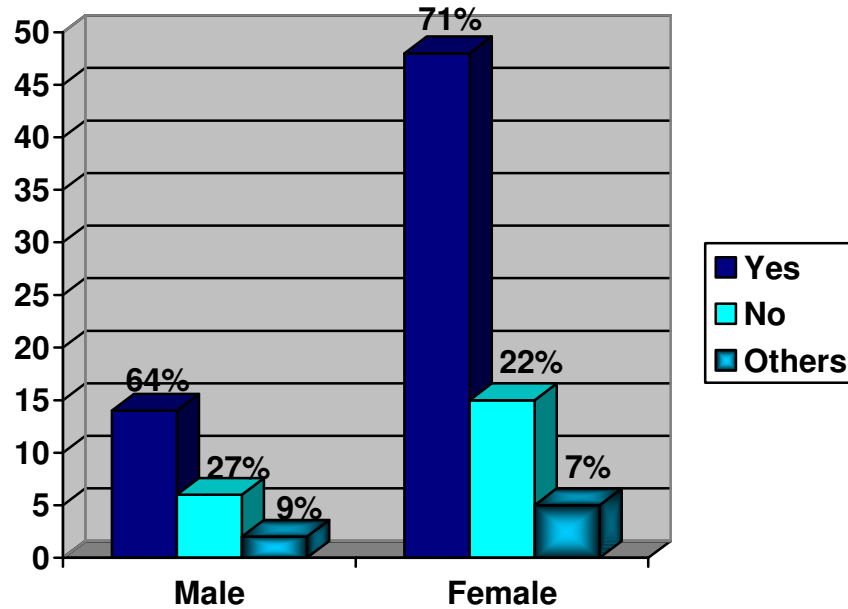


Figure 16: Political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media

A total of fourteen (14) males (64%) and forty eight (48) females (71%) said that political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media. Only six (6) males (27%) and fifteen (15) females (22%) think that the mainstream media is giving enough attention to the mainstream newspapers. Two (2) males (9%) and five (5) females (7%) had other answers such as the attention given to the political corruption case depends on the seriousness of the case.

20)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	11	37	48
No	8	30	38
Others	3	1	4

Table 17: Malaysian press making us to believe that political corruption is not common in the country.

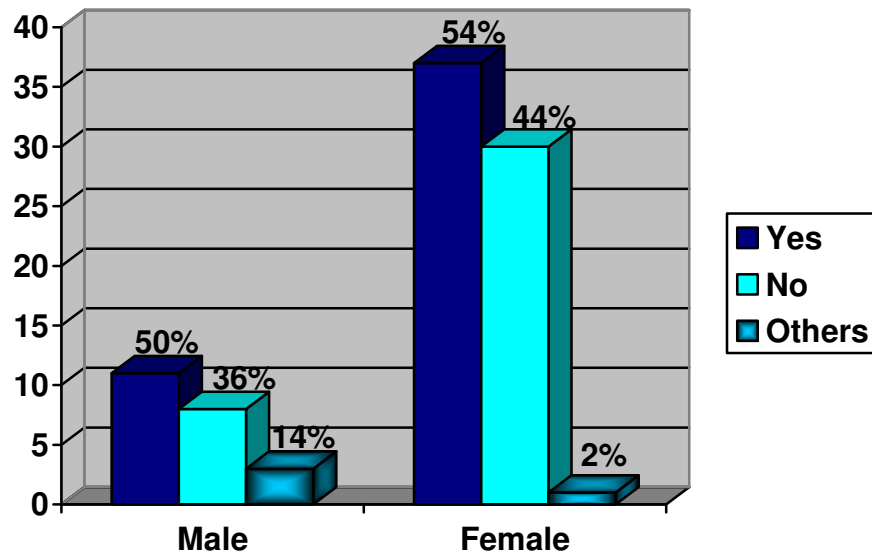


Figure 17: Malaysian press making us to believe that political corruption is not common in the country.

The bar chart above shows that eleven (11) males (50%) and thirty seven (37) females (54%) have the perception that the Malaysian press is making us believe that political corruption is not common in this country. Conversely eight (8) males (36%) and thirty (30) females (44%) disagree to this statement. While three (3) males (14%) and a female (2%) felt that there are other answers.

3.3 Private Sector

Part I – General

1)

Age	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	55 & Above
Male	1	1	2	3	4	3
Female	2	0	2	0	1	1
Total	3	1	4	3	5	4

Table 1: Age

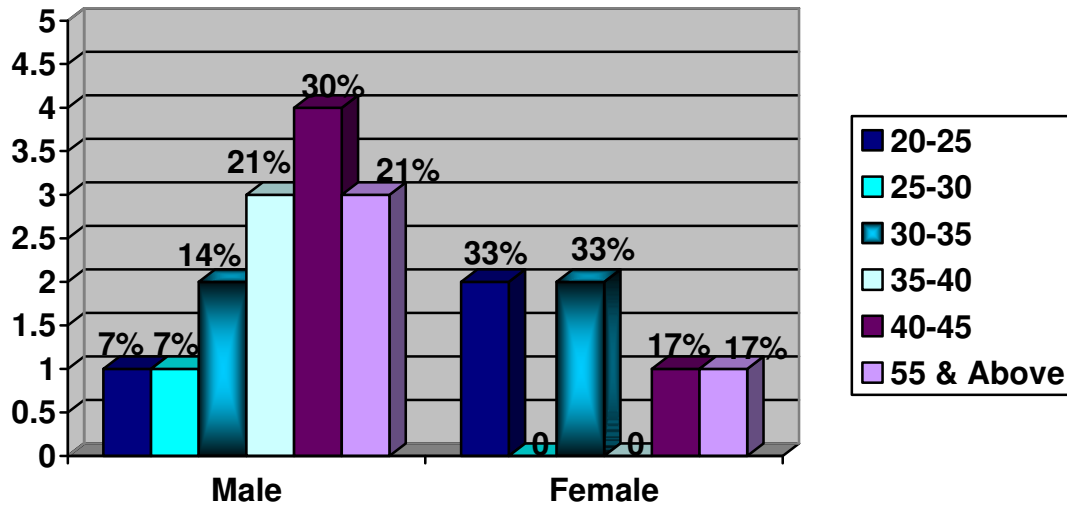


Figure 1: Age

The bar chart above shows the categories of age of the respondents. One (1) male (7%) and two (2) female (33%) are within the age group of 20-25 years. Only one (1) male (7%) represents the age group of 25-30 years. In addition to that two (2) males (14%) and two (2) female (33%) are within the age of 30-35 years and only three (3) males (21%) represent the age group of 35-40 years. Four (4) males (30%) and a female (17%) are within 40 -55 years of age. While three (3) males (21%) and a female (17%) are at the age of fifty five (55) and above.

2)

Sex	Male	Female	Total
	14	6	20

Table 2: Sex

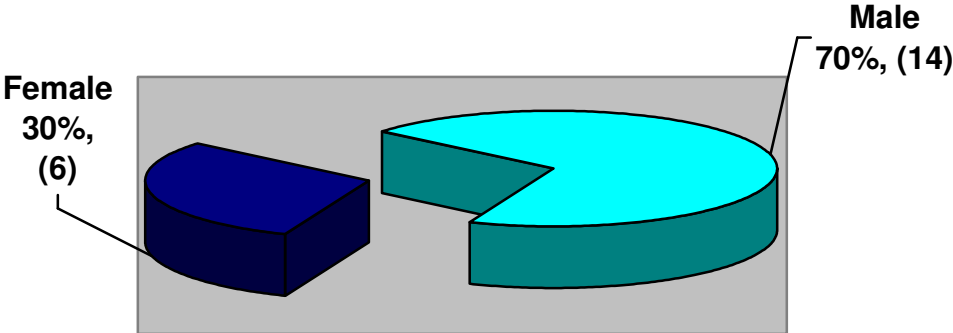


Figure 2: Sex

A high percentage of respondents of working in the private sector are males 70 % (14) while only 30 % are females (6).

3)

Education Level	Male	Female	Total
Graduate	5	4	9
Post graduate	6	2	8
Others	3	0	3

Table 3: Education

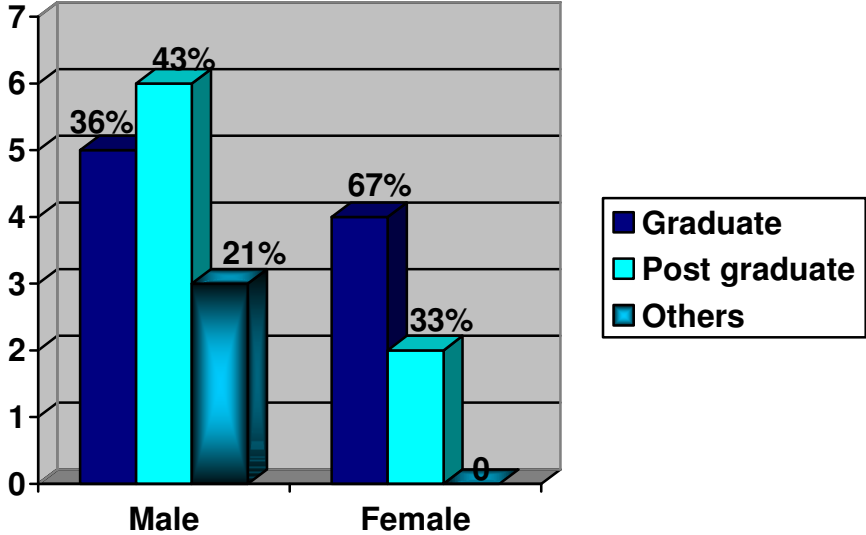


Table 3: Education

Five (5) males (36%) and four (4) females (67%) working in the private sector are graduates. Additionally six (6) males (43%) and two (2) females (33%) have obtained or are currently pursuing their postgraduate degrees. Three males (3) respondents (21%) have other education levels.

4)

Job Sector	Male	Female	Total
Private Sector	14	6	20

Table 4: Job Sector

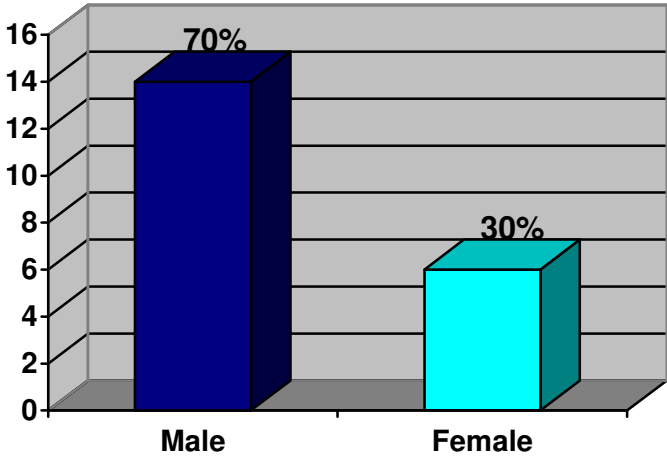


Figure 4: Job Sector

A majority of fourteen (14) males (70%) and only six (6) females (30%) represent the total number of twenty (20) respondents of the private sector.

Part II – General

5)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	8	4	12
No	6	1	7
Others	0	1	1

Table 5: Effectiveness of journalists as watchdogs to society

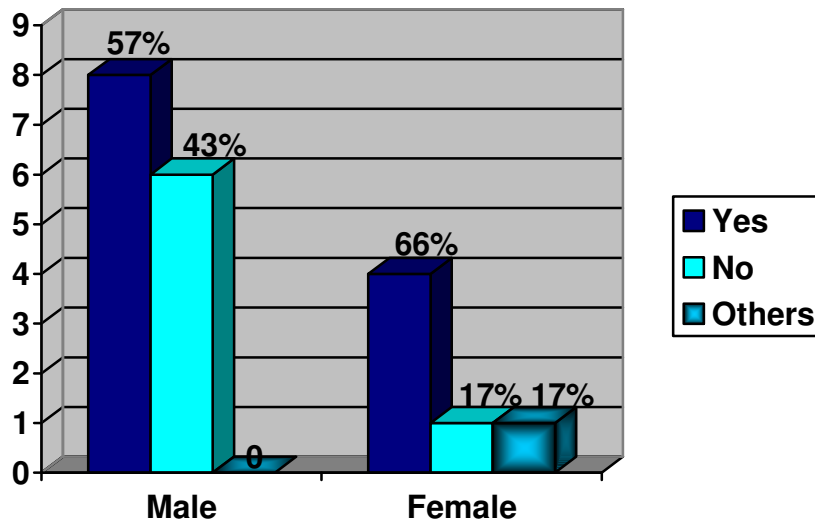


Table 5: Effectiveness of journalists as watchdogs to society

It is clearly shown in the bar chart above that eight (8) males (57%) and four (4) (66%) females have the perception that journalists are effective watchdogs of the society. While six (6) males (43%) and a (1) female (17%) think that journalists are not effective watchdogs of the society. Only one female (17%) ticked OTHERS in the answer box.

6)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	3	1	4
No	9	5	14
Others	2	0	2

Table 6: Freedom of speech to expose political corruption

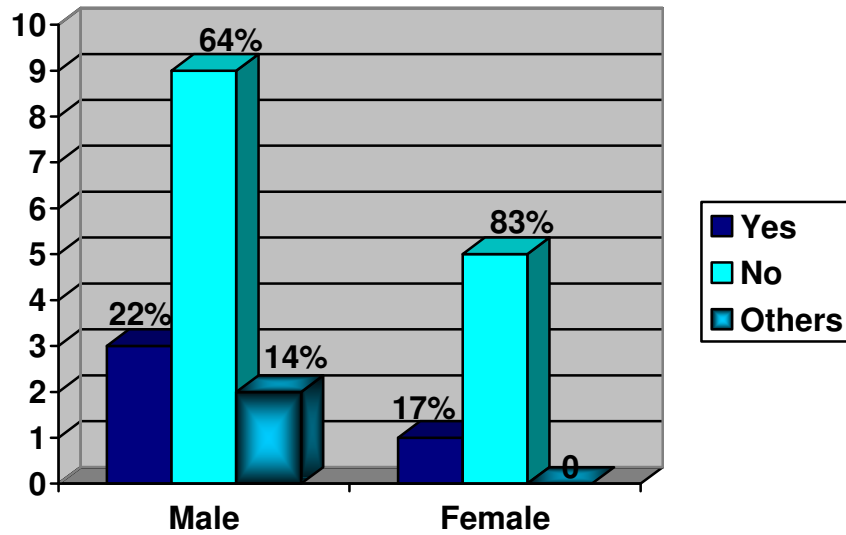


Figure 6: Freedom of speech to expose political corruption

A majority of nine (9) males (64%) and five (5) females (83%) felt that there is no freedom of speech to expose political corruption. On the contrary three (3) males (22%) and one (1) female (17%) believe that there is freedom of speech to expose political corruption. Two (2) males (14%) had other perceptions.

7)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	9	3	12
No	5	1	6
Others	0	2	2

Table 7: Malaysians preparedness for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption

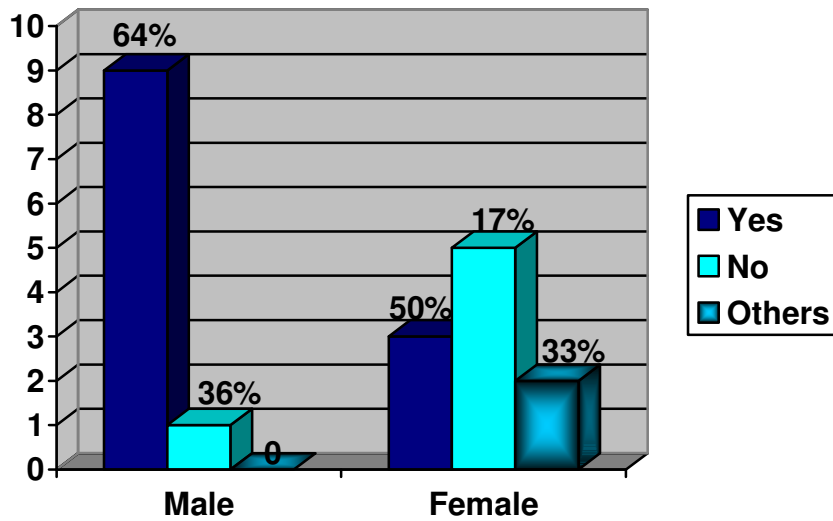


Figure 7: Malaysians preparedness for more press freedom to allow more exposure on political corruption

A total of nine (9) males (64%) and three (3) females (50%) think that Malaysians are prepared for more press freedom that will allow more exposure on political corruption. Five (5) males (36%) and a female (17%) think that Malaysians are still not prepared for more press freedom that will enable more exposure on political corruption. Only two (2) females (33%) are not sure.

8)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Laws & regulations	8	5	13
Journalistic ethics	3	0	3
Others	3	1	4

Table 8: Main challenge of journalists in reporting political corruption

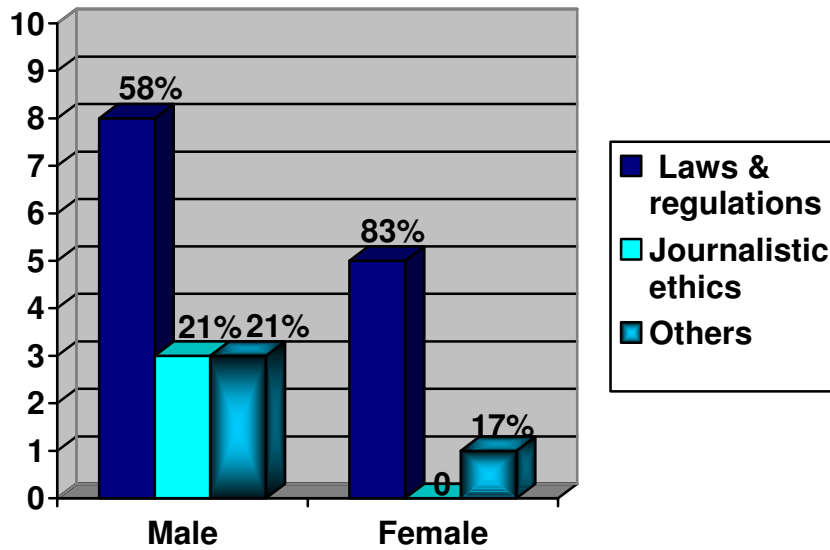


Figure 8: Main challenge of journalists in reporting political corruption

The above chart clearly shows that a majority of eight (8) males (58%) and five (5) females (83%) have the idea that laws and regulations are the main challenges of journalists in reporting political corruption. Only three (3) males (21%) think other wise. Conversely three (3) males (21%) and a female (17%) think that there are other obstacles for journalists to report on political corruption such as media ownership.

9)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	10	4	14
No	4	2	6

Table 9: Laws and regulations affecting effectiveness of watchdog journalism

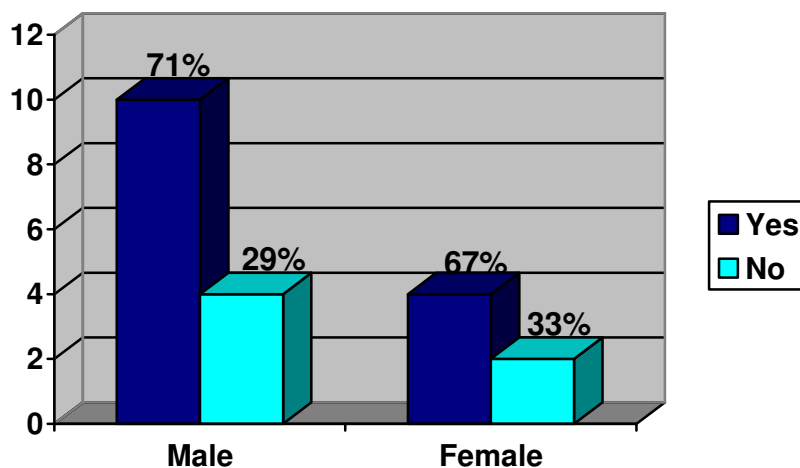


Figure 9: Laws and regulations affecting effectiveness of watchdog journalism

A total of ten (10) males (71%) and four (4) females (67%) have the perception that laws and regulations are affecting the effectiveness of watchdog journalism. While four (4) males (29%) and two (2) females (33%) felt that laws and regulations do not bring any impact to the effectiveness of watchdog journalism

10)

Category	Male	Female	Total
High	9	4	13
Low	1	0	1
Others	4	2	6

Table 10: Perception on the level of political corruption in Malaysia

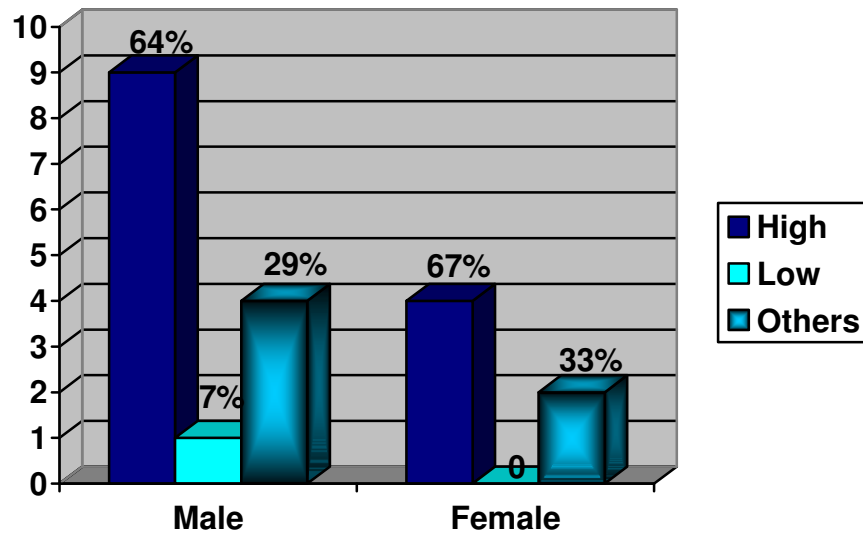


Figure 10: Perception on the level of political corruption in Malaysia

Most of the respondents from the private sector have the perception that political corruption in the country is high. This is clearly indicated in the bar chart where nine (9) males (64%) and four (4) females (67%) choose the answer HIGH in the answer box and only one (1) male (7%) respondent felt that the level of political corruption is low in the country. Four (4) males (29%) and two (2) females (33%) ticked OTHERS in the answer box.

Part III – Social responsibility

13)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	8	3	11
No	6	1	7
Others	0	2	2

Table 11: Journalist as effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia

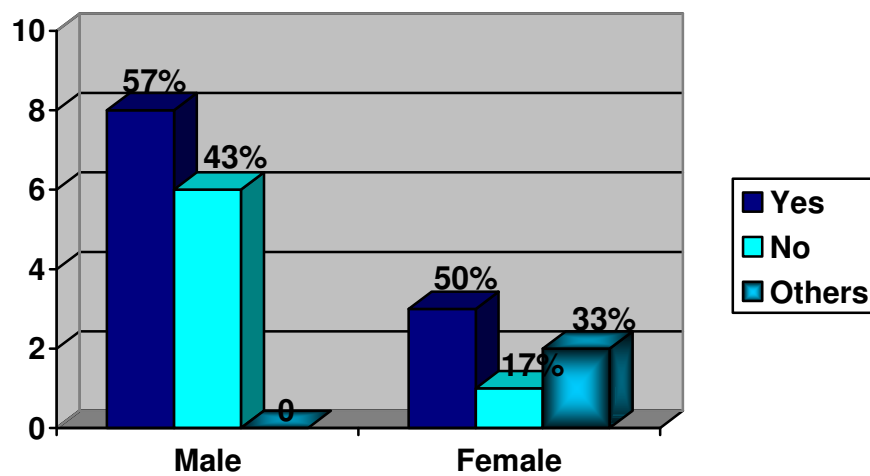


Figure 11: Journalist as effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia

A total of eight (8) males (57%) and three (3) females (50%) felt that journalists are effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia. Six (6) males (43%) and a female (17%) think that journalists are not effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption in Malaysia. Two (2) females (33%) have other opinions.

14)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Agree	10	1	11
Disagree	1	0	1
Not sure	1	5	6
Others	2	0	2

Table 12: Social responsibility of the Malaysian press

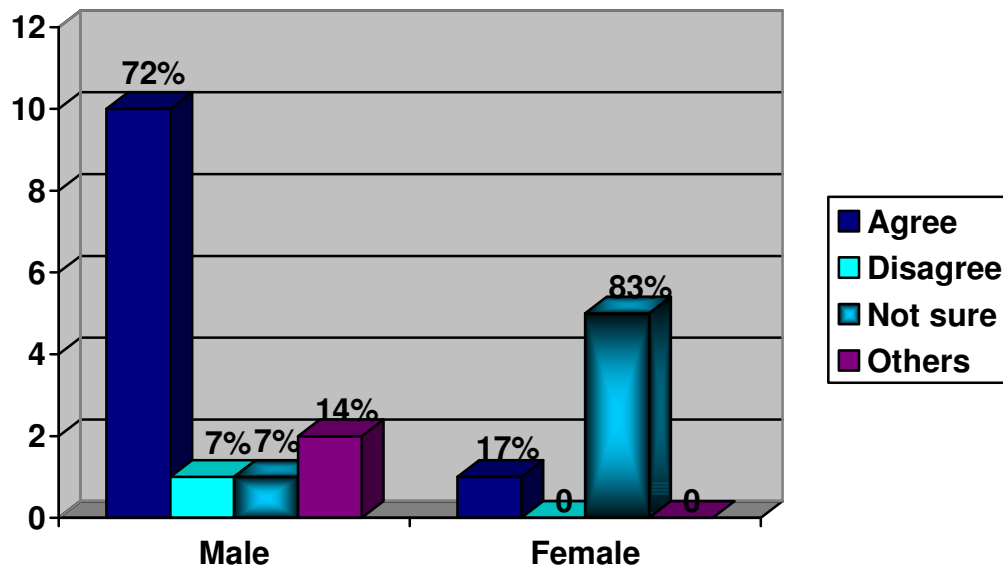


Figure 12: Social responsibility of the Malaysian press

A majority of ten (10) males (72%) and a female (17%) think agree that the Malaysian press should be socially responsible to the people. On the contrary only one (1) male respondent (7%) disagree to this statement. One (1) male (7%) and five (5) females (83%) are not sure and only two (2) males (14%) ticked OTHERS in the answer box.

15)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	5	4	9
No	7	2	9
Others	2	0	2

Table 13: News of political corruption receives enough media attention

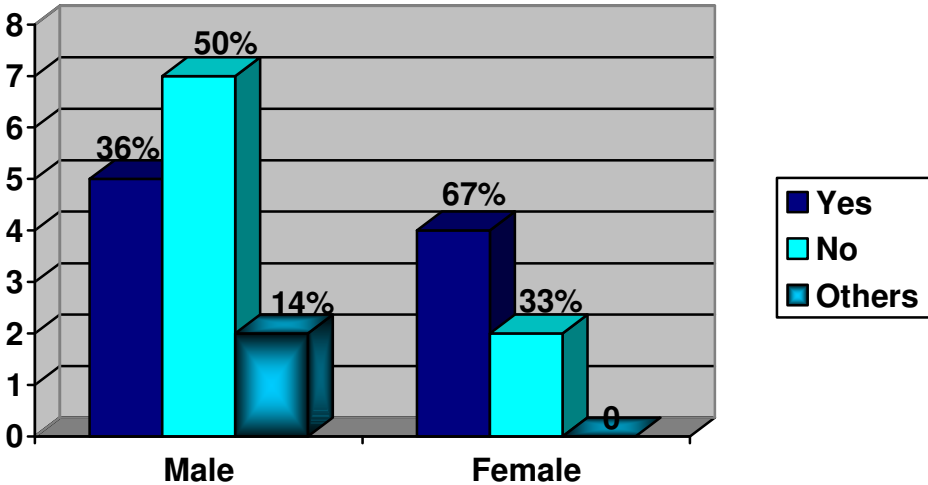


Figure 13: News of political corruption receives enough media attention

The chart above shows five (5) males (36%) and four (4) females (67%) felt that news of political corruption receives enough media attention. On the other hand, seven (7) males (50%) and two (2) females (33%) think that news of political corruption receives enough media attention. Only two (2) males (14%) chose to answer OTHERS in the answer box.

16)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Excellent	0	1	1
Good	4	1	5
Fair	5	4	9
Poor	4	0	4
Others	1	0	1

Table 14: How well Malaysian journalists fair in reporting political corruption

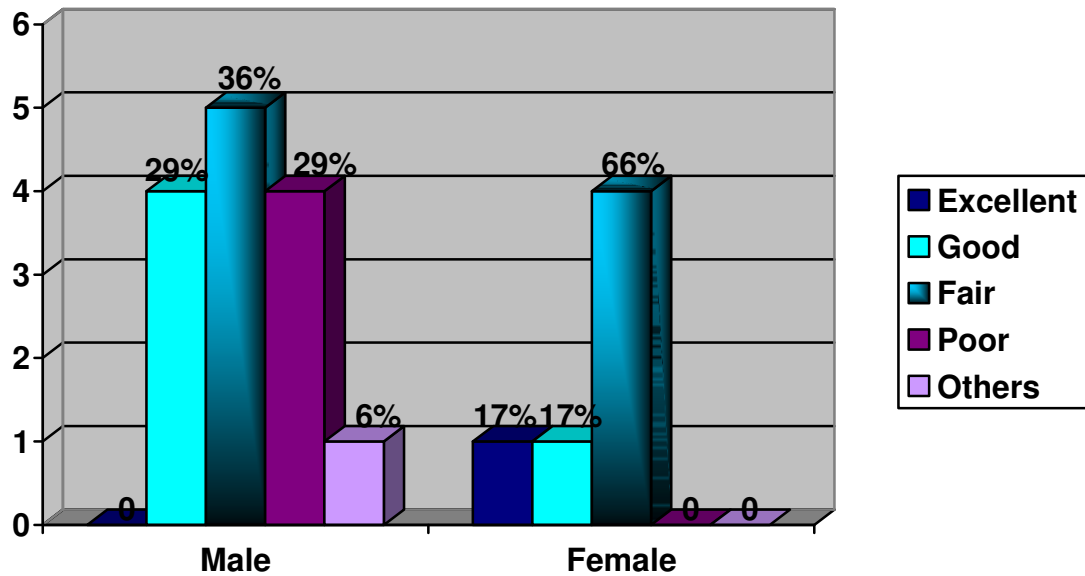


Figure 14: How well Malaysian journalists fair in reporting political corruption

Only one female (17%) consider Malaysian journalists are excellent in reporting political corruption. Four (4) males (29%) and a female (17%) think that Malaysian journalists are good in reporting political corruption but a high number of respondents five (5) male (36%) and four (4) females (66%) consider the Malaysian journalists are only average (fair) when reporting on cases of political corruption. only one male (6%) ticked OTHERS in the answer box.

Part IV – Agenda Setting of the Press

17)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	3	1	5
No	10	4	13
Others	1	1	2

Table 15: Journalist being bias in reporting cases of political corruption

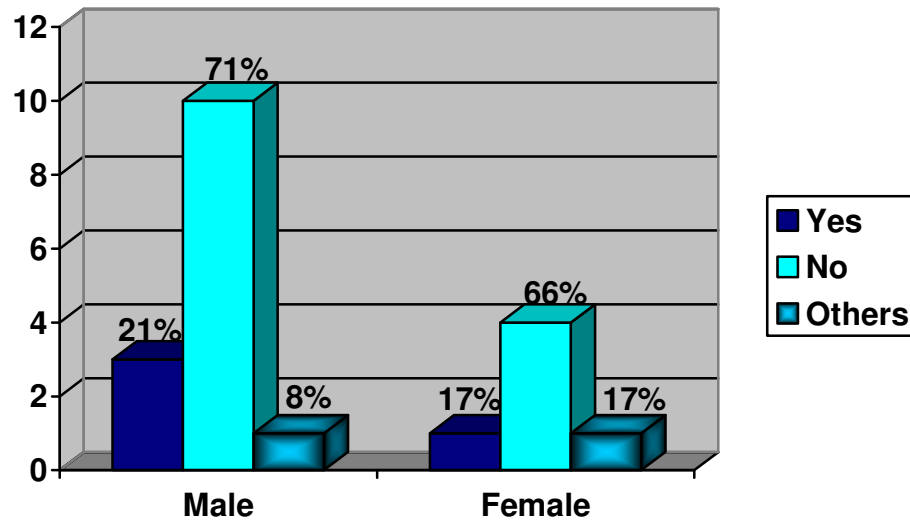


Figure 15: Journalist being bias in reporting cases of political corruption

A total of three (3) males (21%) and a female (17%) felt that journalists should be bias in reporting political corruption. A high number of respondents, ten (10) males (71%) and four (4) females (66%) felt that journalist should not be bias when reporting cases of political corruption. A male (8%) and a female (17%) chose to answer OTHERS.

18)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	10	4	14
No	3	1	4
Others	1	1	2

Table 16: News on political corruption in newspapers had been framed by the media

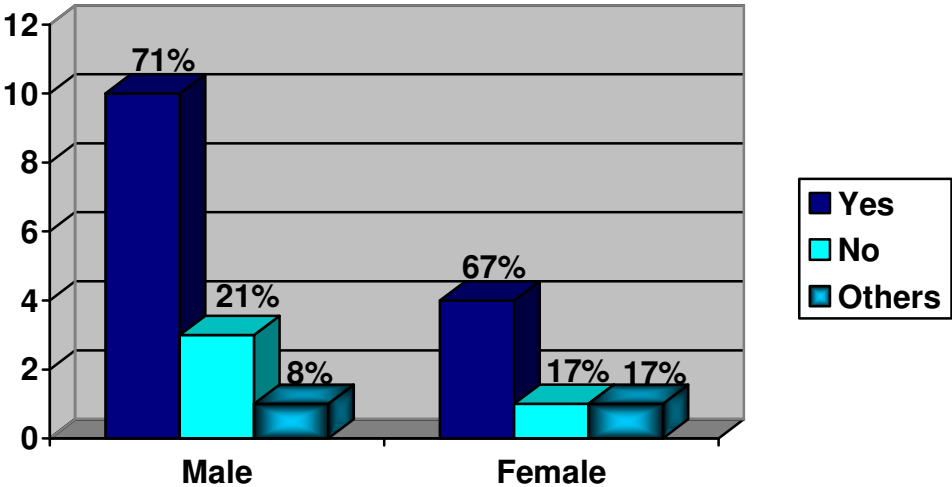


Figure 16: News on political corruption in newspapers had been framed by the media

The above chart shows that ten (10) males (71%) and four (4) females (67%) consider news of political corruption in newspapers have been framed by the media. Only three (3) males (21%) and a female (17%) disagree to this statement. A male (8%) and a female (17%) respondent chose the answer OTHERS

19)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	11	6	17
No	1	0	1
Others	2	0	2

Table 17: Political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media

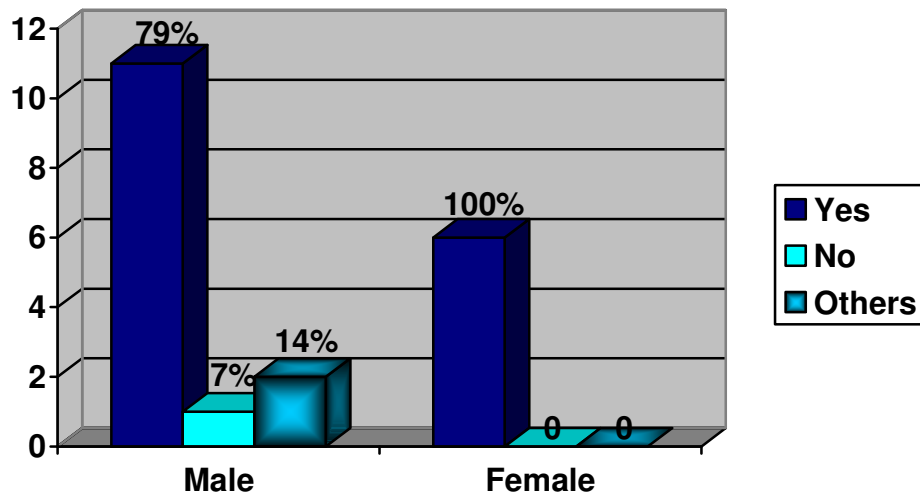


Figure 17: Political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media

A majority of eleven (11) males (79%) and six (6) females (100%) think that political corruption gets little attention by the mainstream media and only one (1) male (7%) respondent felt that political corruption receive enough media attention in mainstream newspapers. Two (2) male (14%) respondents ticked OTHERS in the answer box.

20)

Category	Male	Female	Total
Yes	7	5	12
No	3	0	3
Others	4	1	5

Table 18: Malaysian press making us to believe that political corruption is not common in the country

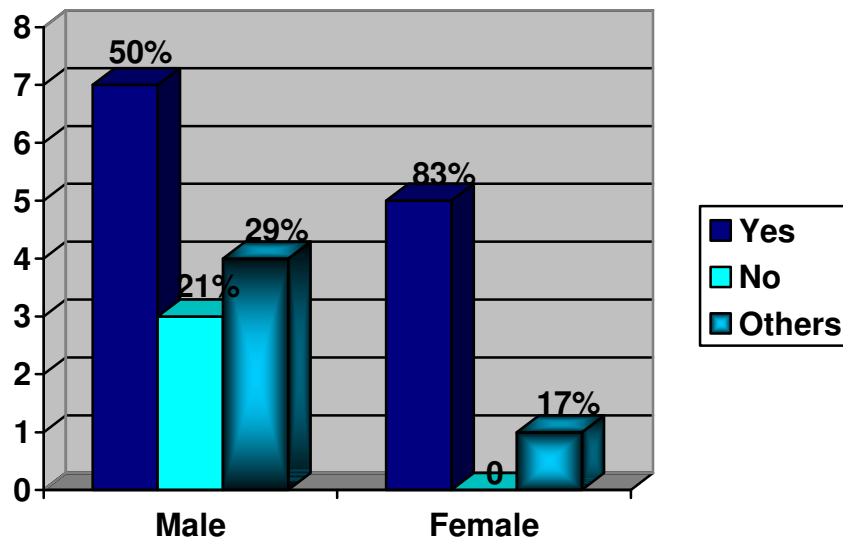


Figure 18: Malaysian press making us to believe that political corruption is not common in the country

The chart above clearly shows that seven (7) males (50%) and five (5) females (83%) think that the Malaysian press is making us believe that political corruption is not common in the country. On the contrary only three (3) males (21%) think that the press is not doing so. While four (4) males (29%) and a female (17%) had other perceptions.

Chapter 4

Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Discussion of findings

Generally out of 135 respondents surveyed 85 % of the respondents perceive political corruption to be rampant in the country while only 20 % of the respondents felt that the level of political corruption is low. This may be as a result of priority given to news on political corruption in the Malaysian media.

Furthermore the findings of the survey clearly shows that 77 % undergraduates, 88 % of the public sector and 65 % of the private sector believe that laws and regulations are the main obstacles of journalists to be effective watchdogs of the society. Many agree that the Internal Security Act (ISA) is one of the main factors that is effecting the efficiency of journalist in reporting political corruption as the act under the power of the Home Minister is able to determine whether an individual should be arrested because his or her acts may be judged by the police and Home Ministry as a threat to the country or to the government.

Thus, it is only logical that the media is often cautious when reporting political corruption as they are afraid that their news reporting would be taken as a threat to certain government officials. It is even more difficult for mainstream newspapers such as *The Star* and *Utusan Malaysia* as they are owned by investment arms of political parties. Therefore, they usually take a neutral stand when reporting political corruptions. Relating this to one of the questions posted, many respondents felt that the press should be granted more freedom of speech to be effective watchdogs of the society.

This is rationalised according to Gillian Doyle (2002, 19) in which he said that whenever regulatory measures are in place, the opportunities for media owners to emphasize an indirect influence over the content and the agenda of products they own seem complete as to defy any guarantee of separation.

There also seems to be a conformity that the role of the media in society is to inform the public of what it needs as well as serve the public interest. Therefore the press has the power to determine the focus and tone of public discussion and whatever is widely reported would become news and sets the agenda for public discussion and further investigation and reporting.

This could be linked to the case of Datuk Khir Toyo who sparked a controversy when he was charged with land fraud and bribery. This then led to the exposure of another corrupt politician which was exposed in the heat of the Lenggang by elections in Negeri Sembilan. This would consequently be the subject of discussion as people question the transparency and capability of our ruling party but it may also be an advantage to the ruling party as this shows that the government is transparent and does not accept corrupt politicians to rule the people.

Consequently these issues would be important to the people's lives and relevant to their personal and political decisions as the quality of public discussions becomes important and the goal of an informed public is well preserved.

Additionally some felt that there should be less punitive laws and more matured citizens and journalists. While others argued that it is difficult to improve journalism in Malaysia as news reported is often filtered and censored, others even suggested that the only way to improve is that journalists should be given the right and freedom to voice out based on human rights that is practised internationally.

Respondents from the public sector and undergraduate share the perception that journalists are not effective watchdogs in curbing political corruption. On the contrary most of the respondents from the private sector felt that journalists are effective in curbing corruption.

The reason behind this would be that respondents from the public sector and undergraduates have the perception that the occasional highlights on government officials embroiled in this criminal activity is not sufficient to fully curb it while the respondents of the private sector looked at it from a more positive point of view probably because they felt that despite only seeing political corruption being highlighted occasionally it is the first step to slowly but effectively eradicate corruption in Malaysia.

A high percentage of respondents agreed that the Malaysian press is socially responsible to the people but many felt that news on political corruption is not receiving enough media attention. This is partly caused by the fact that there is a restriction of freedom of speech as Gauthier, 1999 argued that freedom carries related obligations and the press which enjoys a privileged position under government is obligated to be responsible to the society for carrying out certain essential functions of mass communication in the modern society.

Additionally Tun Mahatir Mohamad during his tenure as the Prime Minister of Malaysia asserted that Malaysia believes in press freedom but as other freedom and right must be with responsibility. He also added that Malaysians can only hope for a more responsible Malaysian media but then we should not ignore the need of supervision of this responsibility.

The mainstream media is at times bias in reporting political corruptions because there are governed by the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984 that removes whatever minor safeguards that exist in checking the executive authority. It also gives absolute power upon the minister concerned whatever his virtues as individual.

There should be no doubt that he will be in a position to control the most fundamental of all freedoms- freedom of expression. Moreover the act gives him the sort of dictatorial image that he may not desire or deserves. (Chandra Muzaffar, 1986:2)

In a nutshell with restricted media freedom and news that is constantly being frame by the media and some say the government it is only logical that many agree that the Malaysian press is making us believe that political corruption is not common in the country.

Despite the laws that impede the freedom of our press it crucial remember that they are still socially responsible to disseminate information relevant our concerns and although the press is not the only forum and we an still use other methods of expression such as public gathering and demonstration, the press is still able to effectively exercise this right on our behalf through its space, which is necessary in a democracy.

It is also important to have a free press as the press not only plays a watchdog role but also represents and speaks on behalf of all sections of our society, particularly the voiceless and it makes democracy a truly representative regime.

This is proven when *The Star* reported that former Menteri Besar of Selangor of accepting two land lots for RM3.5mil when the said lots were bought for RM6.5mil and also paying for a holiday to Disneyland for his family member and mind. This was followed by the exposure of Barisan's Nasional's (BN) assemblyman Mustafa Salim who was found guilty of accepting RM 2,000 bribe from a contractor during the by elections in Negeri Sembilan.

Despite knowing the fact this may influence the support and trust of the people towards our ruling party (BN), the press have the responsibility of making these cases and many others known to the people. This can be supported by H. Goodwin's, (1983) statement in which he stated that the public has a legal right to know what its government is doing and the press is the representative of the public finding that out. While in 1986, R. Barney argued that the right to know is a basic element of a "participatory society".

Furthermore the latter suggested that in order for intelligent social decisions to be made sufficient information should be given to our society to produce greater awareness of alternatives in any decision making opportunity. Thus the media should be more transparent in highlighting cases of political corruption to ensure that the people are aware able to judge our ruling government and decide whether they are fit to rule our country.

Through the survey it is clear that political corruption will slow our country development and delays the country from achieving Vision 2020. These phenomena would be due to the fact that the scarce resources of the country is being drained by public officials for their personal gain that will eventually cause inflation due to the higher prices of raw materials. Foreign investors would also be mindful when investing in our countries as there will be many red tapes that will eventually deter them from investing in our country.

Additionally political corruption does not only impede the development of the country economically but also socially as it will increase the income gap of the Malaysian citizens where the rich will become richer and the poor will become poor. Many nation building missions such as having a better education system or improving the socioeconomic of the improvised will be at a standstill as a result of the selfishness of government officials siphoning the states coffers.

Besides that political corruption may also lead to unfairness and misuse of power such as nepotism, cronyism and favouritism which will eradicate the urge to compete and thus giving birth to a society that is too dependent on state funds that will eventually cause our country to not be able to be at par with other developed and developing countries.

4.2 Conclusion

In conclusion the effectiveness of watchdog journalism can only be improved when the press independence and freedom as well as pluralism in media ownership and points of view are safeguarded. Besides, such pluralism ensures that the media's ability to act as watchdogs is not constrained by the interests or points of view of media owners.

This would also mean that the establishment of system that makes the media such as the transparency accountability of the government. In short the watchdog is unable to be credible if it is not credible and accountable for what it does.

In order to improve the Malaysian media effectiveness, there also should be reforms that involve ratification of firm constitutional guarantees of a free press and freedom of information. There also should be an implementation of liberal freedom of information laws besides strengthening of the courts, the police and the judiciary which is generally the rule of law to provide adequate protection for journalists. (Sheila Coronel, 2008)

Furthermore there should be regulations that would lower the barriers to media ownership and reduce concentration of media ownership. Dependent press councils, media watch groups, Ombudsmen and other media self-regulatory bodies independent from the government should be established. It is also crucial to remove restrictions that prevent the media from playing its watchdog role.

Reform in this industry could include making media organisations more transparent about their ownership, their editorial decision making process that have pit pressures and restraint in allowing better coverage on news regarding political corruption. Free and independent journalist unions and associations should also be encouraged to promote better press freedom, ethical journalism and watchdog journalist, besides providing better pay and job conditions should for watchdog journalists

Without the press there will be no freedom of expression and if the press is being controlled this would significantly mean that peoples' freedom of expression is being controlled. Therefore the media should play a more responsible role to create well-balanced reports for the publics needs as well as the government policies because of the factor of the powerful media roles the government tends to restrain the media role for their interest and it's happening in the country.

Lastly it is important to note that the most important thing about the function of the media is the "watchdog" role of balance and monitoring government's characters and responsibilities for not moving away from the basic needs of common good as well as people's welfare and problem, solving.

The main obstacle to this research would be time constrain and limited references. Therefore future researchers should be more meticulous on their reading materials.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Khair charged with mansion land deal fraud

By ONG HAN SEAN

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■ Khair Toyo pleads not guilty

SHAH ALAM: Former Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo has been charged with land fraud involving two plots of land and a house in Shah Alam worth millions of ringgit.

He was charged at the Sessions Court here with knowingly purchasing the properties from Ditamas Sdn Bhd director Shamsuddin Haryoni in 2007 much lower than its original price.

Dr Khir, 45, is alleged to have committed the offence at the Selangor Menteri Besar's official residence on May 29 when he obtained for himself and his wife Datin Seri Zahrah Kechik the two plots of land and house from Shamsuddin at RM3.5mil.

Ditamas had bought the lots on Dec 23, 2004 for RM6.5mil.

Dr Khir was the menteri besar at that time.

Shamsuddin is charged under Section 109 and Section 165 of the Penal Code with abetting Dr Khir in the deal.

Both pleaded not guilty before Sessions Court judge Azhaniz Teh Azman Teh yesterday.

If convicted, they can be jailed up to two years, fined or both.

Dr Khir, who is Sungai Panjang assemblyman, arrived at the court here at 11.25am yesterday accompanied by Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) officers and with heavy police presence.

The prosecution led by Attorney-General Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail had offered bail at RM1mil each, saying the case was very serious and had drawn a lot of public attention.

Dr Khir's lawyer M. Athimulan asked for a lower bail, saying that his client would not skip bail as he was an assemblyman.

Azhaniz Teh set bail at RM750,000 each.

No mention date was fixed as the prosecution had applied for the case to be transferred to the High Court.

In a press conference afterwards, Gani commended the MACC for a thorough investigation.

He added that 16 witnesses would be called by the prosecution.

“The full force of the law will be applied to protect the witnesses and ensure no interference of any kind,” Gani said.

Asked why it had taken so long for the case to be brought to court, Gani said a very detailed investigation had to be done into how the land was obtained and transacted.

“A piece of land being bought cheaper does not automatically mean an offence has been committed.

“MACC had to check every detail to make sure the case was not flimsy,” he said.

Dr Khir left the court at 3.15pm after his bail was posted at about 3pm by a man believed to be his brother.

The former menteri besar told reporters that the bail amount was too high, and that was why his family members took about three hours to raise the money.

Dr Khir was accompanied by an assistant and a few friends to the court.

Appendix B

Published: Thursday December 9, 2010 MYT 4:36:00 PM
 Updated: Thursday December 9, 2010 MYT 5:32:25 PM

Khair Toyo charge not show or gimmick: PM Najib

By DHARMENDER SINGH

PUTRAJAYA: The prosecution of former Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Khir Toyo for land fraud is not a case of selective prosecution or a gimmick by the Government, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Thursday.

Najib said the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) had scrutinised the facts of the case in detail before reporting it to the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC), which then decided there were enough grounds to take the case to court.

He said the prosecution was result of the work carried out by two independent bodies, the MACC and the AGC, and they had followed all the necessary processes before taking the case to court.

"We are not using the prosecution as a gimmick. How is it a sandiwara (sideshow) if he (Dr Khir) has been charged?"

"This is what happens when a corruption case is turned into political issue. They want to slam the Government by making it look as though we are not serious (in fighting corruption), we are covering up or we are conducting selective prosecution," he told press conference here after witnessing the signing of a pledge to combat corruption by five bodies representing businesses.

The bodies are the Malaysia Chamber of Commerce, Associated Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Malaysian Associated Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers and the Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Najib was commenting on claims by the Opposition that Dr Khir's prosecution was no more than a gimmick by the Government ahead of the next general election.

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/12/9/nation/20101209164423&sec=nation>

Appendix C

Published: Friday March 4, 2011 MYT 11:53:00 AM
Updated: Friday March 4, 2011 MYT 3:58:18 PM

Lenggeng assemblyman Mustafa Salim found guilty of corruption (Updated)

By **SARBAN SINGH**

SEREMBAN: Lenggeng assemblyman Mustafa Salim (pix) was found guilty Friday of accepting a RM2,000 bribe from a contractor as an inducement to issue a supporting letter to mine sand, more than two years ago.



Sessions Court Judge Amran Jantan fixed April 1 for sentencing.

The 51-year-old, first-term assemblyman from Barisan Nasional was, however, acquitted of two counts of soliciting bribes from one M. Manimaran for the same purpose.

Mustafa was charged under Section 10(a)(aa) of the Anti-Corruption Act 1997 with accepting the money at a restaurant in Mantin on Aug 31, 2008.

The charge carries a jail sentence of between 14 days and 20 years, and fine of five times the bribe amount or a minimum of RM10,000.

**Faculty of Creative Industries
Research Project Evaluation Form**

Supervisor: Idhewa Samuel Chibundu

Reviewer: _____

Student's Name : Alicia Lee Siah

Student ID : 0806554

Programme:
Journalism

Research Project Title: The Watchdog Role of a Journalist in a Politically Corrupt Nation: A Case Study of Malaysian Journalists

Instruction:
Please score each descriptor based on the scale provided below:
(1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = average, 4 = good and 5 = very good)

Abstract (5%)	Score	Convert
1. Adequately describes the entire project		
2. States clearly the research problem		
3. Describe briefly and clearly the approach/methodology of the study		
4. Highlights the outcomes/significance of the study		
Sum		
Subtotal (sum / 4)		
Remark:		
Introduction (10%)		
1. Fitting introduction to the subject of the study		
2. Concepts/definitions well explained		
3. Scope of study well described		
4. Statement of the research problem/ research questions		
Sum		

Subtotal (sum / 2)		
Remark:		
Literature Review (20%)		
1. Early works published on the subject		
2. Latest research/ work done in the area of study		
3. Explication of theories used		
4. Constructive discussion on publications in relation to the topic of study		
Sum		
Subtotal (sum *1)		
Remark:		
Methodology (10%)		
1. Research method explained clearly(inclusive of clear explanation of sampling techniques used, where applicable only)		
2. Appropriate research design / framework/questionnaire		
Sum		
Subtotal (sum * 1)		
Remark:		
Remark:		

Findings & Analysis (20%)		
1. Data analysis is appropriate		
2. Data analysis is detailed		
3. Pertinent use of diagrams/tables/graphs, correlated with content/ Analysis supported by evidence		
4. Clear interpretation, well explained		
Sum		
Subtotal (sum * 1)		
Remark:		
Discussion & Conclusion (20%)		
1. Appropriate; related to the objective of the study		
2. Findings related to broader issues & recommendations for further research		
3. Shortcomings of the study & recommendations for future study		
4. Conclusion is apt, clear		
Sum		
Subtotal (sum * 1)		
Remark:		
Language & Organization (15%)		
1. Correct use of English and technical language		
2. APA format is followed		
3. Comprehensiveness of content and presentation		
Sum		
Subtotal (sum * 1)		
Remark:		

	TOTAL	/100%
Penalty: maximum 10 marks for late submission or poor attendance for consultation with supervisor		
	FINAL MARK	/100%

****Overall Comments:**

Signature: _____

Date:

Notes:

- (1) Sum: The sum of scores for the chapter
 - (2) Subtotal: Convert scores from the sum of scores for the chapter
 - (3) Total: The summation of all subtotal score
- **It's compulsory for the supervisor/reviewer to give the overall comments for the research project with A & F grading.

**FYP Evaluation Form
(Literature-based projects)**

Supervisor: Idhewa Samuel Chibundu

Name: Alicia Yeoh Lee Siah

Student

ID: 0806554

Program: Journalism

Project Title: The Watchdog Role of a Journalist in a Politically Corrupt Nation: A Case Study of Malaysian Journalists

<p>Abstract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Adequately describe the entire thesis II. State clearly the research problem III. Describe briefly the approach to the research/work/study IV. Highlight the outcome/significance of the study (impart sufficient depth in argument/discussion) 	<p>5 marks</p>	
<p>Context/Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Background of author and text II. Information about genre and/or historical time period of the text III. Information about theory/theories used to analyze the text e.g. feminist/Marxist/etc. if any IV. Awareness of academic debates/discussions of text or theories used 	<p>15 marks</p>	
<p>Close Reading/Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Original close reading that extends and expands our understanding of the text II. Analysis that is precise and well-supported by textual evidence III. Adheres to objectives of the project 	<p>30 marks</p>	
<p>Relationship of issues/themes to the entire text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Relating close reading analysis to the text as a whole II. Looking at broader issues/themes in the text and their significance 	<p>10 marks</p>	

<p>Relationship of text to other works by the same author (if any) or in the same genre</p> <p>I. Able to relate text to other works or similar themes/issues explored by same author</p> <p>II. Able to relate text to works in the same genre</p>	<p>10 marks</p>	
<p>Organization</p> <p>I. Ideas well organized and flow smoothly</p> <p>II. Ideas in each chapter are coherent and self-contained.</p> <p>III. Relationship of chapter analysis to the thesis as a whole is well-elaborated and logical</p>	<p>10 marks</p>	
<p>Language</p> <p>I. Correct use of grammar and punctuation</p> <p>II. Correct use of technical language</p>	<p>15 marks</p>	
<p>Presentation of Project</p> <p>I. References/appendices correctly cited</p> <p>II. Thesis handed in on time and complete</p>	<p>5 marks</p>	

TOTAL **100 MARKS** _____

Comments:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Checklist

Whole the project	Done
1 Font size = 12 points	[]
2 Font type = Times New Roman	[]
3 No bold	[]
4 Italic for statistical symbols	[]
5 Margins = the left, top and bottom margins should be 1 inch.	[]
6 Spacing = double-spaced	[]
7 A4 paper	[]
8 No justification for APA; Justification for M LA ETC.	[]
9 Number of words = 6,500 to 10,000words (exclude reference and appendices)	[]
Abstract	
1 Not more than 200 words	[]
2 No tab and in one paragraph	[]
3 Include the following information	[]
a. Statement of the problem,	
b. A concise description of participants, the research method and design	
c. Summary of major findings	
d. Conclusions and suggestion	
Level of writing	
1 Level one (title of each section) = CENTERED in uppercase	[]
2 Level two = flush left, italicized, Title case	[]
3 Level three = indented, italicized, sentence case, ending with a period	[]
Appendix	
Appendix materials should be grouped by type, e.g. Appendix A:	
1 Questionnaire; Appendix B: Original Data; Appendix C: Result	[]
2 Every appendix group starts from a new page	[]
Table	
1 Tables are numbered consecutively (with Arabic numerals) throughout the research paper (including text and appendices), such as Table 1, Table 2	[]
2 Format:	
a. Type the word Table and its Arabic numeral	[]
b. Flush left at the top of the table.	[]
c. Double-space	[]
d. Begin the table title flush left,	[]
e. Sentence case	[]

- f. Italicizing the title. []
- g. Insert into text, []
- h. Not more than 1 table in a page []

Figure

- 1 Figures are numbered consecutively (with Arabic numerals) throughout the research paper (including text and appendices), such as Figure 1, Figure 2... []
- 2 Format:
 - a. Type the word Figure and its Arabic numeral []
 - b. Flush left at the **bottom** of the Figure. []
 - c. Follow by the Figure caption flush left, []
 - d. Sentence case []
 - e. Italicizing the caption. []
 - f. Insert into text, []
 - g. Not more than 1 figure in a page []

Page header

- 1 First two or three words from the title []
- 2 Upper right-hand corner []
- 3 Sentence case []
- 4 12 points times new roman []
- 5 After page header, leave 2-5 spaces, follow by page number []
- 6 Start from introduction to the last page of appendices []

Pagination

- Blank leaf, title page, acknowledgement and approval sheet = No
- 1 pagination []
- 2 Abstract, declaration, table of contents, list of tables, list of graphs, list of plates and list of abbreviations = To be paginated as i, ii, iii... []
- 3 Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Findings & Analysis, Discussion & Conclusion, References and Appendices = To be paginated as 1, 2, 3 []

Table of content

- Blank leaf, title page, acknowledgement and approval sheet = not be
- 1 listed []

Research spine

- 1 12-point, Times New Roman []
- 2 Lettered in gold []
- 3 Include the followings: []
 - a. Project/Research title (abridged version);
 - b. Faculty and
 - c. Year of submission

Project cover

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | 12- point, Times New Roman | [] |
| 2 | Lettered in gold | [] |
| 3 | ALL in UPPER CASE | [] |
| 4 | Include the followings | [] |
| | a. University logo | |
| | b. Title of thesis | |
| | c. Name of candidate; | |
| | d. Degree; | |
| | e. Faculty | |
| | f. Name of university | |
| | g. Month and year of submission. | |

Submission

- | | | |
|---|---|-----|
| 1 | Two bound copies of research project to supervisor | [] |
| 2 | A soft-copy in the form of a compact disc to supervisor | [] |
| 3 | Signed the declaration | [] |
| 4 | Signed the approval sheet by supervisor | [] |

