



UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN
FACULTY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
And
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

EFFECTIVENESS OF PROPAGANDA IN MANIPULATING THE MINDS OF
THE CITIZEN: THE STUDY ON “ALLAH” ISSUE

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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 are they printed, electronic or personal.

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As I go along, I would also like to thank my parents as they are the one who give me endless moral and financial support without them, I would not be able to succeed in completing my final year project. After all family members will be the one who stands and fall with you.

MICHELLE LIM XIU HUI

Approval Form

This research paper attached hereto, entitled “EFFECTIVENESS OF PROPAGANDA IN MANIPULATING THE MINDS OF THE CITIZEN: THE STUDY ON “ALLAH” ISSUE” prepared and submitted by MICHELLE LIM XIU HUI in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Journalism is hereby accepted.

SUPERVISOR

SUPERVISOR'S NAME: MR. AFI ROSHEZRY

DATE: _____

ABSTRACT

The relevancy of this study is to find out the way journalist express their rights in a political constraint country. The main objective of this research is to discover the rights of expression by Malaysian Journalist. The researcher will then look into the dilemmas faced by Malaysian journalist in their process of expressing their rights through news reporting. At the same time, look into the way the Malaysian journalist play their role as news media in informing the public. Additionally, the researcher will highlight the media propaganda in Malaysia. The research will focus also on the “Allah” issue reported in the media mainstreams and alternatives. The different content reported in the media will be analyzed in order to obtain specific results on the propaganda role in freedom of speech in Malaysia.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Propaganda is a specific type of message presentation, aimed at serving an agenda. Even if the message send true information but it may be a spilt and the complete idea of the issue will not be able to be notify. (Norris & Inglehart, 2007)

Modern propaganda can be term as an attempt to influence the opinions of an audience through the opinions of an audience and also through the communication of ideas and values for a specific persuasive purpose, consciously designed to serve the interest of the propogandists and their political masters, either directly or indirectly. In this, propaganda is separated from information in which function to transmit facts objectively and through delivering education, which hopes to open its students' minds. (Welch, 1999)

Additionally, propaganda can also be regarded as the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols. The word attitude is taken to refer as a meaning of a tendency to act according to certain patterns of valuation. The existence of an attitude is not a direct datum of experience, but interference from signs which have a conventionalized significance.

Propaganda gain it's transitory importance in the past whenever a social system based upon the sanctions of ancient times was broken up by a dictator. The ever-present function of propaganda in modern life is in large measure attributable to the social disorganization which has been precipitated by the rapid advent of technological changes.

At the same time, impersonality has supplanted personal loyalty to leaders. Literacy and the physical channels of communication have quickened the connection

between those who rule and ruled. Conventions have arisen which favor the airing of opinions and the taking of votes. Most of that which formerly could be done by violence and intimidation must now be done by argument and persuasion. Democracy has proclaimed the dictatorship of discussion, and the technique of dictating to the dictator is named propaganda.

Thus the researcher will then look into the national interest issues on the “Allah” issue reported in *The Star* and *Aliran* in order to gather more updated news on the limits of the level of freedom in reporting. *The Star* and *Aliran* both play an important role in propagating the public and they serve as a medium in influencing the public and at the same time decide what news to be delivered to the readers.

There has been an ongoing debate regarding this issue reported in *The Star* and also *Aliran*. However, the issues are reported in different ways as there are existences of different perspectives on the issue whether it is a religious or political factor. In *The Star*, the issue was heated up when Deputy Comm Datuk Khalid Abu Bakar explained that if the word “Allah” was used to describe God as a form of common understanding, there was nothing wrong in it.

He continued by warning the public on the word must not be misused as it will definitely cause racial tensions and action must be taken if there is a party that involves in using the word in vain. Further to this issue, the police force has to play an important role in maintaining the peace and security of the people as there will be street demonstrations.

This worsens, when the question on possible demonstrations taking place in the state over a court decision allowing the usage of the term “Allah” by the Catholic weekly

Herald. Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Musa Hassan stressed that stern action will be taken against any group staging illegal gatherings to demonstrate against the Catholic Church following the court ruling in allowing the *Herald* to use the word “Allah.”

On the other hand, the issue highlighted in *Aliran* views a different angle on the issue where it stated as the Malaysian Government obtained a stay order, pending appeal against the issue. The concern here arises as it is not because the government is trying to defy the High Court order, but because the controversy has become politically unmanageable due to overcharged emotions.

The Malays who resist the use of word Allah by Christians argue that this will create confusion and worry that, in view of the missionary activities of some Christians, they may convert to Christianity. They thus want to stop this confusion from affecting the Malays. This may have its own rationale but the problem has to be solved through dialogue and mutual understanding. But the problem is that some politicians would like to exploit such controversies for their benefit.

There is opinions state that the Muslims should welcome it if non-Muslims also use the word “Allah” referring to God. The question here is how could one object to the use of “Allah” by others? Anyone who learns Arabic and talks about God will have to use the word “Allah”. As to support the point, all Christian Arabs freely use word “Allah” in countries such as Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. No one objects to the use of the word “Allah”.

Besides, there is no language that can be monopolized by any one religious community. In India, many Hindus learnt Arabic and Persian, which was court language, and they spoke fluent Persian and even wrote poetry in Persian like Chandrabhan

Brahman. Several first rate Urdu poets were and still are Hindus, and they use words such as 'Khuda' and 'Allah' in their poetry. How can one object to that?

Other perspective point out on the issue is not religious but is politically influence which explains the reason why it blow up to be a controversy by many different parties. The problem here is when does all this first started? It all started with the 1986 government ban on the usage of the word "Allah", and three others including "solat", "Kaabah" and "Baitullah".

There are views brought up by Jacqueline, the editor of the nut graph further explain the issue in which she view her thoughts by highlighting on we Malaysian know "Allah" predates Islam; and secondly that is used by non-Muslims in other Muslim countries with no restriction. Therefore, apart of it the Government is partially to be blame for this narrow-minded and bigoted interpretation of who can use "Allah" in Malaysia. Her views strongly disagree referring to the existence of the notion that Muslim rights indirectly replacing the rights of the non-Muslims.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

Propaganda can serve to assemble people behind a cause, but often at the cost of exaggerating, misrepresenting, or even lying about the issues in order to gain that support. The common tactics in propaganda often used by either side include using selective stories that come over as wide-covering and objective. Additionally, elements of propaganda can be referred to partial facts, or historical context. Propaganda is essential in reinforcing reasons and motivations to act due to threats on the security of the individual. (Anup Shah, 2005)

Propaganda existed when there are narrow sources of “experts” to provide insights into the situation. For example, the mainstream media typically interview retired military personnel for many conflict-related issues, or treat official government sources as fact, rather than just one perspective that need to be verified and researched. Moreover, propaganda serves to demonize the “enemy” who does not fit the picture of what is “right”. In the process of propaganda use a narrow range of discourse, whereby judgments are often made while the boundary of discourse itself, or the framework within which the opinions are formed, are often not discussed. The narrow focus then helps to contribute to the interests of the propagandists. (ibid.).

On the other hand, media and politics are indeed inseparable. Media favors more sources concerning politicians who are involved in policy making and governance of the country which directly involve public interest. These are considered to be items of high news value. At the same time, a politician needs the media for publicity and to inform the people of their activities, especially during an election campaign. Media in a way will serve as a platform to gain exposure and popularity, and hence to get votes for politicians

in the political arena. If the political actors want to gain a place in media, they should stick to certain conventions and genre which are needed by the media organizations to give priority to conflicts, power struggles and dramas.

The Malaysian press now represents the people's views and response from Government's. In 1998, Cook express his believes that Government officials are more dependent on the media to communicate effectively. Newspaper in Malaysia can be differentiated in various forms, the mainstream media and the alternative media, the print and electronic media, prestige media in particular super-regional subscriber newspapers or popular media such as the tabloid dailies, television and radio and so forth. All these portray media ability to propagate in many o ther mediums in their duties to spread their ideology to the public. (Lee Kuok Tiong & Mohd Safar Hasim, 2009)

Newspapers in politics, especially during elections are used to attract votes and insert propaganda to put down adversaries. Good or bad image broadcasting is believed to influence the people's perceptions towards the leader. Newspapers no matter online or printed medium are able to downplay or play up a certain issue while portraying the image of a political personality. Whether it is from the journalism norm, the dependency of media on the source, the desire to act in accordance with public's priority, the desire to acquire profit, the priority of the journalist's value, or the accessibility of the spokesman and other practical considerations liaise with Tuchman in 1980 explain on media frame forms over how certain issues are being portrayed, either directly or through chosen message to who they want. (ibid.).

Media plays a role in focusing the people's attention towards a certain issue. The frequency, depth and importance given by the media towards a certain issue are believed

to determine the level of observation, reaction or the thoughts of the targeted audience or society towards it. (ibid.). According to Reese in 2001 state that framing is organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world in which media is believed to have authority in influencing the people's views towards a certain issue. (Reese, 2001)

Besides, the references and sources used by the newspaper also play a significant role in framing the news. Media can easily manipulate their news framing by only referring to sources that carried same thought with their agenda. As a result, this study tend to identify resources used inside the news writing, especially 'whose speech' being used to produce the news. (Anup Shah, 2005) In 1993 Entman explain, "to frame is to choose certain reality aspects that can be seen and make them stand out more in the communication text." (Entman, 1993)

The reasons propaganda existed are based on a few reasons which include the time when people wish to believe that best about themselves and their country. This worsens when there is a fear-mongering, especially about the threat to cherished values such as freedom and justice. Propaganda will work whenever there is presenting fears and claims that appear logical and factual. Adding on that the media management and public relations is deemed to be very professional and need to be professional. (Anup Shah, 2005)

Part of the reason is the wanting to administer thoughts by narrowing ranges of debate, thus minimizing widely discussed thoughts that deviate from the main agendas. While at times on of the party will have the feeling of more important and superior than others, it can in terms of language, religion, customs or even their behaviors. The

existence of propaganda can be seen through the practice in each country especially on the way they preserve their independence and gain victory for their own pride. (ibid.).

The ever first example is democratic country, the citizen tend to believe that they and their countries are generally superior. Additionally, the histories of some nations may have involved overcoming adversaries for legitimate reasons where the American war to gain its independence and freedom from British Empire was one based on strong moral grounds of freedom from authoritarian rule. Such important history is often recounted and remembered as part of the collective culture of the country and those same values are projected into modern times. This explains the existence of propaganda when the fear of losing such cherished values. (ibid.).

Media will be the tool for propagating the minds of the public, especially highlighting religious issues. The Asia Times are making their way in the effort to attract the public's attention on religious happenings in which there are two dissimilar events occurred. One was passage of an Islamic family law, where this brings the feminists and moderate Muslims to oppose the action. While as for the other issue touches on the forced burial, according to Muslim rites, of a Hindu soldier by Islamic authorities who insisted he had converted to Islam. Both issues have triggered many questions on the role of an increasingly puritanical Islam in a multi-ethnic society that prides itself on tolerance and an easygoing, modern way of life. (Baradan, 2006)

All in all, the issue of the usage of "Allah" word has actually lead the public to further open their minds to understand the constitutional provisions and legislation relating to religion in which Article 3(1) state that Islam is the religion of the Federation; but others religions may be practiced in peace and harmony in any part of the federation.

Additionally in Article 8 declares that “all persons are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of the law,” but states that this article does not prohibit any provision or practice restricting office or employment connected with affairs of any religion, or of an institution managed by a group professing any religion, to persons professing that religion.” (Pedro, 1995)

Even there is the rights granted to every religions but still there will be party that breach it as stated in article 3 (1) and 8 both reminds people on the freedom of every individual to practice their own religion. Due to the increase of numbers of religious intolerance, shows that the federal government does not protect the fundamental rights necessary to ensure freedom of religion. Amnesty International argues that the government does not protect the fundamental rights necessary to ensure freedom of religion. Besides, the government does not currently protect such liberties stating that “In the Malaysian context, the balance between governmental power and individual freedom has been drawn in a manner which makes governmental authority in matters of arrest and detention all-powerful where the individual is at the mercy of the executive branch of the state. (ibid.).

In other countries, especially Arab where the Catholics and Copts also exclaim Masha-allah, Wallahi, ya-Rabbi, Wallah-u allam and Allahuakbar day in, day out, everywhere they go. The Coptic taxi driver blears out ‘By Allah, can’t you see where you are parking?’ as he dodges the obstacle ahead. While, the Catholic shopkeeper bemoans: ‘Ya Allah, Ya Allah! You can only offer me two pounds for the scarf? Wallahi, my mother would die if she heard that! Ya-Rabbi, Ya-Rabbi!’ (Farish, 2008)

Yet in Malaysia is now embroiled in another non-issue in which the Malaysian

Herald, a publication by and for the Catholics in the country, has been told that it can no longer publish its Malay language edition if it continues to use the word 'Allah' for God. Worse still, the country's Deputy Internal Security Minister Johari Baharum recently stated that 'only Muslims can use the word Allah,' ostensibly on the grounds that it is a Muslim word. (ibid.).

The mind boggles at the puzzling logic of such a non-argument, which speaks volumes about the individual's ignorance of Muslim culture, history and the fundamental tenets of Islam itself. At the beginning, the word 'Allah' predates the revelation to the Prophet Muhammad and goes back to the pre-Islamic era. Christians had been using the word long before there were any Muslims. It is an Arabic word and thus became common to all peoples, cultures and societies where Arabic, in all its dialects, is spoken. (ibid.).

One could understand that it is an Arabic word; it therefore has more to do with the development and evolution of Arabic language and culture and the lesser to do with Islam. It is hard to understand how any religion can have a language to call its own, for languages emerge from a societal context and not a belief system. If one were to abide by the twisted logic of the Malaysian minister, then presumably the language of Christianity would be Aramaic, or perhaps Latin. (ibid.).

Racism and racial discrimination could be one of the problems that cause this issue to arise in Malaysia. As stated by the Director of the Malaysian human rights organization SUARAM (Suara Rakyat Malaysia), Dr. Kua Kia Soong in his book on Malaysian Critical Issues discusses on the situation that Malaysian are facing in which they did not notice. Race has becoming deeply institutionalized that it is a key factor determining benefits from government development policies, bids for business contracts,

education policy and other official policies. (Kua Kia Soong, 2002)

Practically in almost all aspect of Malaysian life is permeated by the so-called “Bumiputera policy” based on Malay centrism. Thus all these are not made known to the public and causing them fail to analyze what the media inform them daily. This is proven still from a new survey by the University of Malaya shows that 98 per cent of Malay students do not mix with non-Malays while 99 per cent of Chinese students and 97 per cent of Indian students do not mingle with other races. (ibid.).

The main reason that contributes to the usage of “Allah” issue is also due to racism that is integrated as part of the Malaysian socio-political system. The ruling coalition is still dominated by racially-defined component parties, the United Malays National Organization, the Malaysian Chinese Association and The Malaysian Indian Congress. These parties compete with each other to gain electoral support from their respective party congresses. While some opportunistic Opposition parties likewise pander to their constituencies using racist propaganda to win electoral support and they also contribute to the vicious circle of racial politics which has characterized Malaysian politics all these years. (ibid.).

Since this issue is play up by the politicians first then the media would only serve as watchdog and play their roles to disseminate the respective information to the public. The information left for the public will be analyzed according to themselves depends on their own perception on the topic. Politicians will be the one to select the created myths and ideologies which is the created “Allah” word usage and then sell them off after struggling with other politicians over selected issue to be the dominant one before circulating it. While as for the journalist or the media, they will report on politicians by

circulating the myths, packaged the myths for the media audiences and circulate it to the society. (ibid.).

All in all, the media helps to preserve and promote democracy by safeguarding the independence of its institutions and ensuring their accountability as well as facilitating the communication of ideas and policies. Media has its role to deliver what that is important to the people and so one of the problems face by the media is control.

According to Doris Graber in 2003 state that is no free media from government controls. Many of the regulations regarding the size and reach of media business combinations, protection of national security, protection of the rights of individuals, and cultural safeguards strongly influence what may and may not be published. Any violations are kept under observation and check by the fear of regulatory legislation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study will use both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (case studies) research methods.

For the survey researcher, the researcher will distribute 200 questionnaires to undergraduates and also lecturers who are familiar with news media reporting on the 'Allah' issue especially news in *The Star* (Mainstream Media) and *MalaysiaKini* (Alternative Media). In doing so, relevant data on a few basic questions relating to the credibility of news can be gathered from online news portal and mainstream media.

According to Wimmer and Dommick (2003) qualitative research method is research using small samples at times not randomly selected and the results are not generalized to the population from which the sample was drawn.

Quantitative research is the research using a large, randomly selected sample of people where the results are generalized to the population from which the sample was drawn. (ibid) While, qualitative research which is the interview means a formal meeting in person, especially one arranged for the assessment of the qualifications of an applicant.

According to Kerlinger (2000) define content analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables. Kerlinger's definition involves three concepts that require elaboration.

First, content analysis is systematic. This means that the content to be analyzed is selected according to explicit and consistently applied rules: Sample selection must follow proper procedures, and each item must have an equal chance of being included in

the analysis.

Additionally, the evaluation process must be systematic and place in sequence in which all content under consideration is to be treated in exactly the same manner. There must be uniformity in the coding and analysis procedures and in length of time coders are exposed to the material. There is only one set of guidelines that are used for evaluation throughout the study.

Second, content analysis is objective; that is, the researcher's personal idiosyncrasies and biases should not enter into the findings. The analysis done should yield the same results if another researcher replicates the study. Operational definitions and rules for the classification of variables should be explicit and comprehensive so that other researchers who repeat the process will arrive at the same decisions.

Unless a clear set of criteria and procedures is established that fully explains the sampling and categorization methods, the researcher does not meet the requirement of objectivity and the reliability of the results may be called into questions. Therefore, perfect objectivity is difficult to be achieving in a content analysis.

In order to draw more accurate results on the "Allah" issue, the researcher will use the content analysis. An analysis will be conducted to find out the difference in terms of the content of the articles. Due to the different point of views state in the articles, therefore the researcher will then analyze a rearrange the information to draw a more precise conclusion. Analysis is done to describe the existence of the issue.

Moreover, content analysis is quantitative in which the goal is an accurate representation of a body of messages. Quantification is important in fulfilling the objective because it aids researchers in the quest for precision. In addition, quantification

allows researchers to summarize results and to report them concisely. If measurements are made over intervals of time, comparisons of the numerical data from one time period to another can help simplify and standardize the evaluation procedure. At last, quantification gives researchers additional statistical tools can aid in interpretation and analysis.

There are two major types of surveys descriptive and analytical. A descriptive survey attempts to describe or document current conditions or attitudes that are to explain what exists at the moment. An analytical survey attempts to describe and explain why situations exist. In this approach, two or more variables are usually examined to investigate research questions or test research hypotheses. The results allow researchers to examine the interrelationships among variables and to develop explanatory inferences.

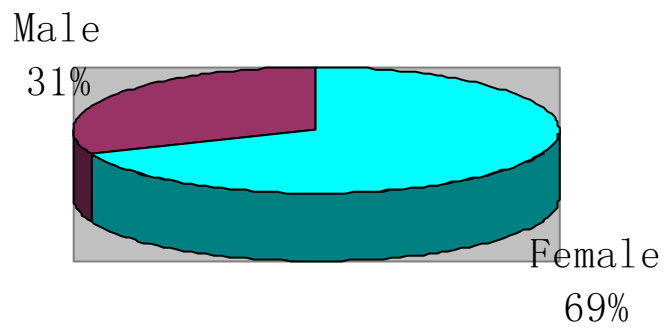
In this research on the “Allah” issue, the researcher will use the descriptive survey in which all information or necessary details related to the feedback of the people in the form of questionnaires will be gathered.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

UNDERGRADUATES' RESPONDENTS

1)

**Figure 1**

The above pie chart shows that majority respondents for the “Allah” Issue Is Female stating 69%. While the male respondent 31%.

2)

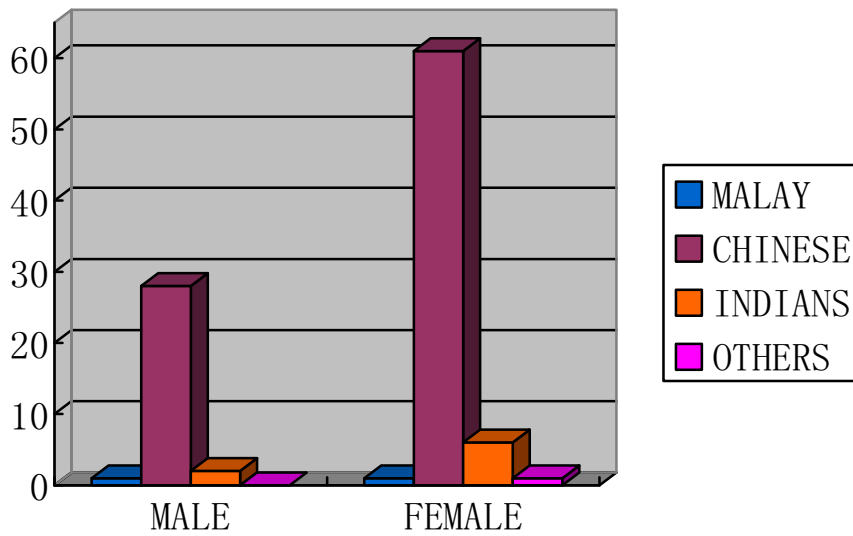


Figure 2

The above bar chart state different races participating as respondent to the survey on the “Allah” issue. The highest percentage state that 61% of female Chinese respondent are Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman undergraduates. While the male undergraduates’ state 28%. Follow by Indians female student stating 6% and 2% for Indian male undergraduates’ student.

3)

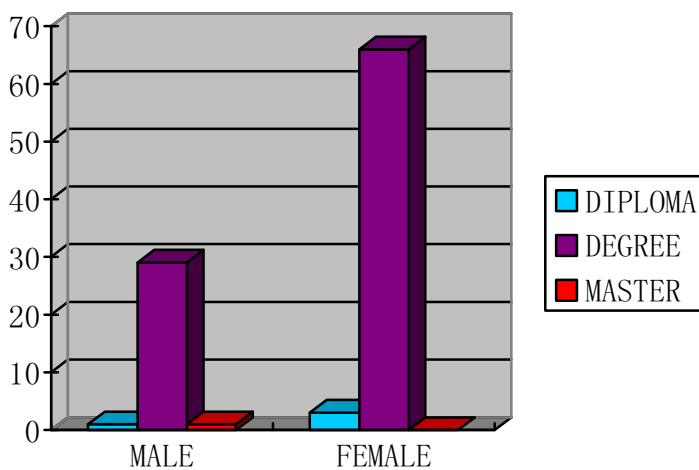


Figure 3

The bar chart shows 66% of the female students with the degree educational level give the most feedback especially journalism students. While 29% of the male undergraduates' students give their respond.

4)

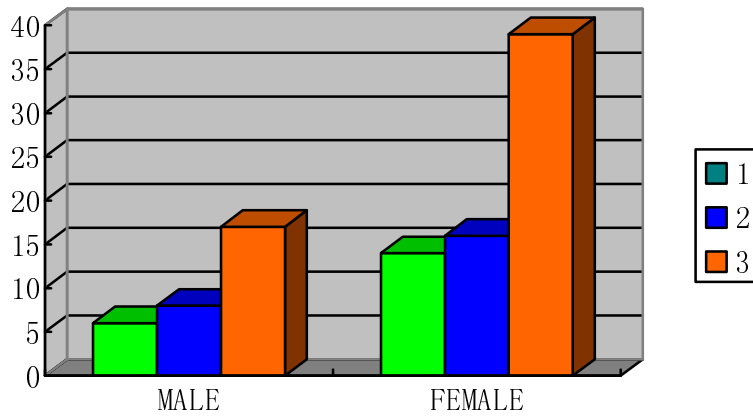


Figure 4

The chart above state final year students in which divided into 39% female respondent and 17% male students in year 3 giving their respond to the “Allah” issue.

5)

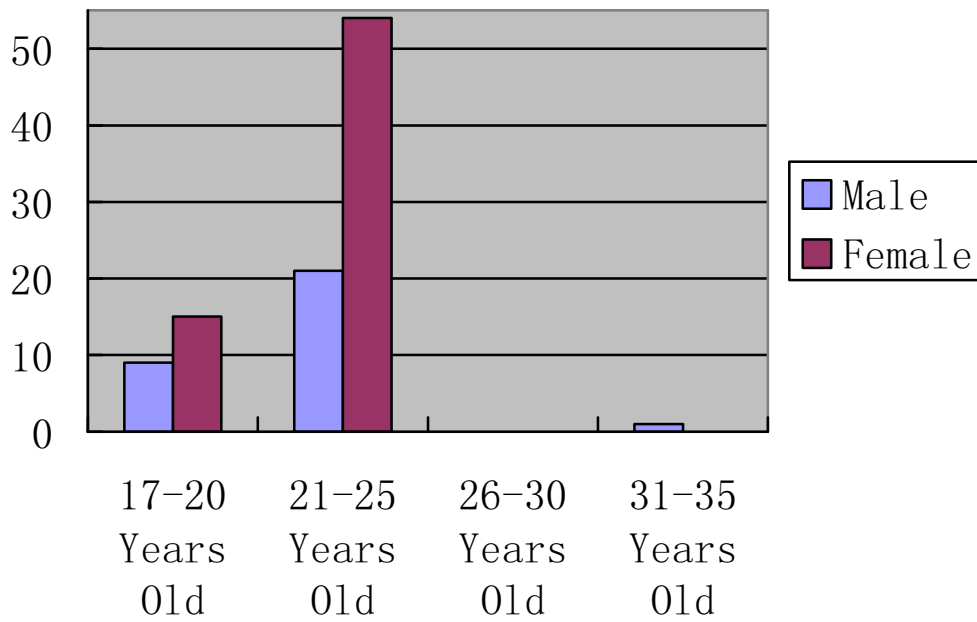


Figure 5

The above chart show that four category of age group consist of both male and female giving feedback on the issue. The age group 21 to 25 years old state 54% which is the highest percentage of undergraduate students participating in the survey questionnaires to gain better results for the issue.

SECTION B

1)

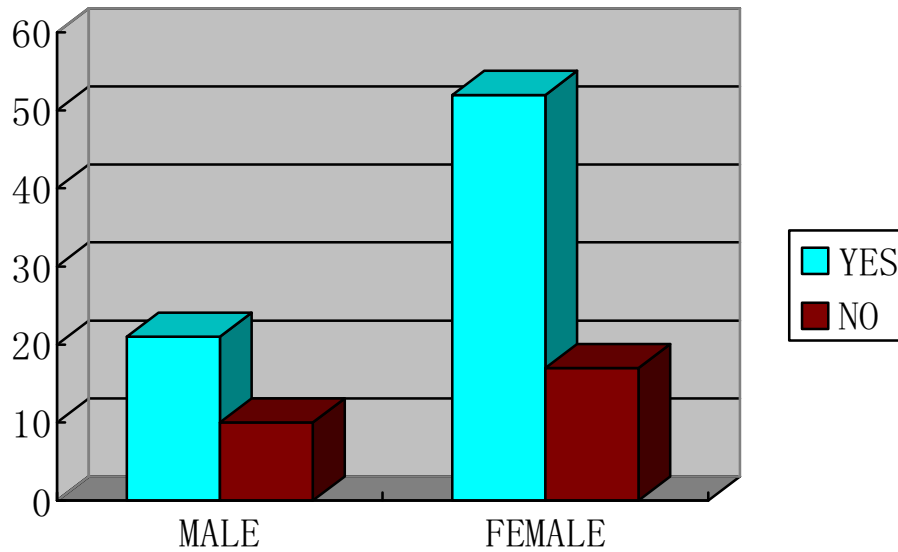


Figure 1

The bar chart shows the percentage of both male and female respondents on their level of awareness on the issue. Majority respondents are female undergraduates' students in University Tunku Abdul Rahman with the chart showing 52% of them are aware of the regarding issue. While for the male students the bar chart shows only 21% of them saying yes that they are aware of the issue.

3)

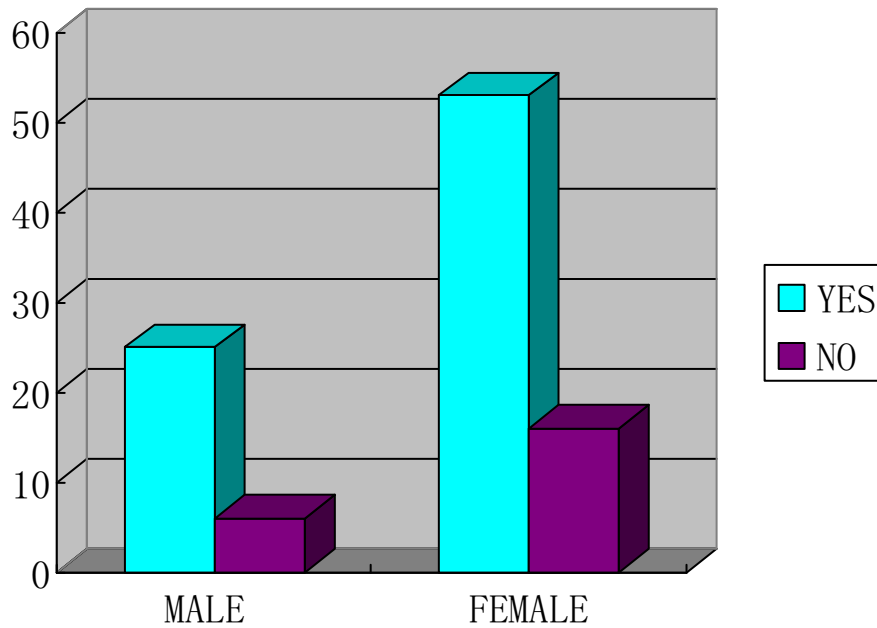


Figure 3

The above chart portrays the opinion on the “Allah” issue on whether it will cause racial tension in the state. Therefore, both females and male undergraduates’ students will give their feedback in which female student state 53% and the male students’ state 25% agreeing to the cause.

4)

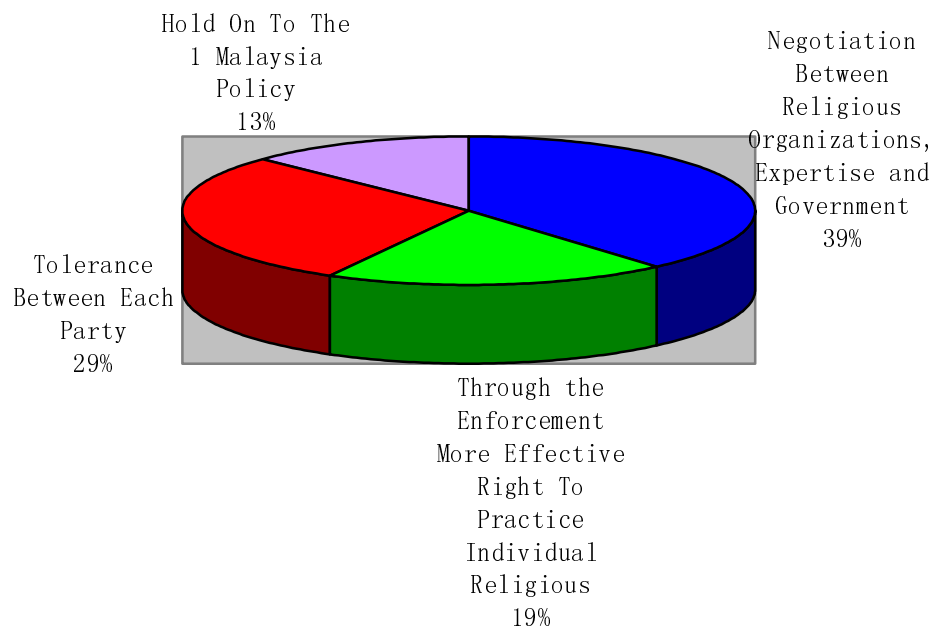
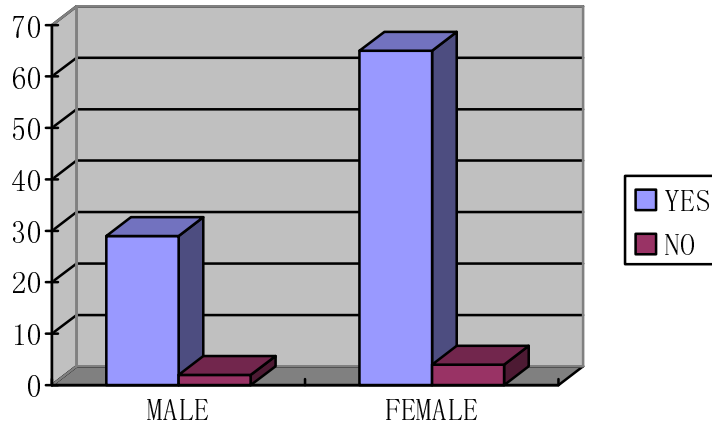


Figure 4

The pie chart shows the categories of solutions that are preferable to overcome the issue.

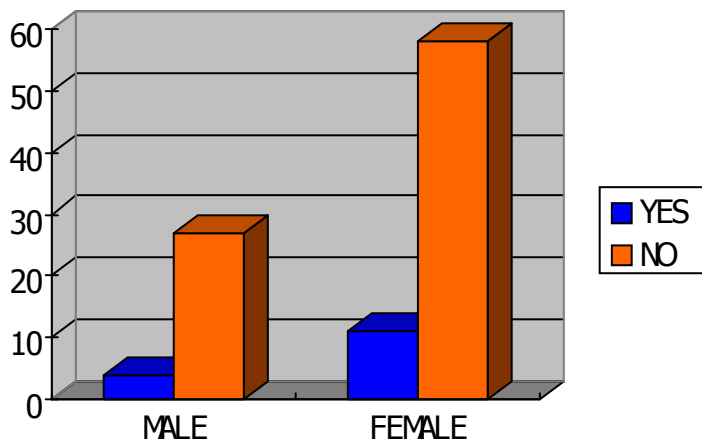
Both male and female agreed that the way negotiation take place between religious organizations, expertise and government will be the best way to overcome the problems.

5)

**Figure 5**

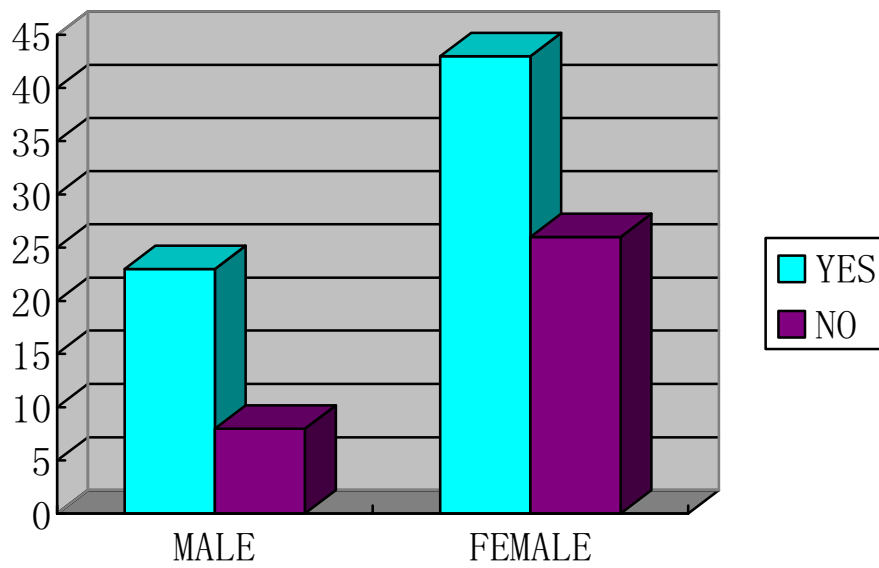
The bar chart shows that 58% of the female undergraduates' students agree that the word "Allah" not only be used by Muslims as 27% of the male students support the statement.

6)

**Figure 6**

The bar chart shows 65% of female undergraduates students say yes that the media play a vital role in highlighting the issue to the public while male undergraduates state 29% who supports also the responsibility of the media.

7)

**Figure 7**

Majority of the 43% of the females undergraduate agree that the media has propagated the issue as male undergraduate students 26% supports the regarding statement that the media trying to influence the minds of the people. While, the rest of them do not agree with the statement proposed.

8)

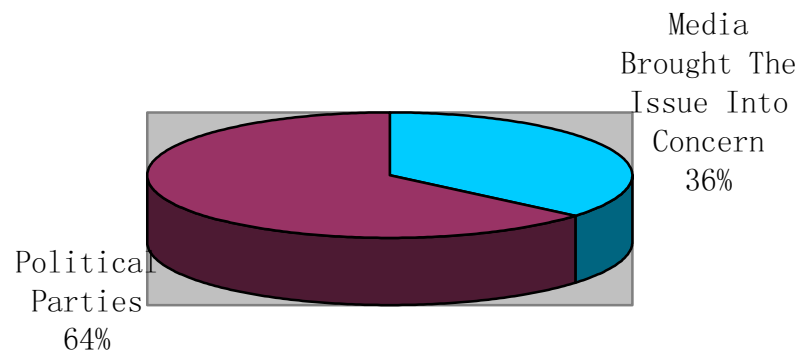


Figure 8

The pie chart portray 64% which is the majority of female undergraduate students agree to the issue is played up by politicians more than the media as their role is only as watchdog to observe and deliver the news to the public.

9)

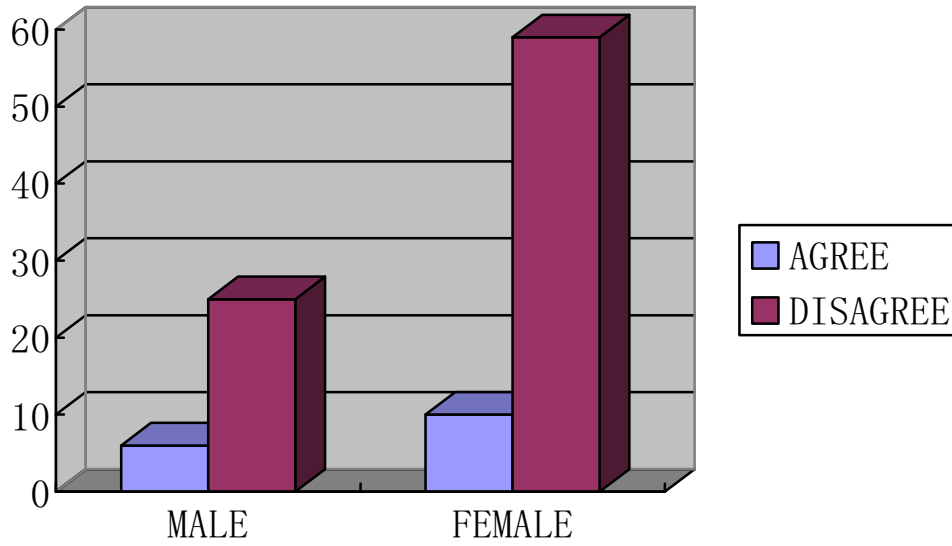


Figure 9

The bar chart shows that 59% of the female undergraduate students disagree that the word “Allah” only allowed to be used by Muslims as 25% male undergraduate students also supports the statement.

10)

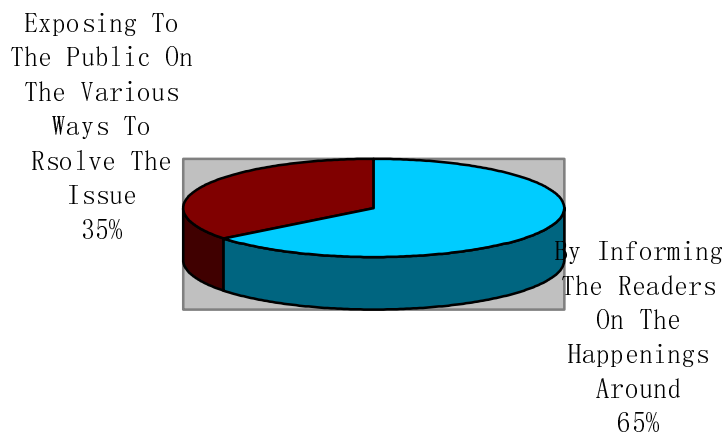


Figure 10

The pie chart illustrate on the way media play up the “Allah” issue. 65% of the female undergraduates agree that the issue is brought up through media action to disseminate the news around. While 35% of the male students agree to the various ways that media use to resolve the issue to the public.

11)

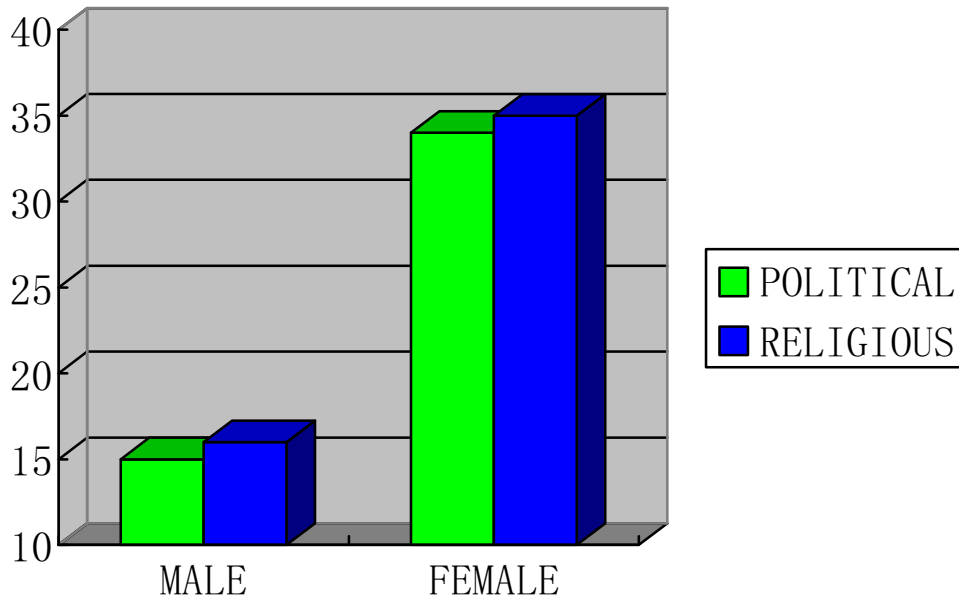


Figure 11

The bar chart illustrate majority of the undergraduates students stating 35% of the female undergraduates think that the “Allah” issue is cause by religious misunderstanding. While the male undergraduates’ state 34% of them supporting the females’ point of view.

12)

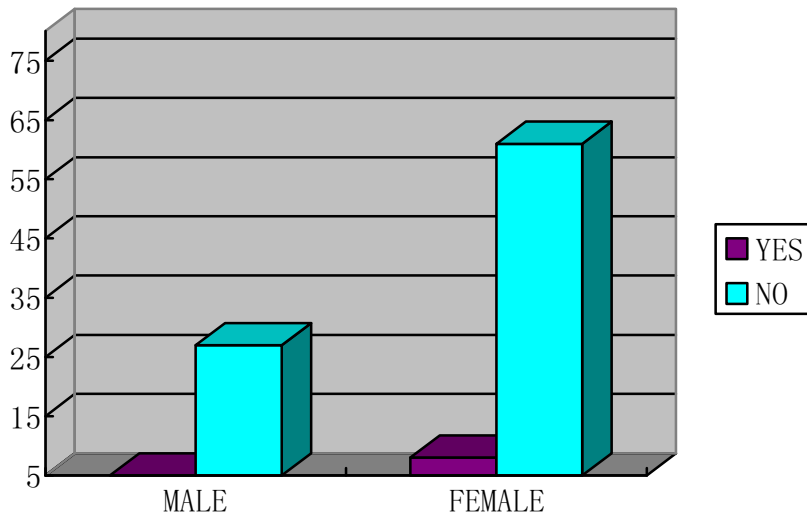
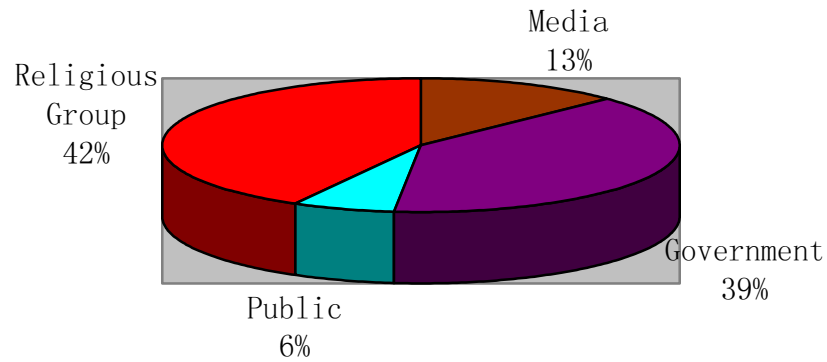


Figure 12

The above bar chart shows that the majority of 61% female undergraduate's students be on the same mind that the One Malaysia concept will not be effective if the "Allah" issue still remain unsolved by respective government or religious party. While the male undergraduates 27% of them also agree with the statement.

13)

**Figure 13**

The pie chart shows that the majority percentage of the students' opinion on the party that should be responsible in overcoming the regarding issue. 42% of them all state that the religious groups should be the one to play their role and help stop the issue from continuing.

SECTION C

15)

Categories	Male	Female
Yes	19	52
No	7	17
Not Sure	5	0
	31	69

The table shows that the majority female undergraduates' point out their opinion regarding whether the media is monopolizing the "Allah" issue. Therefore, 36% of the female undergraduates feel that the issue is monopolized by the media. While, 12% of the overall students does not support the statement as they have other views related to the issue. While the male undergraduates' students state 6% of them agree that the issue has been monopolized by the media and 3% does not agree to it and also not forgetting the other 2% of the category are not sure of the issue.

Majority of the females undergraduates who oppose that the issue is monopolized by the media then state their opinions that the issue is control and manipulated by some religious groups and government as well. As for those group of female undergraduates that supports the issue been monopolized by the media state different view points relating to the issue such as media tries to propagate the issue and lead the people to believe the message they deliver to them. Some pointed out that the media has the power to disseminates their news therefore, the public tend to accept whatever that is provided for them as long as they are kept inform on what that is going on in the world.

As for the male undergraduates do agree to the media's role in monopolizing the issue by portraying a few different opinions such as the media highlight the issue for the people will then encourage more participating by the people. On the other hand, there are also opposing group that give feedback on the issue is not only monopolized by the media but also many other parties. There will be some group who practice freedom of speech tends to draw a conclusion to the ongoing issue. Despite the different point of views there are also small percent of male students fall in the category of not sure whether which party

will be the one monopolizing the issue.

16)

Categories	Male	Female
Not sure	5	16
Manipulation	3	9
Propagation	9	11
Special Privileges	6	5
Political Issue	8	4
Politics and the media	0	11
Religious	0	13

Based on the open ended question on the opinions of the undergraduates' on the "Allah" issue, there are seven different categories been divided into which are respondents who are not sure on the ongoing issue, manipulation by certain party, propagation by the media, special rights to the Malays, political issue, issue that might be cause by politicians and the media and also religious aspect.

Referring to the above table shows that the majority of 11% female undergraduates do not aware on the issue as they think that the issue will not make any difference. Follow by 9% of them believe that this issue is cause by manipulation by different party. Politicians, media and religious organizations are all the groups that are connected as they will influence each other. Therefore the issue will happen. The government will then be the one believe to manipulate the minds of the people and so do the media in their attempt to control the thinking of the people. Apart from it the issue is cause by the misunderstanding among the religious groups.

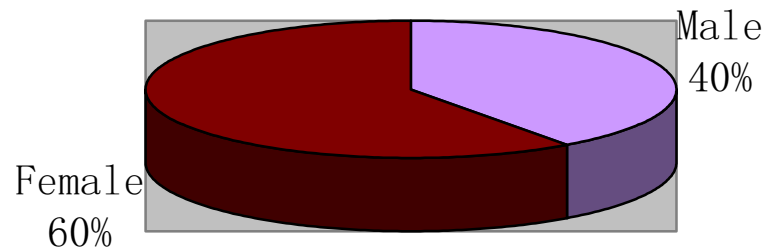
While 8% of the female undergraduates agree to the issue has been propagated.

It is a very small issue which is blown up by the media for the sake of attention. Furthermore, the issue has been long highlighted. 6% of the respondent thinks that the issue has been played up by different parties in which their aim is to gain power and wealth. As 4% of the respondent feels that the issue is worsen by the policy on special privileges to the Malays as they feel more superior to the other races. The rest of the 3% male and female students state that it is on politicians who wants to obtain fame and power in their position in causing a big issue.

However, majority of 3% of the male undergraduates' respondents still thinks that the whole cause of the "Allah" issue is the effect of propaganda by different parties. Tolerance is very important in this case. 2.5% of the male undergraduates responded that the issue is blown up and play up by the politicians for the purpose of power and wealth. 2% of the respondent agrees to the policy on the special privileges for the Malays will be to root of all problems as the Malays feel that their position is challenge. The rest will be the 1% of the male respondent does not have any opinion on the issue.

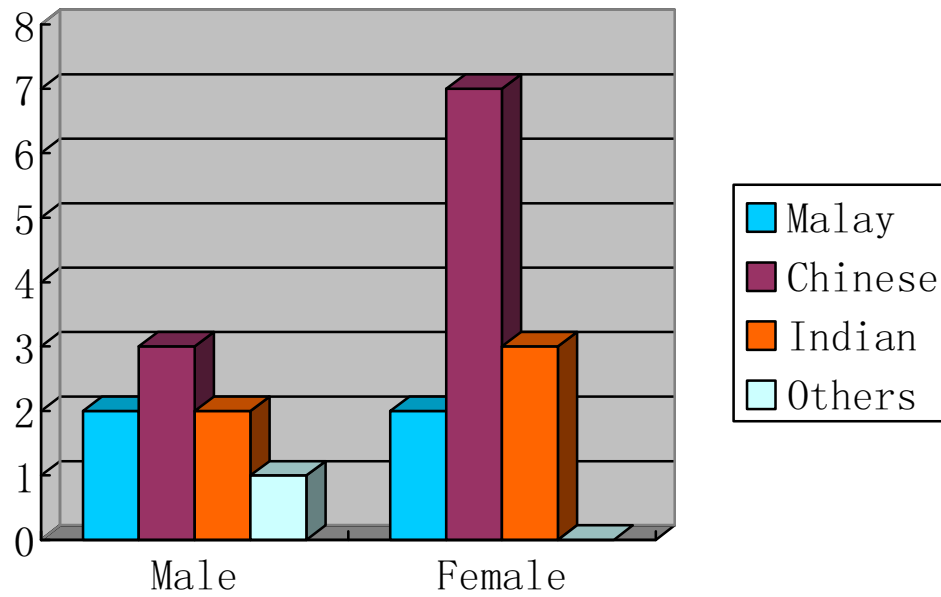
LECTURERS' RESPONDENTS

1)

**Figure 1**

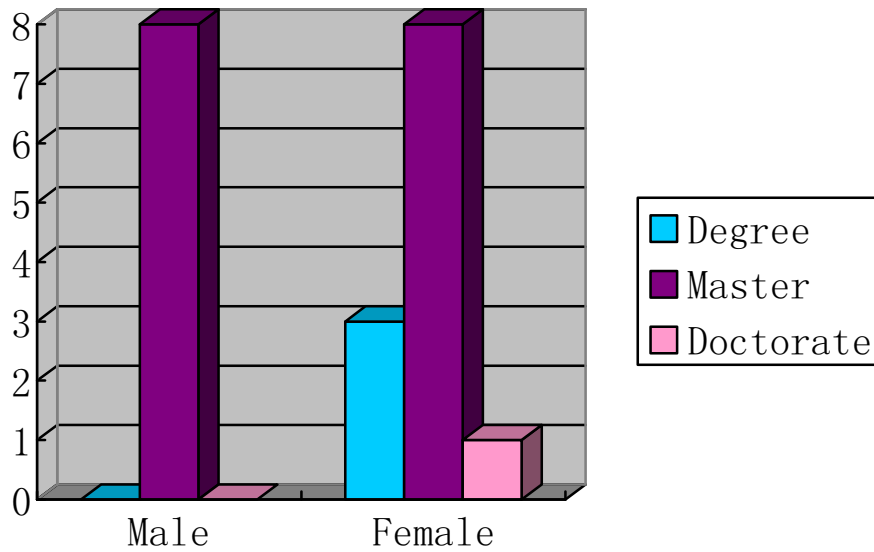
The pie chart shows that 60% female Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman lecturers participate in the survey questionnaires on the “Allah” issue. While, 40% of male Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman lecturers also participate in giving their feedback regarding the matter.

2)

**Figure 2**

The bar chart state different races Malay, Chinese, Indian and others participate in giving feedback on the issue. Chinese female lecturers are the majority respondent stating 7%. Follow by 3% of the male lecturers supports the issue.

3)

**Figure 3**

The bar chart shows the education level in which both male and female lecturers respondent to the “Allah” issue are majority master holder. Both state 8% follow by 3% female lecturers responding to the subject of research.

5)

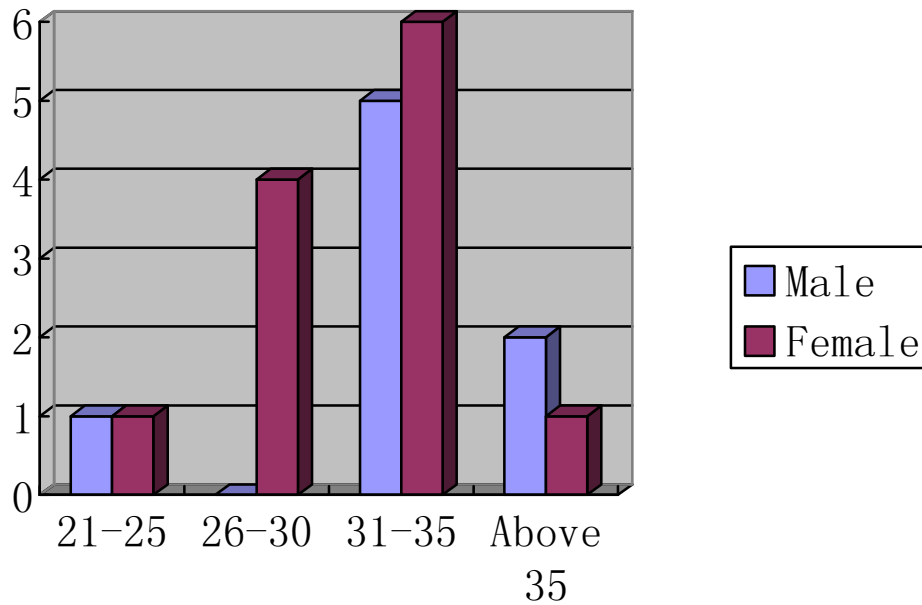
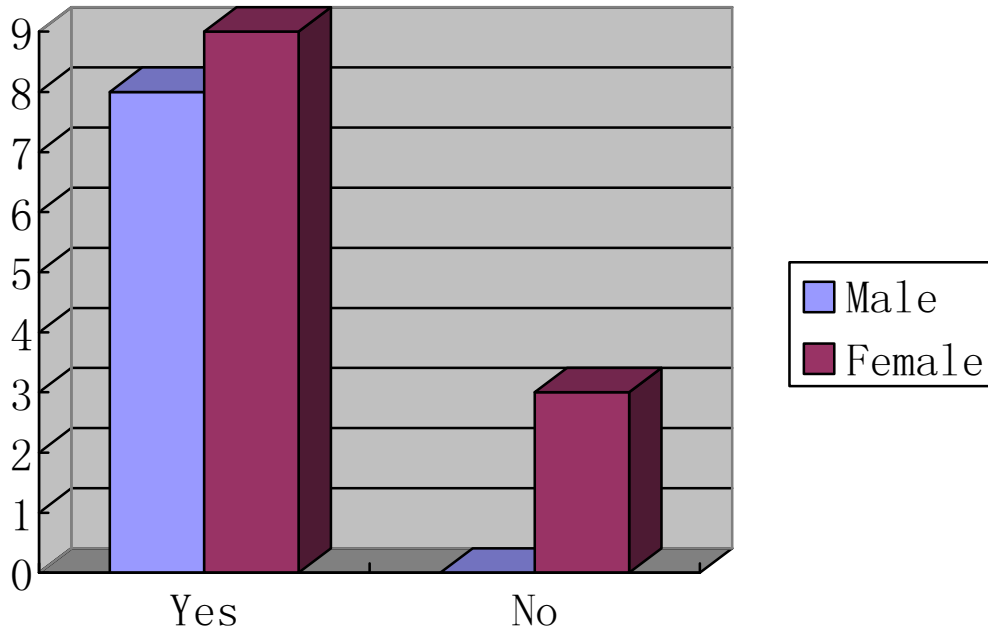


Figure 5

The above bar chart illustrates four different age group of the respondent separated into male and female. Age group between 31-35 years old contributes to more feedback to the research topic in which the highest 6% of them effectively responded to the issue.

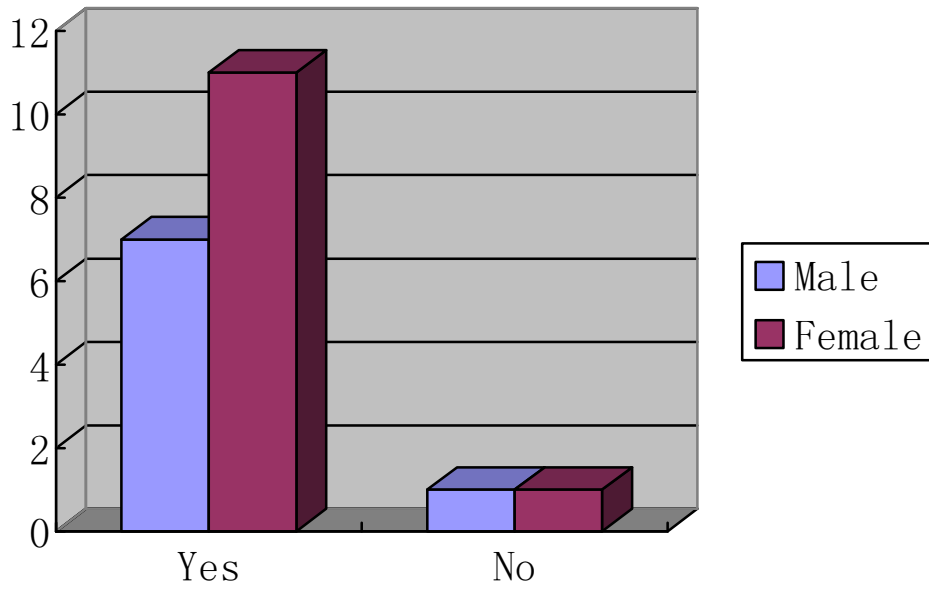
SECTION B

1)

**Figure 1**

The above bar chart demonstrates the percentage of both male and female respondents in their level of awareness on the “Allah” word dispute. Majority of the respondent answer yes which prove that they are aware on the issue. The female respondent state 9% while the male respondent with 8%.

3)

**Figure 3**

The above bar chart illustrates the opinions of the lecturers on the issue whether it will cause racial tension in the state. Therefore, high percentage of the male and female lecturers agrees to the statement by stating 11% as 7% for male respondents.

4)

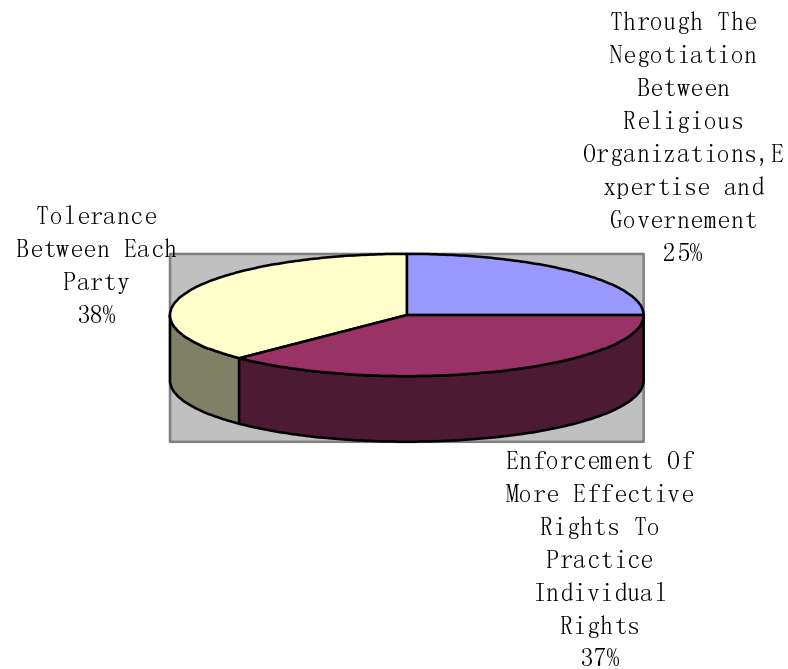


Figure 4

The pie chart shows the point of view on the solutions to overcome the dispute. Majority of them agree to the ways each party tolerates by stating 38% which is the highest percentage. Both male and female lecturers respond that the best solution for the regarding issue, it is vital for all sides to tolerate to achieve mutual understanding despite the differences.

5)

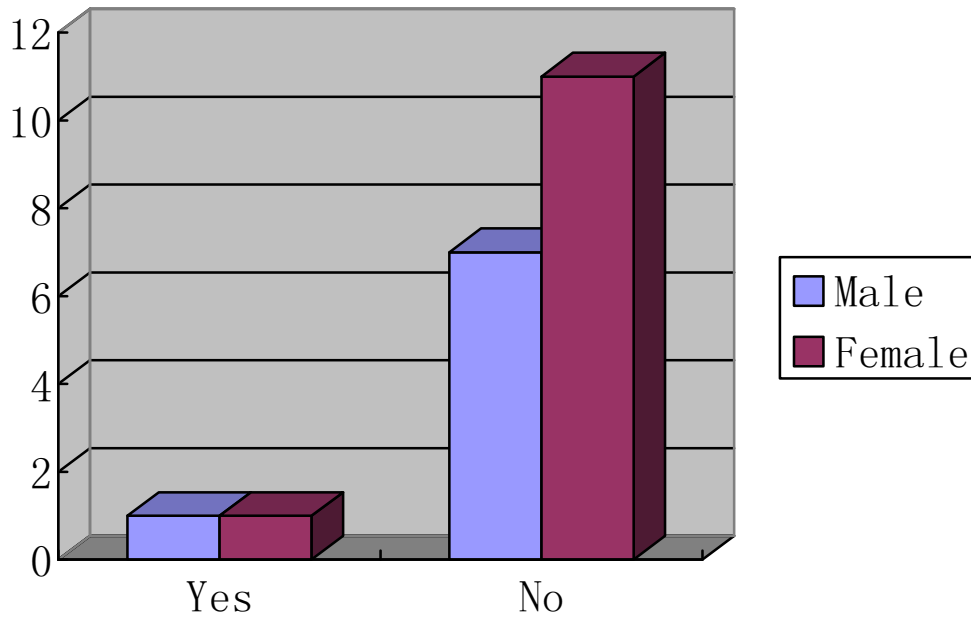
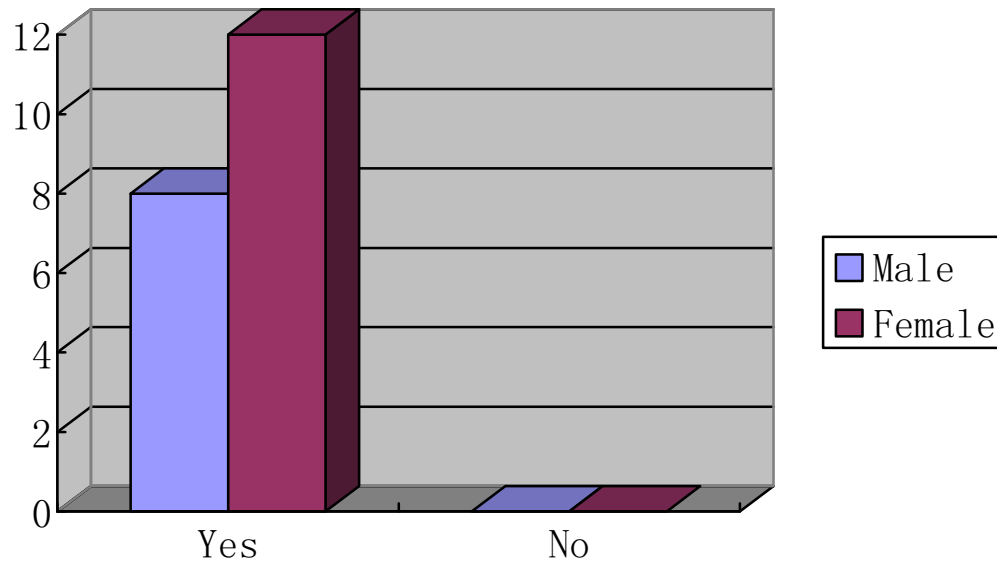


Figure 5

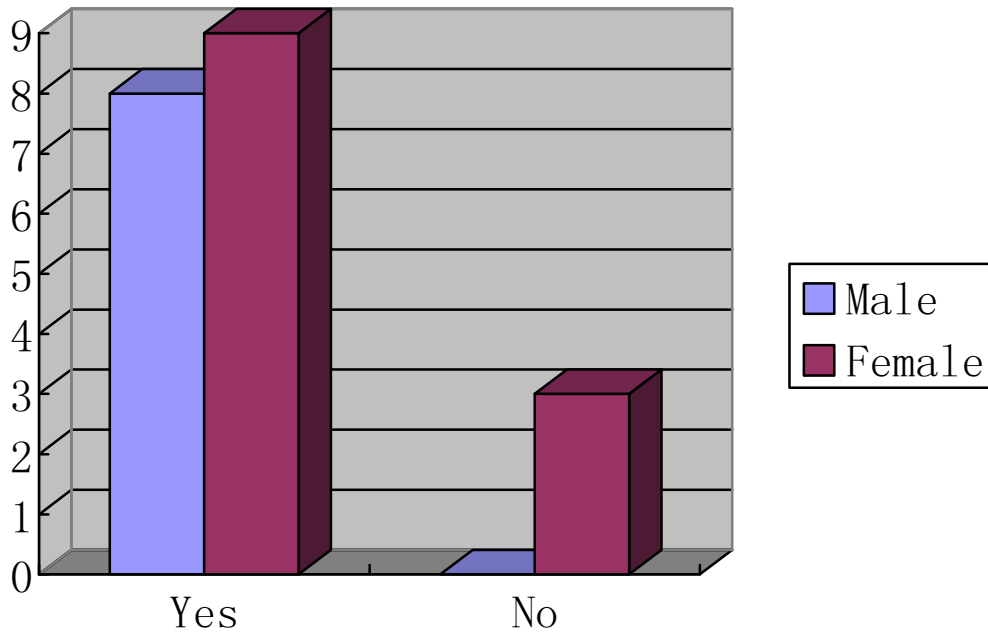
The bar chart shows the opinions on the privilege of the usage of the word “Allah” by the Muslims in which should the word be used only by Muslim and not others. Therefore, majority of the 11% female lecturers responded that the word must not only be limited to the Muslims. Follow by the male lecturers stating 7% all of them.

6)

**Figure 6**

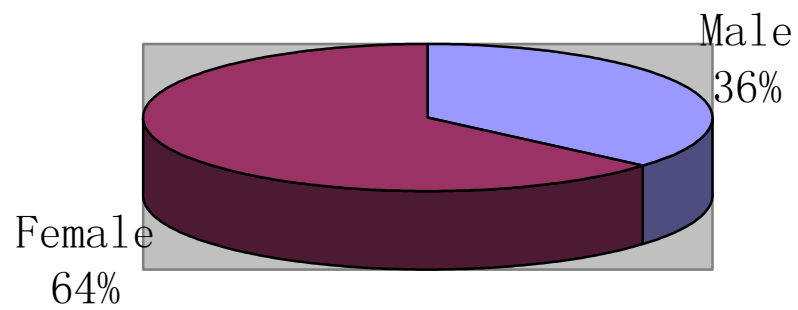
The bar chart shows the majority of the female lecturers stating 12% of them agree that the media play a vital role in highlighting the issue. While the male lecturers' state 8% of them. However, a small percentage do not agree that the media play an important role in letting the public know what that is happening around.

7)

**Figure 7**

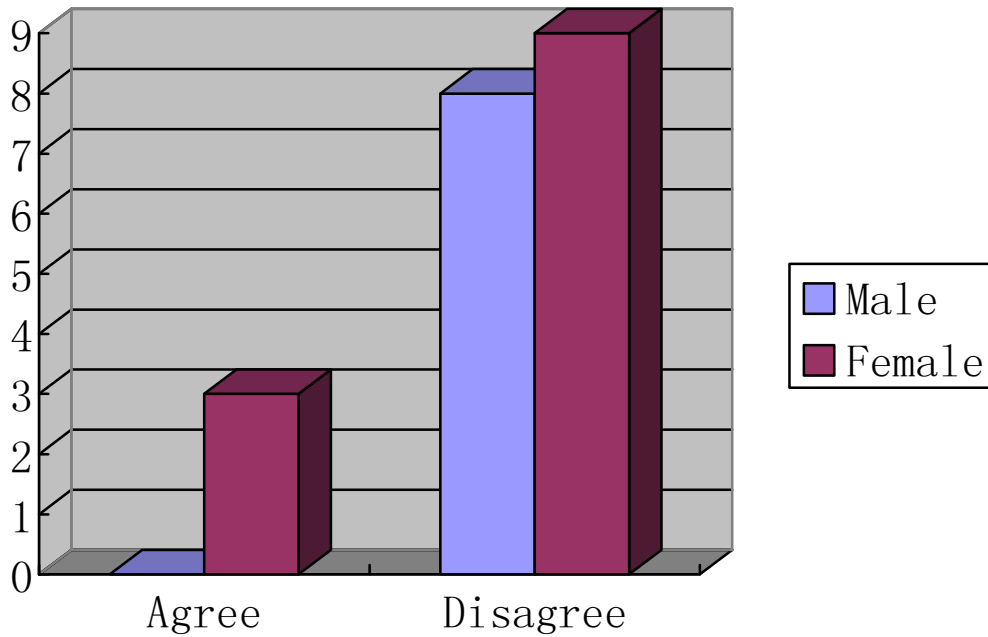
The bar chart shows majority of the female lecturers and male lecturers agree to the “Allah” issue that is propagated by the media. 9% of the female lecturers and 8% of the male lecturers responded to the survey.

8)

**Figure 8**

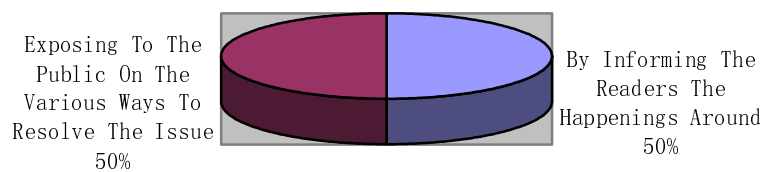
The pie chart shows 64% of the female lecturers agree to the media bring more impact to the public than the politicians. As 36% of the male lecturers also supports the stand on the media plays an important role in highlighting the issue.

9)

**Figure 9**

The bar chart shows that the majority of male and female lecturers disagree that the word “Allah” should only be used by the Muslims but not other races. 9% of the female lecturers and 8% of male lecturers portray their dissatisfaction on the regarding matter.

10)

**Figure 10**

The above pie chart shows that 50% of both female and male lecturers agree to the solutions made to solve the regarding issue. The left portion refers to the female lecturers that agree to the media playing their role to expose to the public on the various ways to resolve the issue while the other half 50% of the male lecturers agree to the media solely inform the public what that is happening in the country.

11)

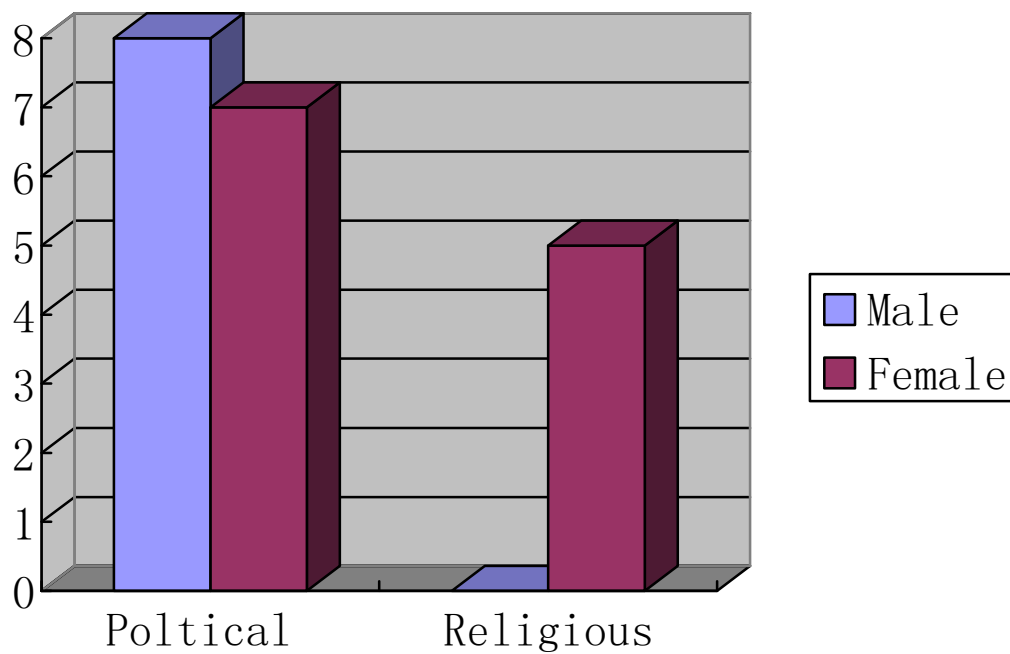
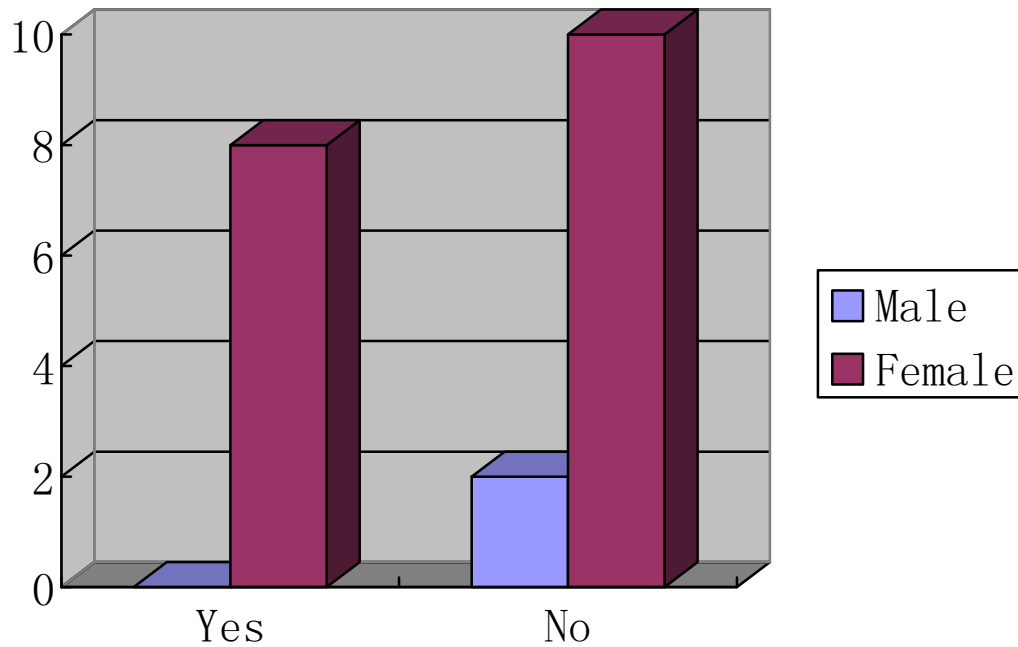


Figure 11

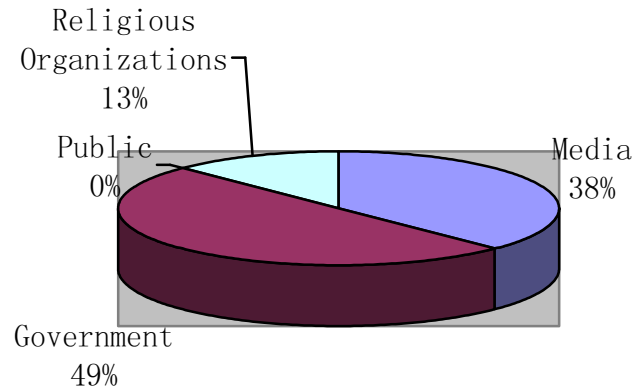
The bar chart explains that the “Allah” word dispute is caused by political issues as 8% of the female lecturers responded positively to the survey. While 7% of the male lecturers also give the same response to the issue.

12)

**Figure 12**

The bar chart illustrates the effectiveness of the One Malaysia plan despite the dispute. Therefore, majority of the 10% female lecturers say no that the One Malaysia will fail its plan to unite the people. While, 8% of the male lecturers responded that the plan can still continue to make their way through.

13)

**Figure 13**

The pie chart above prove that 49% of both the male and female lecturers feedback that the government should be the party to be blame as they should be the one to be responsible to stop the current chaos. Follow by 38% of them agree that media should be the party to be blame for the problems occurred.

SECTION C

15)

Categories	Male	Female
Yes	7	7
No	1	4
Not Sure	0	1
	8	12

Based on the table above, majority of the 0.52% male lecturers responded yes and 0.12%

says no to the “Allah” issue that has been monopolized by the media. As for the female lecturers, 0.52% of them say yes that the issue is monopolized. While, 0.48% of the female lecturers say no the issue is not solely monopolized by media. Follow by 0.12% them says that they are not aware on the issue.

Majority of the male students 0.52% say yes with different point of view. 0.24% says that the mainstream media especially control the issue. While 0.16% state that this issue is cause by religious organizations and those interested parties who exploit the religious sensitivity of the people. 0.8% of the male lecturers believe that the issue is play up by the politicians to gain power and wealth.

As for the female lecturers, 0.52% feels that the issue is due to media monopolization. Some thinks that this issue is related to religious issue; however it is not another’s wish to own the religion but to practice it for the good of oneself. 0.48% female lecturers who mention no that the media has monopolized the issue strongly state that the issue is monopolized by the other party as like the politicians and also religious organizations. There are still 0.12% of them not aware of the ongoing issue that has happened.

16)

Categories	Male	Female
Not Sure	0	1
Propagation	0	2
Religious	3	3
Tolerance	0	1
Individual Rights	1	5
All Parties	2	0
Political	2	0
	8	12

The table above shows that the majority of the 0.6% female lecturers think that the issue should be perceived as leaving the rights for the people to choose what they think is right and not letting the other parties to interfere. While 0.4% of the female lecturers feels that the more important aspect is religion as they feel that if all religious organizations could merely negotiate with each other of course it would help solve the issue.

While, 0.3% of the female lecturers agree that the media is propagating the issue to capture the attention from the public. As the rest 0.1% thinks that tolerance might be the best solution to solve the issue. However, there are also some not aware on the issue.

On the other hand, the majority of 0.2% thinks that religious organizations should negotiate with each other to overcome the issue. As the rest of the male lecturer respondents feels that all other parties must also participate to look into the arising issue and find more effective way to overcome it.

Political system need to be scrutinized so that there is no misuse of power for own benefit. 0.08% does also agree that practicing own individual rights to practice own religion would be best to stop this issue from happening.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Journalists potentially have the power to disrupt and undermine the work of spin-doctors by refusing to accept the line they are spinning and by trying to unearth issues the spin-doctors are attempting to bury. However, the media has increasingly become an industry geared towards profit maximization rather than 'investigation'. This has driven many newsrooms into effectively becoming media release processing centers. (Eric, 2008)

Generally, the power that journalists obtain and use it to influence the political process comes not from being watchdogs, but from the fact that politician and their public relations demand for the media (Ingham, 1991:160).

There is a mutual interdependence. Neither side can afford to break the relationship, nor fundamentally alienate the other partner. However, journalists are never in control because they must collaborate in order to retain their sources, neither are they powerless. But their 'power' and status is of a second-hand variety-derivative of their relationship with the real power holders. It is also a 'negative power', because journalists do not have the power to make policy or allocate resources, but they can in certain situation with their own ways bring down those with such power. Consequently, journalists sometimes have the ability to frighten politicians and to mobilize 'moral panics' and 'groundswells of hostility' to policies. (Eric, 2008)

It could be argued that communication professionals inside the political machine acquire a variety of power from their direct relationship with policy makers and party functionaries, while those outside the political machine for example, journalist acquire who acquire a variety of derivative power because politicians are dependent on them to

disseminate the hype. This brought up the questions about the political consequences of the symbiotic relationships that have apparently developed between politicians, their PRs, journalists and media owners. Representative democracy advocates have some cause for concern given the influence that non-elected communication professionals seem to have increase in numbers from driving the mass hype machinery. (ibid.).

Essentially, politicians need journalists and PRs to help them to circulate appropriate political myths, stories and visions; build appropriate political identities; build their own profiles and celebrity status; and sell policies, belief systems and worldviews. When it comes to politics, journalists have an especially powerful influence because the news media holds the responsibility for circulating political meanings. Journalists have therefore played a significant part in constructing national identity reaching back to the earliest days of mass-circulating presses. Revealing this contribution serves to illustrate the role the media plays in building political identities such as national identity. (ibid.).

Based on the mainstream media reporting, their content is slightly different from the alternative media like *Aliran* and Malaysia Today. The mainstream are more focused on the solutions or steps taken by the government and religious organizations to overcome the issue while as for the alternative their content will include the many cases of churches arson. *The Star* and New Straits Times both mainstream papers report on more major events that are focusing on the ruling coalition. In their content of *The Star* state on the Prime Minister's action to find solutions to the issue in which instructions are given for all the people to not do anything that can endanger the lives of the public and their interest. Moreover, the Malaysian Institute of Islamic Understanding (IKIM) will hold a closed-door discussion among Islamic experts on Jan 21 entitled "Translation of

‘God’ as Allah.

As for the content in New Straits Times, the highlight is also on the actions taken by the government to overcome the issue. The “Allah” controversy is related to the cause and consequences that will threaten the religious organizations in the country. The focus also to inform people to let them know and have a clear picture of the issue that is happening. Additionally, readers will be able to keep track of the updated information on the steps taken by the government to stop the issue from continuing for mentioning the session court sentencing two youths who found to be involve in starting the dispute.

However, the alternative papers’ content shows the formation of opinion of a person regarding the issue. The news piece is much more like an opinion piece in which people could also leave their comments to participate the debate. Both alternative papers discuss the problems that cause the “Allah” controversy. The main reason for this issue is due to politics not religion. The content discusses the individual’s rights to practice their own religion as it is not right for any party to question it especially all of us live in a democratic country. All in all, the issue has been played up to threaten the political arena, social aspect and harmony in the state.

The mainstream discusses less issue on the facts that the issue is blown up. While, the alternatives papers provide news and information that encourages feedbacks and also participation from the public at the same time space for further debate. Whenever there are question touching on three most sensitive issues which are royalty, race and religion then it will contribute to racism. Race relationships and connections to powerful socio-economic policies have been debated in websites and blogs. The issue will be a starting point for the failure of the One Malaysia concept in creating unity. The situation is clear

that the media is trying to influence the minds of the people making them believe what they read everyday.

Based on the researcher's findings found out that majority of the undergraduates students and lecturers agree that the media do propagate the 'Allah' issue. Most of them believe that if the level of propagation in the media world increase, there will not be credibility and truth in a particular news piece. Moreover, the role of propaganda will be one of the important factors contributing to the level of freedom in speech and also news reporting. The analysis shows that 100 undergraduates' respondents and 20 lecturers deem to accept that media propaganda do limit the freedom of speech in Malaysia. They believe when the media is control by certain party, the media content will be controlled to protect their party's image.

There is 53 percent of the female students and 25 percent pointed out that the issues that are played up by the media will eventually cause racial tension. They stress that media play their role as propaganda machinery by the political parties that each represent. Therefore, the "Allah" issue could be one of the tools used to play about with the religious party in the country. As for the solutions taken to solve the problems, 39% of the female and male undergraduates agree that all the religious, governmental and expertise must discuss with each other to form good strategies to stop the "Allah" issue from getting worst. While the 49% of the male and female lecturers thinks that the government should be the party to be fully responsible to overcome the issue. The respective steps should be taken to structure and find the root of the problem.

Moreover, there are also the other sides of argument for the usage of "Allah" word. The Catholic Church argues a few reason they use the "Allah" word for their worship

purposes that had triggered the chaos in religion rights. The first reason is that they claimed that they are following the Bible. The Bible in the Malay language uses the word “Allah” as the translation of “God” and “God” for the word “Lord”. However, the rejection arguments that exist were “Allah” is deemed as a specific name from an Arabic word and it cannot be used in other forms or any other meanings. According to the Arabic grammar, the word cannot be publicized, minimized, be gender biased or be published in other terms. The word “Allah” is free from all grammatical structure and corrupted meanings. It also cannot be manipulated in whatever way from its original form.

In the Malaysian context, the word “Allah” is not translated into Malay language and is retained without translated. That is why “Allah” here refers directly to the meaning in the Quran without modification in its saying (translation) or the meaning of the word itself. This is proven as defined by Kamus Dewan 4th Edition: Allah: Ar (language origin Arabic) God (the only One); ~ azzawajalla the Nicest and the Most Sacred; ~ subhanahu wa taala: the most elevated God. Therefore the use of the word “Allah” cannot be regarded as an adherence to the sacred Book of Muslims which has been part of the Muslim culture and is fully understood by the non-muslims in this country.

While as for the second reason argues by the Catholic Church is they claim as early as 19th century, the Catholics in Malaya had owned prayers books in Malay and the word “Allah” has been used in reference to God. The Maltese Catholic had also used the word “Allah” to refer to “God” and similarly the Christians in Indonesia, Pakistan and the West Asia. Nevertheless, there are still party that rejects the arguments in which the attempt to compare Malaysia with other countries which uses “Allah” as a reference to “God” is also rejected. This is because there are different legends and cultures in every

language used by the different races in a certain country. In this case, the background of the Malay language which has been used by the Malaysians comes from the root of Islam and the Malay culture. This means the Malay culture itself comes from Islam.

As for the third reason the Catholic Church argues that the segments (translation) in Bahasa Malaysia are created to meet the needs of ethnic and linguistic diversity that exists in Malaysia which similarly exists in the Catholic population in Malaysia. The rejection argument was the reason to translate it into Bahasa Malaysia as a sign that there exists diversity in the Catholic Christian population is also unacceptable. It should be known that Bahasa Malaysia comes from Malay language.

Item 152 in the Federal Constitution states that the Malay language is the national and official language of Malaysia, therefore it is important for us to remember that the word “Malaysia” has yet to exist. Therefore, when we refer to Bahasa Malaysia, we are referring to Malay Language, which actually refers to the Malay Muslims population. Thus, specific terminologies which have become the flagship (syiar) and symbol of the Malay Muslim population can never be conceptualized to fit in other cultures and religions.

Conflict does occurred between people in all kinds of human relationships and in all social setting because of the wide range of potential differences among people, the absence of conflict usually results in the absence of meaningful interaction. Therefore, conflict here can bring positive and also negative impact. However, the manner conflict is handled all depends on whether it is constructive or destructive. Regardless of the level of conflict, there are different approaches to deal with the incompatibilities that exist. Conflict can result in destructive outcomes or bring out positive outcomes all depends on

the actions taken to solve it.

Fisher highlight that if we as active citizens in a country can manage conflict creatively, we can often find new solutions that are agreeable to both parties. He continue to discuss on the creative outcomes are more portable when the parties are more interdependent, for example each having some degree of independence and autonomy from which to influence the other rather than one party being primarily dependent on the other. Given interdependence, three general strategies have been identified that the parties may take toward dealing with their conflict: win-lose, lose-lose and win-win. (Blake, Shepard & Mouton, 1964)

Fisher states that people must adapt three strategies as a solution to racial dispute. Each individual or interest groups should look into win-lose, lose-lose or win-win situation. The win-lose approach is all common. People learn the behaviors of destructive conflict early in life – competition, dominance, aggression and defense permeate many of our social relationships from the family to the school playground. The fixed pie assumption is made. Often incorrectly, that what one party gains, the other loses. The strategy is thus to force the other side to surrender. (ibid.).

This in a way shows the competition happening between humans in whom they compete to defend their own interest and religion. As this result to the dispute as their strong will to be more superior to the other. While as for lose-lose approach is exemplified by smoothing over conflict or by reaching the simplest of compromises. In neither ways is seen that the creative potential of productive conflict resolution realized or explored. In this situation, each party gets some of what it wants, and resigns itself to partial satisfaction. (ibid.),

Besides that win-win situations can also be applied to solve the dispute. Different religious groups should tolerate with each other's differences order to reach mutual understanding. This approach requires conscious and systematic attempt to maximize the goals of both parties through collaborative problem solving. The problem will seem to be solved rather than a war to be won. This method focuses on the needs and constraints of both party rather than strategies design to conquer. The communication is open and direct rather than secretive and calculating. (Fisher, 2000)

CONCLUSION

As to conclude, in the media world all information that is created by politicians or the public will package and circulated by the media person. It is because the political system has been media-zed. Then politicians and also prominent person will be the center of attention of the media. The usage of “Allah” word has been brought up by one of the prominent player then it will analyze and packaged and distribute to the public by the press.

Since the policy making involves policy elites negotiating with a range of interest groups; financial backers; and other politicians that are within their respective parties group or other parties. During these negotiations, the media can often be used to help to build leverage by mobilizing interest groups or public opinion in ways that undermine one’s opponents’ position, and/or boost one’s own position. Many techniques can be used to generate beneficial media coverage, ranging from conventional PR to leaking stories to journalists.

Communication experts are now from time to time consulted to advise policy elites on what is politically possible for example to what extent the public can be managed or steered. If communication experts inform politicians that they cannot deliver public approval, or acquiescence, or passivity on a proposed policy, policy elites appear to often pull back. Moreover, it appears that communication experts now often set the limits on what is regarded as ‘politically possible’ where limits set by how far communication steering is deemed feasible.

Additionally, an independent website name Hawkeye highlights the view of the Malaysian political and economic state of affairs. The editorial sections are provided for

everyday debate on the issue propagation by the mainstream media especially those own by specific political parties. The issue on the media should not be the propaganda machinery for the political parties are all open for the discussion for the people. The main highlight of the matter is on the Malaysian papers for being propaganda tools for the ruling party.

The president of Malaysian National Union of Journalists Hata Wahari has issued a public call to the Malaysian papers to stop being “propaganda tools” of the Malaysian government. Based on the press release, Mr. Hata stress on the union also asks editors of mainstream media especially Utusan Malaysia, New Straits Times, Berita Harian and the *The Star* to play the role of disseminating information to the public and not as propaganda machinery of the government, political parties, or any individual.”

At the same time, Mr. Hata is taking actions to go through the latest figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) stating the decline in circulation in most Malaysian papers such as Untusan Malaysia, New Straits Times, The Star and Berita Harian. He also commented on the issue on ‘racist’ editors from Utusan Malaysia from flaming racial tensions and sentiments in Malaysia, leading to a 5.9 percent drop in its readership. The Utusan group was founded in Singapore in 1939 by Singapore in 1939 by Singapore’s first President Yusok Ishak and a group of Malay intellectuals. Utusan Malaysia’s daily circulation has declined by nearly half from 350,000 ten years ago to only 170,000 now.

The increase of alternative news sites in Malaysia is fast eroding the readership and profitability of the Malaysian media which has often been decried as ‘propaganda mouthpieces’ of the Malaysian government. Since 2008, the Malaysian new media has

seen a dozen new players entering the scene such as The Malaysian Insider, The Malaysian Chronicle and Free Malaysia Today. Singapore also has an association of journalists which is a toothless organization with little power or authority to take action against errant 'journalists', most of whom are under the payroll of Singapore Press Holdings, headed by a former PAP deputy prime minister.

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APPENDIXES

Headline: Getting excited over S word

Publication: NST

Date of publication: Mar 18, 2010

Section heading: Main Section

Page number: 014

Byline / Author: By Azmi Anshar

THE three hyper-sensitive issues known as the 3Rs - royalty, race and religion - have dominated under-the-radar discourses for decades but, in the open, there is barely enough data to fill a floppy disk.

Another letter was injected into the national consciousness - S - which stands for "sex".

Some may think it is "sodomy". Any difference?

The last time the monarchy was scrutinized in the media was during the 1992-1993 constitutional crisis, triggered by the excesses of certain princes.

These days, any scrutiny of royalty revolves around scuffles, marriage break-ups and palace succession intrigues.

Race relationships and connections to powerful socio-economic policies have been simmering in websites and blogs for years.

Some debates actually provide con-structive ideas on improving racial ties while others antagonist and alienate the cross-section, who may think that they are under siege.

Business and education quotas are a vexing dispute: one race will clamour for more privileges because they insist their advancement is retarded while others demand liberalization to amplify Malaysia's global competitiveness.

Intra-religious dialogue burgeoned in the apoplectic but civilized **Allah** appellation **controversy**. It was Malaysia's dazzling free-speech moment but a free-for-all is still impossible.

Yesterday, the **S word** was floated by Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin,

who announced a committee of experts to examine feedback on teaching sex education in schools.

Speaking at Parliament House, Muhyiddin alluded to the prickly nature of the subject, seeing that experts have divergent views on it: some praised its imminence, others balked at its introduction, and many thought it was timely while others worried about its repercussions.

What was needed most, he said, was to dissect the issue to its absolute point so that the government could produce a sensible policy.

So unbending is the sex taboo that the Home Ministry recently banned 17 books and magazines on the grounds of "moral reasons" and "unsuitable content".

A glance at the titles set off reflexive titillation at the prose and perhaps a graphic picture or two of escapades and romances with a sexual bent.

Muhyiddin is on the right course. Sex education, a harmless subject dealing in human interaction and procreation, can't get traction in schools because it radiates bad vibes, at least to the ultra-religious and conservatives convinced that it encourages permissiveness, promiscuity and social destruction.

Critics counter-argue that in the absence of sex education, social dysfunction transpires.

An example is abandoned babies, dead before being discovered in alleys, abandoned by fearful mothers who don't know any better.

Tell that also to the victims of sexual abuse in desolate quarters of the country.

What about the vulgarity that is a middle-aged man wedded to a 11-year-old girl barely out of puberty and unable to think about the consenting issues of marriage and consummation?

Such is the skewed perception of sex, at least among the ignorant class who badly needs an education about the **S word**.

Headline: Cause and consequence

Publication: NST

Date of publication: Aug 16, 2010

Section heading: Main Section

Page number: 016

A SESSIONS Court has sentenced the two youths who tried to burn down the Metro Tabernacle Church in Desa Melawati in January to five years' imprisonment for that act of arson. The judicial process will have to run its gamut of appeals. But judge S.M. Komathy Suppiah's verdict, delivered in language including the words "reprehensible" and "appalling", coupled with the doubling of the two defendants' bail bonds pending their appeals, sends the necessary message that there will be consequences for acts like this, and they will be severe.

Perhaps, for some, not severe enough. The fire-bombing of churches was unheard-of in this country. Desecrations of places of worship have indeed occurred, but the animal parts tossed into temples and mosques did no lasting damage and threatened no lives. What Raja Muhammad Faizal Raja Ibrahim and his younger brother Raja Muhammad Idzham did, however, took this sort of vile behaviour to a new and unprecedented level amid the volatile atmosphere then extant over the use of the **word "Allah"** by non-Muslims in this country. And, as Komathy also observed in the judgment, they sparked copycats. These young men's act was indeed so inflammatory, in all senses of the **word**, that some would think five years behind bars is too lenient.

That might be so, had they been part of anything larger than a stupid, ignorant, idiotically melodramatic jape among delinquents. The two brothers may be chronologically adults, but their interactions, as unearthed by police investigations, revealed nothing more than the desperate immaturity of children: heroic role-playing escalating on I-dare-yous to that act of utter folly on the night of Jan 7 this year.

It's taken just eight months for this to have been wrapped up and bundled off to the appeals process. In the intervening period, gratifyingly, even as this and subsequent copycat acts were met by grim restraint among the general populace, a measure of sobriety has infused the underlying **controversy** over the common use of religious terminology in this country. That matter, too, remains under judicial consideration.

Thanks to this verdict on the arsonists of the Metro Tabernacle Church, the silver lining to these clouded issues is that more sensibility now attends their deliberation, and less emotion and puerile angst. Sensitive issues are sensitive not by decree but because people

are sensitive about them, and there will be consequences to things said and done in defiance of this. This verdict is among those consequences for these two troublemakers.

THE STAR

Thursday January 7, 2010

PM explains 'Allah' ruling controversy to the King

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had an audience with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong to explain the controversy surrounding the use of the word 'Allah' and measures taken by the Government to find a solution.

Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin had consented to the measures taken by the Government, said a statement from the Prime Minister's Office.

"The Government has filed an appeal against the decision by the High Court. While the appeal process is going on, it is our responsibility not to do anything that can jeopardise the interest and well-being of the people," the statement said.

The Malaysian Institute of Islamic Understanding (Ikim) will hold a closed-door discussion among Islamic experts on Jan 21 entitled "Translation of 'God' as Allah: Identifying the Root of the Problem and its Solution",

In Bangi, former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said it was crucial the matter was not politicised and urged all parties to leave it to the Court of Appeal to make its decision.

MALAYSIA TODAY

The "Allah" Controversy- the political ramifications

Archives 2010

14 January 2010

Art Harun

The controversy surrounding the usage of "Allah" by non-Muslims, particularly the Christians, in Malaysia continues to rage even as at the time of writing this article. The Malaysian Insider just reported that a ninth church - this time in Kota Tinggi, Johore - had been vandalised.

The year 2009 was about to end when Yang Ariff Justice Lau Bee Lan held that the word "Allah" may be used by the Herald in its newspaper. That decision has almost redefined the phrase "ending the year with a bang."

Viewed with the benefit of hindsight, there were of course political opportunity loss on the part of the Barisan Nasional. In a land where everything from the slaughtering of cows for distribution to the poor and needy to the building of a free trade zone are perfect fodders for politics, the Allah issue was never far from being one as well.

In the last half of 2009, I actually thought that the Prime Minister was in the political driving seat. He was in control. His 1 Malaysia concept and sloganeering, although leaving much to be desired from the view point of the urbanites, was gaining support from the heartland. The Chinese and Indian supports were slowly coming back to him and his government despite the impotence and lameness of the two most important protagonists which were supposed to represent the two races within the government, namely the MCA and MIC respectively.

The public relation machinations of the government were working full steam and in overdrive. The Prime Minister and his men were all over the place, winning nods of approvals from the people on the street.

In the meantime, power base in UMNO was being broadened. And his hard line approach towards the opposition was well received within the UMNO circle, especially at the grass root level. The Perak power grab, orchestrated and executed by him, although crude and almost unrefined, served to cement the belief among UMNO members that in Dato' Seri Najib Razak, UMNO has a powerful leader who is not afraid to use his power for the benefit of UMNO. Gone were the days of the lembik leadership that they had under the stewardship of Tun Abdullah.

And so, despite various issues ranging from Teoh Beng Hock's death at the MACC state head office to the PKFZ debacle, the Prime Minister was looking good.

ALIRAN

Can ‘Allah’ be monopolised by any community?

By, on 16 March 2010

Public intellectuals must raise the voice of reason and take a public stand on this issue even risking their own reputations or careers, says Asghar Ali Engineer.

Of late, I have been receiving questions about the controversy these days in Malaysia about ‘Allah’ as Malay Muslims are objecting to the use of word ‘Allah’ by Christians. The Malays feel only Muslims can use the word Allah and Christians cannot. The case was fought at the High Court, which allowed the use of the word ‘Allah’ by Christians. But the Malaysian government obtained a stay order, pending appeal. It is not because the government is trying to defy the High Court order, but because the controversy has become politically unmanageable due to overcharged emotions.

The Catholics translate the word ‘God’ as ‘Allah’ in the Malay-language supplement of their weekly newspaper, Herald – and hence the controversy. Of late, about a dozen churches have been attacked and with the administrative wing of one extensively damaged. The religious extremists appear to be determined to inflict their views on others. Malaysia, like India, is a multi-religious society, and by and large it has remained peaceful except when violence erupted in 1969 between Malays and Chinese.

But then again, relations between Malays and Christians or Malays and Hindus sour occasionally or the situation becomes tense. All multi-religious societies experience inter-communal or inter-religious tensions in some or more degrees. All Malays are Muslims, who constitute about sixty per cent of Malaysia’s population. In Malaysia, Malays and Muslims have become synonymous. As mostly weaker sections of society embrace Islam in the hope of equality and justice, in Malaysia too, poorer sections embraced Islam and large numbers of Malays till recently were poor and backward. However, many of them are now well educated and economically better off.

The Malays who oppose the use of word Allah by Christians argue that this will confuse ordinary Malays and worry that, in view of the missionary activities of some Christians, they may convert to Christianity. They thus want to ward off this confusion among the Malays. This may have its own rationale but the problem has to be solved through dialogue and mutual understanding. But the problem is that some politicians would like to exploit such controversies for their benefit.

In fact, those who object to the use of the word ‘Allah’ by Christians are on weak grounds. Allah is one and the creator of all of us and cannot be monopolised by any one religious group, much less linguistic community. The word ‘Allah’ in Arabic was in use before Islam appeared on the scene in Mecca. As Maulana Azad points out in his Tarjuman al-Qur’an the word ‘Allah’ is derived linguistically from pre-Islamic ‘eel’ as in Jibra’il or Israfil. The word in Hebrew was also iloh or ilah and by adding ‘al’ (which in English is used for ‘the’). Thus al-ilah (the God) became Allah in Arabic and was used for supreme God.

In fact Muslims should welcome it if non-Muslims too use the word Allah for God or Ishwar. How can one object to the use of Allah by others? Anyone who learns Arabic and talks about God will have to use word Allah. All Christian Arabs freely use word Allah in countries such as Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. No one objects to the use of the word 'Allah'. At least I do not know whether any Muslim Arab ever objected to such use.

Language pre-exists religion

I was in Lebanon in the late nineties for a Christian-Muslim dialogue and we decided to visit a mosque on a Friday and a church on Sunday. We, Muslims, offered salah (prayer) on Friday and the Christians sat in one place till the prayer was over, and we discussed with the imam of the mosque certain inter-communal problems. Similarly, we Muslims observed the service in the church on Sunday while Christians in the group participated in the service.

The priest, who was delivering the sermon in Arabic, was using the word 'Allah' only and had a rosary (tasbih) in his hand like the imam in the mosque. If a curtain had been drawn between us and the priest, I would have felt as if the imam in the mosque was delivering a khutba in the mosque. Of course, there were theological differences, but otherwise the Arabic language made us feel as one. As I have always maintained, any language exists prior to any religion and not otherwise. A particular religion uses a language which pre-exists it. More than one religious community can use the same language, and the terminology of both the religions would appear very similar. In fact, in Lebanon, Christians have rendered yeoman service to the Arabic language, and it is the Christians who have prepared a dictionary of modern Arabic Al-Munjid, which is consulted by all Arab scholars of modern Arabic. No language can be the monopoly of any one religious community. In India too, many Hindus learnt Arabic and Persian, which was court language, and they spoke fluent Persian and even wrote poetry in Persian like Chandrabhan Brahman. Several first rate Urdu poets were and still are Hindus, and they use words such as 'Khuda' and 'Allah' in their poetry. How can one object to that? The fear that the use of the word 'Allah' by Christians would confuse Malay Muslims and they might then convert to Christianity is not well grounded. Only those who feel their religion is followed without much conviction can entertain such fears. For Malays, their very identity and existence is based on Islam and as pointed out above, being Malay and being Muslim have become identical. How then can such fear be justified?

Not religious but political

In a modern democratic society, one cannot stop conversions through a fear of the law. If anyone converts to another religion, it would be between him/her and Allah. In matters of religion, one is answerable only to God, not to any human being. However, this matter is really not religious but political. The majority community feels it would be reduced to a minority and hence it resists any conversion to other religions. In India, the Hindutva forces are enacting laws in the BJP-ruled states to stop Hindus converting to other religions like Christianity or Islam but conversions are welcome if any Muslim or Christian converts to Hinduism. Thus, political benefit and not conversion

is the issue.

In a truly democratic society what matters are democratic and fundamental rights not conversion to or from the religion of the majority community religion. It should be purely an individual decision whether to convert to or from any one religion to another religion. Otherwise, our democratic rights would be in great danger. As rightist forces and extremists make a big issue out of nothing to scare the minority, the right wing extremists in Malaysia also have tried to create such a controversy. And as in India, when the BJP raised such a controversy about the Ramjanambhoomi Temple, the Congress Government under Narsimha Rao allowed the Babri Masjid to be demolished. The Malaysian Government too is scared and is afraid of implementing the High Court judgment for the time being.

Any multi-religious or multi-cultural democracy does not work smoothly in an ideal sense. Even advanced western countries are facing problems of inter-religious tension. In France, there is often tension between African Muslims and white French. It is not so much religious but economic and political, and there also rightist forces behind such eruptions.

Jan 3, 2011

Malaysian Papers are Propaganda Tools of the BN Government



The President of Malaysian National Union of Journalists Hata Wahari has issued a public call to Malaysian papers to stop being ‘propaganda tools’ of the Malaysian government.

In a press release, Mr Hata said:

“The union also asks editors of mainstream media especially Utusan Malaysia, New Straits Times, Berita Harian and the The Star to play the role of disseminating information to the public and not as propaganda machinery of the government, political parties, or any individual.”

Mr Hata is responding to latest figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) showing decline in circulation in most Malaysian papers such as Utusan Malaysia, New Straits Times, The Star and Beritan Harian.

He also criticized ‘racist’ editors from Utusan Malaysia for flaming racial tensions and sentiments in Malaysia, leading to a 5.9 percent drop in its readership.

The Utusan group was founded in Singapore in 1939 by Singapore’s first President Yusok Ishak and a group of Malay intellectuals. Utusan Malaysia’s daily circulation has declined by nearly half from 350,000 ten years ago to only 170,000 now.

The proliferation of alternative news sites in Malaysia is fast eroding the readership and profitability of the Malaysian media which has often been decried as ‘propaganda mouthpieces’ of the Malaysian government.

Since 2008, the Malaysian new media has seen a dozen new players entering the scene such as The Malaysian Insider, The Malaysian Chronicle and Free Malaysia Today.

Singapore also has an association of journalists which is a toothless organization with little power or authority to take action against errant ‘journalists’, most of whom are

under the payroll of Singapore Press Holdings, headed by a former PAP deputy prime minister.

Faculty of Creative Industries
Research Project Evaluation Form

Supervisor
 Reviewer:

Student's
 Name :

Student
 ID :

Programme:

Research

Project

Title:

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:		

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: _____

Name: _____

Student
ID: _____

Program: _____

Project Title: _____

<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) 	5 marks	
<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 	15 marks	
<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 	30 marks	
<p>Relationship of issues/themes to the entire text</p>		

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

TOTAL**100 MARKS**

Comments:

Signature: _____**Date:** _____