



POLITICAL LITERACY LEVEL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION RATE AMONG  
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN KAMPAR CAMPUS MEDIA SCHOOL  
STUDENTS

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**APPROVAL FORM**

This research paper attached hereto, entitled “Political Literacy Level and Political Participation Rate Among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Kampar Campus Media School Students” prepared and submitted by “Ali Imran Bin Asri” in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Communication (Honours) Journalism is hereby  
accepted.

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## ABSTRACT

Political literacy is the ability to comprehend and analyse the political world that surrounds them as well as understanding how governments operate or political processes are formed. Political literacy is crucial in democratic or liberal democratic countries for governments that rely on the citizens to participate in the political process, which in turn requires adequate political literacy and knowledge. In the context of Malaysia, based on recent survey results from past research, it was found that political literacy, especially among the youth between the age of 15 to 30 years old, is severely low. A low level of political literacy among the Malaysian youth poses a significant issue as the youth represents a substantial portion of Malaysian society. In addition, political participation from the youth is necessary for the Malaysian government to understand the youth demographic and formulate efficient and conventional public policies. This project aimed to identify Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar Campus media school students' level of political literacy as well as their rate of political participation. Furthermore, this project also aims to identify the common causes for low political literacy level and political participation. Qualitative research methods were used to gather the data as it allows this topic and issue to be explored further in depth and find any unexpected answers.

The research findings suggests that education can strongly impact an individual's political literacy and in certain circumstances, political participation as well. The respondents in this research showed high political literacy level but low political participation due to political disinterest and negative perception towards Malaysian politics. However, Malaysian youths that do not have the opportunity to pursue tertiary education are likely to have low political literacy but varying rates of political participation which decreases the quality of democracy in Malaysia due to politically ill-informed decision making.

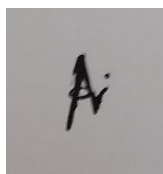
## DECLARATION

I declare that the materials 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.

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Date : 10 December 2023

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
UTAR	Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
EU	European Union
GE15	Malaysia's 15th General Elections
PH	Pakatan Harapan
BN	Barisan Nasional
PN	Perikatan Nasional
PM X	Tenth Malaysian Prime Minister



## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1: Background of Study**

Political literacy can be defined as the ability to comprehend and analyse political concepts critically and apply them in appropriate daily situations, commonly in terms of political participation (Fyfe, 2007; Lailiyah, Yuliyanto, & Pradhana, 2018). Political literacy is often considered as one of the essential skill sets that any citizens should have in order to properly integrate within society, especially countries that practice a democratic framework. It allows them to understand how their government functions, what are their rights and entitlements protected by the constitution, as well as properly participate in the political process in a democratic system.

Past research showed that political literacy level has a direct impact with political participation rate (O'Toole, Marsh, & Jones, 2003; Ismail et al., 2016). It was found the most common reason for low political participation rate is due to having low understanding of how the political process in their country works and politics in general. As such, it has led to disinterest and general apathy towards political issues or knowledge, which deters them to participate with anything related with politics.

Generally, a country or government that practices a democratic political system requires sufficient political participation from its' citizens, typically in terms of voting, petitioning, protesting and others (Somerville, 2011; Parvin, 2018). Inadequate political participation has the risks of creating an inefficient government that may misinterprets the needs of the people or marginalize certain groups of people or issues due to being unaware of them. The topic of political literacy and political participation are often studied and researched under the

content of youths due the common correlation of students' education system and political development (Willeck & Mendelberg, 2022).

In Malaysia, the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Malaysia (KBS) defined youths as Malaysians between the age of 15 and 30, in accordance with the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act (Amendment) Bill 2019 which is an amendment that reduced the age of what is considered as a youth in Malaysia from 40 to 30 years old (Yunus & Landau, 2019). Compared to other countries in the world, the defined age group of youths in Malaysia is actually much wider as most other countries' definition of youths is only between the age of 15 to 24 years old (United Nations, n.d.).

During this time, there was also a Malaysian civil society organization called UNDI18 formed in 2016 that was advocating to amend the minimum voting age in Malaysia to be reduced from 21 to 18 years old and managed to successfully lobby the parliament and passed the Constitution (Amendment) Act 2019 in 2019 (UNDI18, n.d.; Tay & Shankar, 2019). After these two amendments were made, the involvement of youths in Malaysia's political climate as well as the social issues faced by the youths began to be taken more seriously (Allam et al., 2022; Joni, Bahari, & Tajudin, 2022).

Previously, the youths', particularly university students, involvement in political matters were not as significant and prominent compared to before and during the 2022 general elections. Political participation among university students was relatively low in comparison to the total youth population of Malaysia (Ting & Ahmad, 2021). Those who did participate in politics are generally seen as 'fence-sitters' and indecisive due to lack of encouragement for the youths to participate in politics (Pandian, 2014; Halim, Azizan, & Mohamad, 2022).

The topic of political literacy and political participation has been extensively researched from various angles and perspectives, primarily in American or European context. However,

in the context of Malaysia, there is still a severe lack of research done on this specific topic as well as conclusive solutions to the issue, despite increasing interest and concerns on the topic after the 15th Malaysian General Elections (GE15) and the UNDI18 amendment, with a slightly specific interest on the youths (Farudin, 2021; Hui, 2022; Shah & Iskandar, 2022).

### **1.2: Problem Statement**

Recent preliminary studies and surveys done in Malaysia have found that 60% of Malaysian youths from age 18 to 20 do not know basic political knowledge, much less the voting system (Hui, 2022). As such, Malaysia's voter turnout is severely and dangerously low which poses a significant issue in regard to the health of Malaysia's democracy. Additionally, those who do go out and vote are politically indecisive due to not having enough political knowledge to have independent thought in regard to political issues or ideologies.

Higher education is also not excluded from the issue of low political literacy (Gong & Zuo, 2020; Ahearn, Brand, & Zhou, 2022). The issue of low political literacy and by extension, political participation, is fairly nuanced and as such, is complicated to form a general solution that can be applied in every possible context. According to Weiss (2020), despite already undergoing higher education and being exposed to political subjects and concepts within a university or college environment, political literacy level can potentially still be low.

This research project aimed to better understand the political literacy level and political participation rate among Malaysian media school university students as well as identifying the common causes for this issue. Qualitative methods such as interviews was conducted to gain insight into the topic.

### **1.3: Research Objectives**

The main goal of this research project is to further explore and provide a better understanding on the topic of political literacy and political participation in the context of Malaysian youths who are also university students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). As such, the following research objectives was proposed to achieved this goal:

RO1: To assess the political literacy level of media school university students in UTAR.

RO2: To identify the political participation rate of media school university students in UTAR.

RO3: To determine the causes for low political literacy level and low political participation rate among media school university students in UTAR.

### **1.4: Research Questions**

In accordance with the aforementioned research objectives, the following research questions was proposed to further assist in achieving the main goal of this research project:

RQ1: How high is the political literacy level of media school university students in UTAR?

RQ2: What is the political participation rate of media school university students in UTAR?

RQ3: What causes low political literacy level and low political participation rate among media school university students in UTAR?

### **1.5: Research Scope**

With the increase of discussion within Malaysian society regarding political literacy and political participation among the youth both during and after the 15th General Elections recently, political research in the context of youths has become an important and significant facet within the field of political science and social science (Tan & Vethasalam, 2022).

The scope of this research was conducted within the area of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Kampar campus and the sample size was limited to seven respondents from the university with academic background in media and currently pursuing a degree in either journalism, public relations, or advertising. Additionally, the respondents were also minoring in politics and have taken Introduction to Political Science subject or equivalent. The reason for this is it allows for more interesting findings and discussion in regards with political literacy as an unexamined assumption that could be made is that the respondents are minoring in politics and therefore, should have a higher political literacy level. Lastly, due to the demographic of UTAR students, the respondents were from a Chinese ethnic and cultural background.

### **1.6: Research Significance**

Research political literacy and political participation within Malaysian context remains to be low. As such, the findings of this research were to fill in the gap regarding political literacy and political participation among the youth which includes university students in Malaysian context, as well as updating and adding on to existing research done by other scholars and researchers. The findings of this research have also contributed and help improve Malaysia's democracy in terms of policy making in the context of youths and university students. This research also provides another perspective on political literacy and political participation among university students in terms of types of universities, with this research focusing on a private university. In addition, due to the demographic of students enrolled in UTAR, the findings of this research are from respondents who are Chinese, which represents one of the three major ethnic groups in Malaysia. As such, the findings have fill in the research gap in terms of correlation between political literacy and participation, and ethnicity.

Future researchers may find the findings useful and expand upon this research to a much wider scale such as the entirety of Malaysia or even Southeast Asia up to the discretion of

the researchers' interest. Besides scholars and researchers, the findings of this research also be used as insight and information on the Malaysian youths' views and opinions on the political situation in Malaysia which can be useful for politicians, political parties, or public administrators to understand the youths.

### **1.7: Limitations of Study**

However, there were some limitations to this research project. First and foremost, the overall scope of the research was still too small and restricted to properly form a generalisation that could be applied in a wider context or outside of Malaysia. This research is limited to a single private university in Kampar, Perak, Malaysia which does not cover other private universities or public universities in Malaysia. In addition, the respondents in this research come from a niche and specific background which do not entirely represent the youth or university students in Malaysia. Besides that, as Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multicultural country, findings of this research are fairly limited to certain ethnic groups and cannot be generalized with the rest of Malaysian society and will require additional research with different sample groups. As such, findings of this research might be biased or only applicable in certain and specific situations.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1: Political Literacy

According to Lailiyah, Yuliyanto, and Pradhana (2018), political literacy is defined as being able to comprehend political concepts similar to other academic subjects such as English and Mathematics. Political literacy is also similar to critical thinking in that an individual with high political literacy should have enough knowledge about politics to analyse their country's political climate or critique the government's actions democratically.

In the majority of European countries, political knowledge is taught in citizenship education classes in both primary and secondary education. As such, children as young as 12 years old are already exposed to the political world and its' concepts. In the context of England, one of the primary reasons to make citizenship education a compulsory component within the education system was to increase the country's political literacy level and improve the society in a democratic sense (Davies, Mizuyama, Ikeno, Parmenter, & Mori, 2013). By making political knowledge as a subject that is formally taught in education institutes, an individual's political literacy level has become more structured and measurable as it is tied with the individual's education level.

Romania, alongside other European Union (EU) countries, have taken a step further and tried to normalize political knowledge as something that is common knowledge among the society in hopes of maintaining the country's stability and improving democratic practices within the government's political system unconsciously (Foster & Straker, 2002; Hopkins & Coster, 2019). In some cases, such as Ireland, high political literacy is often seen as a necessary skill for long term nation building and political conflict management (Milliken & Smith, 2022).

In other continents of the world such as Asia, the importance and level of political literacy varies from one country to another as well as the unique circumstances each country faces. In Japan, the government only began to take notice of the issue of political literacy after the voting age was lowered from 20 to 18 years old in 2016 (Arai, 2019). Before this however, Japanese citizens under the age of 18 did not receive any formal education on political related subjects or knowledge which led to low political literacy level among the youth. This is mostly due to the aftermath of World War II in which the Japanese government decided at the time to separate education and politics, as well as maintain political neutrality in education institutes (Davies, Mizuyama, & Thompson, 2010; Zhang & Xi, 2022). In contemporary Japan however, the political literacy level among the society is steadily increasing after amendments to the education system, however Japan faces a unique issue in that despite high political literacy level, there still remains a culture of political apathy, especially among the youth demographic (Tsukada, 2015; Regalado & French, 2021; Glass, 2022).

In other parts of Asia however, particularly in Southeast Asia, the issue of low political literacy is much more complicated. Countries such as the Philippines face an issue of difference in political literacy levels between the society's demographics (Dioso, 2019). In the Philippines, individuals who are more educated such as university students and postgraduates are more politically literate and aware compared to the rest of the population. Furthermore, it was found that the youth are actually more politically involved and willing to obtain political knowledge through informal means such as social media if they are unable to enrol in higher education institutes and learn it formally (Hermosa, 2021; Flores et al., 2022).

In Indonesia however, the issue of political literacy has only started to be taken into consideration after Indonesia's 2019 general elections whereby it was found that a majority



of the youth were easily susceptible to political propaganda disseminated through social media and received biased or even wrong political knowledge (Mahmud, Wutsqah, Atikah, & Kusnadi, 2020). While there is interest to learn about politics among the Indonesian youths, the issue however is that the education system in Indonesia still lacks a proper and robust civic education subject that covers more advanced and unbiased political topics (Rakhmat, 2019). Civic education in Indonesia focuses on instilling a sense of patriotism into the students but barely teaches them on the more detailed and intricacies of contemporary politics which prevents them to understand and critically analyse their government's actions or the country's political development (Nurdin, 2015). As such, Indonesian society, especially youths, often relies on the politicians themselves and social media as an alternative in acquiring political knowledge with the caveat that most information being disseminated are either false or manipulated in terms of political party propaganda (Lailiyah, Pradhana, & Yuliyanto, 2020). As such, despite the high interest of political topics in Indonesia, the political literacy level still remains low.

In the context of Malaysia, the political literacy level situation is somewhat similar to the Philippines and Indonesia but to a lesser extent. It was found that Malaysian youths are actually highly interested in politics, but due to lack of proper education institutes that are fully equipped to teach political subjects, most are unable to acquire more political knowledge through formal means (Povera, 2019; Hui, 2022). The extent of political knowledge among the youth is primarily acquired from friends and family members, which has instilled a sense of political party bias, which is a personal barrier in increasing political literacy (Hui, 2022). In addition, Malaysian youths also relied on social media such as TikTok as a means of acquiring political knowledge (The Straits Times, 2022). However, similar to Indonesia, the political knowledge being disseminated on Malaysia's social media is still biased with one of Malaysia's political coalition, Perikatan Nasional (PN), being the

most influential. While political knowledge is indeed being disseminated, it still does not equate to political literacy, which in turn relates to political literacy due to how subjective or rhetorical most of the information is (Reichert, 2016). As such, in comparison with the rest of the world, Malaysia is actually near the lower end levels with other Southeast Asian countries in terms of political literacy level.

Besides that, literature on specifically political literacy level among Malaysian youths are still limited and most information found are from reports and surveys conducted by Malaysian think tanks, and not published research articles.

## **2.2: Political Participation**

According to Reichert (2016), the basic definition of political participation is an action conducted by an individual for the sole purpose of influencing the political system or institutions of the country they are living in as part of their duty as citizens. However, political participation can be interpreted in various different ways. Voting is considered as the most basic and direct form of political participation and often serves as a starting baseline or even the main focus when researching and discussing political participation (Reichert, 2016; Gherghina & Geissel, 2017; Kitanova, 2019). Other forms of political participation include protesting, lobbying, joining a political party, and in recent times, online political participation in terms of social media is the most popular form of political participation among the youth (Kim & Chen, 2016; Kaur & Verma, 2017).

In the United States and most Western European countries, political participation is significantly high as voting is considered as a habit and routine for the citizens, especially for countries that have long practiced a democratic framework and never undergo a drastic political ideology change (Coppock & Green, 2016; Kitanova, 2019). According to Kitanova (2019), post-communist or post-soviet states such as Czech Republic, Hungary, and

Romania are considered as “new democracies” which means that the country has not experienced and practiced democratic mechanisms such as voting long enough for the citizens to form a habit and develop a democratic political culture.

Some countries such as Germany and France who are considered as “advanced democracies” have already developed this sense of democratic political culture and also considered political participation such as voting to be a compulsory component and requirement to be a proper citizen (Connaughton & Schumacher, 2021).

However, recent studies suggest that political participation among the youth in Europe can be described as slightly unconventional and non-traditional (Sloam, 2016; Allaste & Saari, 2019). On a general level, the political participation rate among the youth is high. However, compared to the older citizens who are 24 years and older, the electoral participation rate among the youth is significantly lower (Kitanova, 2019).

It was found that youths from countries with advanced democracies such as France and Luxembourg are more active in issue-based engagement such as protests, demonstrations, boycotting, and petition signing (Sloam, 2016). The European youth described voting as something that is too passive and distracting that promotes partisanship and rhetoric political ideologies while ignoring discussing issues that are currently happening in the country.

This sentiment among the youth is exceptionally strong in European Union (EU) countries due the perception that voting has no impact and does nothing to influence their country’s political and economic situation due EU’s trade agreements and strict intervention on any of its members economic affairs (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2020).

The United Kingdom, however, has a special case in this regard and contradicts this sentiment. Before the United Kingdom’s referendum to withdraw from the EU also known as “Brexit”, political participation rate in terms of electoral participation was the lowest

among other EU states with only 36.5% voter turnout (Sloam, 2016; Rudolph, 2020). During the voting for the Brexit referendum however, there was a significant increase of electoral participation among the British youth (Fox & Pearce, 2017). Initial projections suggested that leaving the EU was one of the key solutions to increase electoral participation among the youth as well as increasing political interest (Hart, 2017).

However, a few years after Brexit, electoral participation plummeted while non-conventional political participation increased due to the youths' increasing dissatisfaction towards the government and the United Kingdom's declining economic situation, which seems to contradict past research on youths' political participation rate and EU sentiments (Johnston & Uberoi, 2022; Sandford, 2023). Despite that, the political participation rate among British youth in general actually increased after Brexit, but not due to voting. Rather, it increased due to increased awareness on issues that have revealed itself after Brexit which are mostly economic such as increased import prices, worker shortages, loss of investment and many more (David, 2023).

In Asia, the political participation rate among the youth varies widely from one country to another. In the case of Japan, political participation rate in general is steadily decreasing by the year, including conventional and non-conventional forms of political participation with age demographics being the main factor (Jou & Endo, 2016). Japan is in a unique and precarious situation where it has the lowest birth rate in the world, which has widened the gap between the youth and the older generation (Yeung & Maruyama, 2023). However, Japan's political climate has not adjusted to this factor as most politicians alongside their policies and political ideologies continue to focus on the older generation, ignoring the Japanese youth (Lee & Inuma, 2021). Lack of young politicians and overfocus on economic issues rather than social issues are the few major causes for the youth to feel "alienated" and

disillusioned with politics in general, leading to significantly low political participation rate (Regalado & French, 2021).

For other parts of Asia such as Pakistan however, political participation is surprisingly very high, especially among the youth (Saud, Ida, & Mashud, 2020). It was found that discussing politics among peers or people with relatively the same age increases political participation. Political socialization from friends and family members plays a significant role for the Pakistani youths with individuals living in joint families having a stronger, positive perception towards participating in various political activities such as voting, debating, and campaigning.

In the case of Southeast Asia, the political participation rate among the youth is exceptionally high compared to other parts of the world such as Europe, even under dire circumstances or suppression from the government. For example, in Thailand, due to the political situation after the 2014 coup, political participation from the public was suppressed and discouraged (Phasuk, 2018). As such, the youth instead participate in political activities through online means such as social media (Prasitwongsa & Panthanuwong, 2020). Discussions about general politics, Thailand's social and economic issues, and calls for democracy are a few common topics the Thai youth would talk about online.

They've also maintained this high rate of political participation during the 2019 elections period where it is safer to participate in public political activities. Aside from voting, the youth are also involved in other proactive activities such as organizing political talks and awareness campaigns, most of which are student-led (Hernandez & Metha, 2019). Usual forms of political participation such as demonstrations and protests have also become more common and participate primarily by students (Tostevin & Wongcha-um, 2020).

Similar to Thailand, Indonesia also has a surprisingly high political participation rate, most of which are contributed by university students (Saud & Margono, 2021). Indonesia saw a rise of both youth and student activism after the government proposed to amend and reduce the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in 2019 (Raslan, 2019). However, in terms of conventional political participation such as voting, it still remains low as less than half of the Indonesian youth population voted in the 2014 general elections (Gnanasagaran, 2018). Similar to Japan, the main reason was due to lack of representation and inclusivity of youths in the political system (Harish, 2023).

Instead of voting however, most of the youths' political participation is done online (Saud & Margono, 2021). Political discussions and creating political campaigns through social media have become the norm for Indonesian youths (Saud, Ida, Abbas, & Ashfaq, 2020). This is because it is generally faster, more efficient and lower risk compared to physical forms of political participation. The youth being generally more tech savvy also helped to lower the barrier of entry to politically participate online.

The trend of political participation through social media is not only unique to Thailand and Indonesia only, but rather almost every single Southeast Asian country is seeing this trend quickly increasing in popularity, especially among the youth. Singaporean and Malaysian youths are also preferring to participate in political matters through social media (Kan, 2020; Soon & Win, 2020; Adnan & Ramly, 2021).

For Singapore, youth political participation rate saw a massive increase during the Covid-19 pandemic (Kwan, 2021). The youth were actually the most active and the forefront in raising issues regarding the socio-economic impact of the pandemic towards Singapore. As Singapore was under Covid-19 lockdown at the time and it was general elections season, social media became the main medium for all forms of political participation including

debates, campaigns, political podcasts, and many more (Kwan, 2021; Skoric, Pan, & Poor, 2021). It was also found that social media managed to revitalize political interest among the youth as it is now more engaging due to most political information being disseminated in the forms of social media content such as videos that are attractive to the younger generation. Coincidentally, the increase of digital political participation has also steadily increased physical or conventional political participation. According to Kwan (2021), after the Covid-19 restrictions was eased, the very same youths that are active in digital political participation also start to be involved in conventional political activities such as attending events, talking with political candidates, and volunteering for political parties.

In the case of Malaysia, political participation rate among the youth is only high in terms of non-conventional forms, predominantly through social media and phone messaging apps (Ahmad & Zain, 2021). Aside from electoral participation, a substantial number of Malaysian youths very rarely participate in other forms of conventional political participation. Similar to the situation in Japan and Indonesia, neglect and lack of understanding of the youths is one of the reasons why the youths have opted to look for alternative means of political participation (Ahmad & Zain, 2021; Braun, 2022). However, the UNDI18 amendment did managed to alleviate some of this issue and that was indeed an increase of formal political participation through voting with as high as 75% of youths estimated to vote in the 15th general elections which is significant as the youth actually represents about 50% of the population (Hui, 2022; Achariam, 2022).

Generally, it was found that Malaysians youths much preferred to engage in politics through social media due to its flexibility and open access to a wider range of political information that is not provided anywhere else (Ting & Ahmad, 2021). Social media have provided an easy to access and convenient space for Malaysian youths to discuss politics and engage with both peers and young politicians that understand the needs of the youths (Zaidi, 2021).

In other words, Malaysian youths are particular in the sense that they are indeed willing to participate in conventional means of political participation, but only in terms of electoral participation. Besides that, however, they much rather stick to social media as means of political participation.

In terms of past studies done, there is quite a substantial amount of research done on Malaysian youths' rate of political participation with the majority agreeing that there is a shift towards non-conventional political participation with social media being a driving force. However, there is not much published studies done in the context of Malaysia on relating political literacy level and political participation rate despite acknowledgment that these two concepts are integral to ensure that the youth are politically participating in a better and democratic way (Hui, 2022; Chin, 2022).

Politically participating with low political literacy can be highly dangerous as it can lead to ill informed decisions, particularly in terms of voting where understanding political parties' ideologies, proposed policies, and manifestos is important before casting a vote for a candidate (Hui, 2022; Shahrilnizam, Hafiy, & Azizun, 2020).

### **2.3: Low Political Literacy Level and Low Political Participation Rate**

The majority of past research has agreed that there is a correlation between political literacy level and political participation rate with most findings suggesting that high political literacy will naturally lead to higher political participation (Putri & Mubarak, 2020; Hopkins & Coster, 2019; Milliken & Smith, 2022). However, this can vary from one country to another.

In the context of European countries such as Germany and France, an individual with high political literacy level, regardless of if they are a youth or older, will most likely also have a high political participation rate (Kitanova, 2019). While electoral participation rate is the common way to measure political participation, some studies widen their scope and include



non-conventional forms of political participation, and findings show that it shares similar results in that high political literacy indeed leads to high political participation (Allaste & Saari, 2019). As such, most European countries understood the importance of political literacy and structured their education system to ensure that political literacy is being fostered from a young age to ensure high political participation from the youths.

In the United States however, the situation is slightly complex. For certain demographics of Americans such as the Latino youths, they have low political participation rate because of low political literacy level (Medina, Guzman, Siegel-Stechler, & Beadle, 2022). Lack of access to adequate education is one of the primary reasons for their low political literacy.

For the other American youths however, they do have sufficient political literacy, and some are even confident enough in their political knowledge to affiliate themselves as either a republican or democrat, the only two political parties in the United States. But, their political participation rate is actually decreasing in recent years, especially in terms of electoral participation with the 2020 election being the only outlier (Desilver, 2022).

A survey found that most youth who have a high understanding of politics tend to become disillusioned with the current political climate in America and as such, are not motivated to participate in any political activities. While there are still some American youths that have high political literacy and are motivated to be more politically active, lack of support and resources from the state government and local politicians have prevented them from participating in political activities that are more proactive and engaging (Booth, 2023).

For Asian countries like Japan, the youth political participation rate is not entirely dependent on their political literacy level (Lee & Inuma, 2021). Japan's society is currently facing the issue of political apathy among its youths. Despite efforts in increasing the youths' political literacy by amending civics subjects being taught in schools, the Japanese youth have no

interest in engaging in politics aside from academic purposes only. Similar with some cases in the United States, most cited that lack of support and youth representation from politicians is what causes political apathy among the youth, regardless of how high their political literacy level is (Tsukada, 2015; Regalado & French, 2021; Glass, 2022).

Moving further south to Southeast Asia, research studies done on the Philippines echoes a few similar results from Europe but with some nuances. The education system in the Philippines allows subjects that are related with politics to be implemented, but only in tertiary level education which prevents certain segments of the society access to more robust information pertaining to politics. (Hermosa, 2021). Naturally, the university students that took political related subjects and programmes tend to also have a high political participation rate.

However, this is where similarities with past studies conducted in the United States and Europe ends. The Filipino youths in general have a high political participation rate, regardless of their political literacy level (Flores et al., 2022). Even those that do not or do not have the means to enrol in a university also regularly participate in various political activities. However, this phenomenon has also brought a caveat known as ill-informed political decisions.

Using voting as an example, this means that they would choose blindly due to not understanding the political context nor the manifestos proposed by the political parties and end up regretting their decision because the decision they made did not benefit nor fit their beliefs and values (Meyer & Somin, 2016; Baskin, 2020). This phenomenon also happens in a few countries in Southeast Asia as well.

Indonesia and Malaysia share a similar situation whereby the youths' political literacy level is being impeded by the education system itself such as lack of sufficient political or civics

subjects in primary and secondary level education (Rakhmat, 2019; Povera, 2019; Hui, 2022). However, the political participation rate for both Indonesia and Malaysia are actually quite high relative to the political literacy level of the youths, which again projects to possible politically ill-informed decisions (Saud & Margono, 2021; Hui, 2022; Shahrilnizam, Hafiy, & Azizun, 2020). Similar to the Philippines, university students from Malaysia are typically more politically literate as well as having a relatively high political participation rate.

In general, the education system plays a significant role in developing the youths' political literacy level. However, how well does political literacy level translate to political participation rate varies from one country to another. Nevertheless, having sufficient political literacy is necessary to prevent making the wrong or less efficient political decisions.

#### **2.4: Theoretical Framework (Constructivist Grounded Theory)**

Constructivist grounded theory is a qualitative research method that uses inductive reasoning by forming a theory or a well-reasoned conclusion based on the findings of the research through constant comparison of codes and concepts that emerges from the data (Charmaz, 2014). It is a variant and extension of the original version of grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) that proposes that the researcher should not do any prior literature reading and instead discover the concepts and ideas first-hand as it emerges from the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) assert that this is to prevent researcher bias due to preconceived knowledge of the topic or problem they are researching.

However, according to Charmaz (2014), the original grounded theory is far too rigid and unrealistic for an average researcher to use. Researchers are naturally attracted to reading and gathering knowledge on their research topic, especially when they absolutely have no knowledge about the topic or issue they are studying. Restricting oneself to not gather

knowledge but at the same time create knowledge through the research process is one of the common criticisms for the original grounded theory.

Charmaz (2014) wanted to fix this and developed a new version of grounded theory known as constructivist grounded theory. This version of grounded theory still retains most of its original elements such as inductive based reasoning, analysis procedures, and constant comparison of codes. However, constructivist grounded theory encourages collecting knowledge and reading literature before conducting the research but stresses to keep an open mind and not let preconceived knowledge influence the researcher's interpretations of the findings during the data collection process.

Constructivist grounded theory, similar to its predecessor, is commonly used when the phenomenon or topic of the research is under researched and as such, no solid and robust theories have been formulated just yet. As such, rather than approach the topic through deductive means such as creating hypotheses, constructivist grounded theory opts to study the topic from the bottom-up through inductive means. In constructivist grounded theory, theories are only formed after the data is thoroughly analysed, unlike the majority of other research methods and approaches.

In terms of analysing data, Constructivist grounded theory retains most of the original grounded theory's elements, except for a few changes. Coding by labelling each data such as words and phrases, constant comparison of codes between each and every interview session, and analytical memo writing where the researcher writes their experience and process of analysing the data is still integral in constructivist grounded theory. The main difference is that it allows room for literature knowledge to assist the researcher understand the more confusing and abstract parts of their research problem, but also reminds the

researcher that it should not influence their interpretation of the data collected from their own research.

Lastly, the theory or well-reasoned conclusion formed from the data is constantly being restructured and amended until either the sample size reaches its saturation point or there are no new findings that can debunk the latest amended theory.

## **2.5: Conceptual Framework**

This research adapts constructivist grounded theory as a means to guide the research and achieve in answering the research questions. As of now, there is a severe lack of academic studies specifically on political literacy level and political participation rate among Malaysian university students. Existing literature thus far are simply quantitative reports on either the political literacy level or political participation rate among youths.

There is very little research or reports that explores why this phenomenon occurred in the Malaysian context or the possible sources of the issue in the first place. Some literature has indeed hinted and suggested a few possible reasons why the issue exists, but seldom dive deeper and expand upon it through qualitative research. As such, due to how this topic in this specific context is under researched, constructivist grounded theory was deemed suitable to be adapted for this research.

Additionally, thematic analysis was also adapted in terms of during the data analysis process. As constructivist grounded theory allows for literature reading, similar research from Europe and Asia have presented a few concepts and ideas that was relevant to this research. Education system, civics education, government policies, political culture are a few common themes found in those research studies.

As such, this research uses those knowledge as means of understanding the overarching nature of the issue but still approached the data found in this research with an open mind about other possibilities as the context is highly different. In addition, having a wider understanding of different context from past research can also assist in preventing researcher bias in terms of cultural biasness.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1: Research Design**

This research uses qualitative research methods with constructivist grounded theory as an approach. This methodology was deemed the most appropriate because the topic of this research required the respondents to provide a more in-depth answer that cannot be predicted through set surveys (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Furthermore, due to the subjectivity of the respondents' answers, qualitative research methods are the most suitable because the data cannot be quantified. The questions for the interview sessions comprises a total of 17 questions and was formed based on the three aforementioned research questions.

#### **3.2: Sample and Sampling**

The respondents for this research were gathered through purposive sampling. This type of sampling technique was deemed the most suitable as the respondents are required to have certain characteristics to participate in this research (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014).

The selected respondents are media school students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar Campus and their degree programme should either be journalism, advertising, or public relations as well as have taken and passed the course "Introduction to Political Science". Additionally, the respondents are also from a Chinese ethnic background as Malaysia is considered a multi ethnicity and multicultural country, the possibility for a correlation between ethnicity and the findings should not be ignored. Furthermore, the findings from this research filled in the research gap in terms of Malaysian context and studies on correlations between multiculturalism and politics.

For the sample size, a total of 12 respondents was initially planned to be selected as this is the recommended minimum number of respondents to achieve data saturation for qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Sim, Saunders, Waterfield, & Kingstone, 2018). However, due to the level and scale of this research, a total of seven respondents was sufficient to reach data saturation.

### **3.3: Data Collection**

The data in this research was collected through 17 in-depth semi structured interview questions and the questions are formed based on the research questions (see Appendix A). As the interview sessions are semi-structured, respondents were probed for further clarifications, elaborations, or be asked any follow up questions should the opportunity present itself during the interview session. As such, some additional questions that were not included in the original questionnaire was asked, but the questions still remained under the context of this research and serve only to answer the research questions.

### **3.4: Data Analysis**

This research adapts both thematic analysis and constructivist grounded theory's method of analysis for the purposes of analysing the collected data from the interview sessions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Charmaz, 2014). Thematic analysis is the primary method of analysing the interview transcripts in terms of coding and deriving patterns or answers that are frequently being shown up during the interview sessions. Constructivist grounded theory's method of analysis is in terms of constant comparisons and analytical memo writing. While thematic analysis did most of the analysis, constructivist grounded theory was also adapted because the topic itself is under researched which prompts some methods of it to be used in order to form a simple, starting theory and fill in the significant research gap.



These two methods of analysis were deemed suitable for this research because the data obtained is from in-depth interview sessions which involve verbal answers from the respondents. As thematic analysis and constructivist grounded theory is commonly used for analysing data such as words and sentences as well as subjective opinions, these two methods of analysis are the most rational and pragmatic choice for this research. The data was analysed with the context of the research questions in mind.

### **3.5: Validity**

In qualitative research, reliability is not as important as validity as it is nigh impossible to have the respondents answer the same question with the same exact answer which reliability requires (Cypress, 2017). Instead, this research focused more on validity instead to ensure the findings of this research is scientifically valuable and without bias. Three methods of increasing validity were used for this research.

First of which, is peer debriefing. After the researcher has collected the data and analysed it, they have sought opinions about the findings from other researchers outside of their research team such as peer researchers and supervisors (Janesick, 2015). The peers have given their opinions and interpretations of the data the researcher has presented and decided if the findings had any hints of researcher bias or baseless assumptions. This has help reduce errors and contradictions in the data before being published.

Besides that, member checking will also be used. After the researcher has conducted the interviews and analysed the data, they have asked the same participants of the research to do a validation interview (Birt et al., 2016). The purpose of this second interview is to verify the answers and statements given by the respondents during the first interview to ensure there are no misinterpretations or misunderstandings by the researcher. This also prevents researcher bias and ambiguity of the findings.

Lastly, an audit trail was used in this research. Throughout the research process, the researcher has recorded all research related activities to ensure there were no contradictions between what is recorded and the final findings (Carcary, 2021). Research related activities include raw interview audio files, transcripts, the researcher's thoughts and rationale when analysing the data, and general field notes. Constructivist grounded theory's analytical memo writing also falls under audit trail, especially during the data analysing process (Charmaz, 2014). As such, the findings of this research should not have any research bias as the entire research process from start to finish is recorded in a transparent manner.

### **3.6: Ethical Considerations**

In terms of ethical considerations, research approval from the university and supervisor was first acquired before the conduction of the research. After approval, the data collection process officially began, and participating respondents was asked for permission and consent to participate in this research. The nature and purpose of this research has been informed to the respondents before they agreed to be part of this research.

During the data collection process, all respondents was treated fairly and equally as possible and were not obligated to answer any interview questions that make them feel uncomfortable. Furthermore, the respondents' privacy was respected and their personal information such as names was not stated in the findings of the research. The only information made available is their degree programme, interview answers, and other relevant information that is related with the research objectives and questions.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Findings**

#### **4.1: Introduction**

This chapter will present the findings gathered from the interview sessions which have been processed and analysed using constructivist grounded theory method of data collection and analysis. As such, the main themes that emerged in this research were the result of constant coding, analysis and refinement as new data was being collected throughout the research period until theoretical saturation was reached, as per the process of constructivist grounded theory qualitative approach.

In total, four themes emerged which are Malaysian youths' political literacy, Malaysian youths' political participation, political disinterest among Malaysian youths, and Malaysia's political education issue.

#### **4.2: Malaysian Youths' Political Literacy**

In general, all respondents showed relatively high level of political literacy and understanding of political concepts, both theoretically and philosophically, which mirrors other countries' youths in the sense that their pool of political knowledge is not only limited to domestic or local politics, but also international politics and other more abstract political beliefs and ideas as well as being able to see and apply political concepts in daily situations.

##### **4.2.1: Personal Political Knowledge and Skills**

All of the respondents showed a significant level of proficiency in political knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. While almost all respondents demonstrated different types of political skills and knowledge during the interview sessions, all of them seemed to fall within a relatively same level of political literacy and share similar political skills or opinions, while

worded differently, could be interpreted rather interchangeably. They described and defined the term “politics” to showcase the basic extent of their political knowledge, which their answers were varied from one respondent to another depending on their perspective or what they are more focused on:

*Politics, I guess is being aware of the issues that's happening around our surrounding. And also, not just aware, but we have to be active in engaging as well, in the discussion of politics. I guess, it's also understanding about different perspectives because in politics, you have to listen to other people and then, at the same time, also finding common grounds to address whatever political issues that's happening right now.*

(Respondent 1).

Another respondent, however, focused more on the structural and functionalist perspective of politics:

*It's like the structure of power and governments, where a group of people or institutions on how they are going to manage and govern the group of people which are the citizens and to ensure how they can operate the government, in an effective way.*

(Respondent 2).

Other respondents also defined politics by describing how it manifests in their daily life and social interactions:

*Politics is not limited to like, formal institutions. It can be like politics among your friends, your family. But usually, I think politics can be seen in the workplace or in any of our social groups that we live in.*

(Respondent 7)

Besides that, they were also asked to define other political concepts such as “democracy”, which again, highlights that each respondent shares a similar level of understanding but in different perspectives with some similarities:

*In my own way, to define democracy is to have freedom to express my opinion and also participate in decision making process.*

(Respondent 1)

*Democracy is when individuals have the power to decide on what our country should do, and not only let the king or Prime Minister to decide all the decisions for us. But we should also have a say because we are the people that live here as well.*

(Respondent 3)

A few respondents also described democracy by focusing more on its’ elements rather than an overview or brief definition:

*Democracy can also be my freedom to vote. And by voting I can hold my leaders accountable. And it's also about having a say through voting again in the future of whatever policy or anything that my or our leaders or countries leaders decided to do and engage in peaceful protest and have access to any information or resources that is available in the country.*

(Respondent 4)

#### 4.2.2: Understanding of Malaysian Political Climate

All respondents showed a significantly high level of understanding and interest in Malaysian politics and surprisingly shared a great deal of opinions and their own analysis of Malaysia's current political climate with most being critical but with fairly rational justifications. Firstly, they had no issues in explaining how the Malaysian government operates:

*Our system is a constitutional monarchy, which means that the king is the leader in terms of religion, especially in Islam and in army as well. We called the king as "Agong" and after that we have sultans and sultans act as leaders of each state that have sultans and then the one that is leading the country nationally would be the Prime Minister.*

(Respondent 1)

*We are running in the federal constitutional monarchy system. And the power to govern the whole country, is broken into a few parts. We have the federal government, which is the highest and then we have the state government which is distributed to every state and then every state will also have their own local government. And for the federal government, they are also partially sanctioned by the head of state, which is the palace, "istana" or I think most people will always like to think is the "Agong".*

(Respondent 5)

*Then we have of course like other democratic countries, we have the three branches of government, the executive, judiciary, and legislature. Which of course means we have the parliament where the decision-making process takes place. We referred to them as "dewan rakyat" and "dewan negara".*

(Respondent 6)

In terms of a more understanding of Malaysian politics, all respondents were well versed in the various political parties and coalitions that currently exist in Malaysia. Some even provided their own subjective opinion on the political parties and individual politicians they were discussion about, some of which was also quite critical:

*I guess the most well-known one is something that we all love and hate which is “Barisan Nasional”. They used to be the dominant coalition, I think for about 40 to 50 years and they are known to be more centre right ideology, focusing on more Malay nationalism, as in economic development, more towards like capitalism and stuff like that. But after they lost the elections, they say “that we have changed lah,” but I think that’s just their way of trying to regain supporters. I still think they’re the same from 50 years ago.*

(Respondent 1)

*If you want to say the biggest coalition right now, then that is PH, Pakatan Harapan, which they have PKR, DAP, and Amanah which these three are the main ones. And generally, they are more on the centre left, the liberal side. So, they’re focus on reforms and fairness and so on.*

(Respondent 2)

For some respondents, they’ve also highlighted some Malaysian political parties that are from Sabah and Sarawak, are not as well known, or received much media coverage:

*And then we also have some from Sabah and Sarawak. We have GPS, Gabungan Parti Sarawak and the one from Sabah, Parti Gabungan Rakyat Sabah which was led by Hajiji Noor. And next is the one who is supposed to*

*join PH, but they still remain independent, which is Parti Warisan which is led by Shafie Apdal.*

(Respondent 5)

*There's something like Parti Socialist Malaysia or something like that and they are more... how do I put it? More like the workers party, they're more focused on like workers' rights and so on. And they are the only small party type one I can remember because you know, they're only one that focus on workers, so that really stood out to me.*

(Respondent 7)

When asked about the government's performance, all respondents provided a few criticisms based on what they've observed in the last few recent months:

*PH is on the centre left, right? They always try to portray and advocate themselves as a coalition that's for progressive policy, and institutional reform and a greater civil liberty. But again, as we can see recently, our Prime Minister, "PM X", Anwar is not actually advocating for that. For now, he's going for towards like a more right policy? I'm not sure, with his support for Hamas and also on.*

(Respondent 1)

*We can see our PM going traveling from one place to another place but, well, rice's price is still going up, everything is going up and they still say economy is doing well and stable. It's like they're trying to sweep the problem under or something and focusing on the wrong things.*

(Respondent 7)



*But what we see today, it's kind of like Anwar Ibrahim keeps tolerating or maybe compromising a lot of these conservative or I would say reductionist activities or thoughts to exist in the whole society of Malaysia, where we can still see some problems of racial discrimination and maybe religious conservatism which are still happening in Malaysia. Well because this is, you know, if we see the demographic, the Malay are obviously the majority in the whole population of Malaysia. But because some of the very "rightest" thoughts there has been threatening the safety and the stability between the races, and Anwar Ibrahim says that he wants to be progressive, but you see him still compromising for these kinds of things to happen. So, it's something quite opposite to his slogan, on what he's trying to say and what he's trying to achieve. So, if he does not solve this thing, on these social issues, then how are we going to put trust on him anyways?*

(Respondent 5)

However, there are also a quite number of respondents that tried to analyse their observations in a more optimistic manner:

*For example, you can see Anwar keeps doing these official visits and inviting country leaders from other countries to come to visit to Malaysia for bilateral talks. Like you can see he went to Turkey because of the earthquake. And then he went to most of the Southeast Asian countries like recently he went to Singapore and Thailand. So, maybe we can say that this is something good. Maybe, the government also thought that Malaysia has to adapt to the international environment or something. But if we want see the current state of this current government be more focused on solving domestic problems? I*

*will say maybe they still need time because for me, I don't see any progress happening. But, if we look through a wider perspective, one thing is very clear that Anwar Ibrahim has been keep on doing bilateral meetings and focusing on improving Malaysia internationally.*

(Respondent 2)

In general, all respondents showed ample understanding of Malaysia's political climate and were able to apply their own critical thinking skills to discuss the issues that they saw, whether to criticize, praise, or understand the actions being taken by the government.

#### **4.2.3: Social Media as Source of Political Information**

All respondents overwhelmingly said that they get majority of their political information and news from social media, more specifically, Facebook:

*Most used social media right now would be probably be Instagram and Facebook. Twitter, yes, but not that much. Its only sometimes people link me stuff from Twitter.*

(Respondent 1)

*I get all my info from social media and one of the main social media that I use is Facebook because, you know some of the media companies and newspapers like The Star, Utusan, MalaysiaKini, FMT and other Chinese media groups like Nanyang Siang Pau, they keep themselves updated on Facebook.*

(Respondent 3)

*I like to use Facebook. It's convenient, and there's a lot of information I can get from there.*

(Respondent 6)

*I use Facebook because the news media we have in Malaysia would post the same news online anyways. Sometime I buy their newspaper, but very less from newspaper already.*

(Respondent 7)

### **4.3: Malaysian Youths' Political Participation**

Surprisingly, despite the seemingly high level of political literacy among the respondents, all of them showed low rates of political participation which interestingly, follows the same conjectures with other research studies from America.

#### **4.3.1: Low Political Participation Rates**

All respondents reported that they did not participate in much activities related with politics, with only some have only attended a few political speeches during GE14 and GE15's campaigning period:

*Even though I was not eligible to vote at that time in 2018, I really wanted to at least listen to the political speech near my hometown because I think it was also around that time I start to get interested into politics, but I didn't understand much about it yet.*

(Respondent 2)

*At most, I only went to see the political speeches but I don't do anything more than that. Because, my parents always worried that I might get into politics and they said that it is very risky and because I was a teenager at that time, I think they thought I could get influenced.*

(Respondent 4)

For certain respondents, some of them undergo industrial training and intern at a few government offices and had to participate in various political activities for work purposes:

*I've participated in political related activities, but it's also because of my internship like but if you ask me honestly, if I'm was not doing internship, will I go? Then no, I won't be participating in any of those related activities.*

(Respondent 1)

#### **4.3.2: Voting as the Bare Minimum**

All respondents have said that they voted in GE15 with a majority stating that voting is their only source of power to influence the country for the better and that is the main reason that motivated them to politically participate, albeit it is the bare minimum:

*I think it's not just my right but it's also my duty to vote. And it's also because I feel that if we don't vote, then we shouldn't complain. And by voting it is our form of power given to us as the people, you know, to vote. So yeah, that's what motivated me to vote.*

(Respondent 7)

*I think only through voting can we hope for change and for Malaysia to be better. I don't think other activities like protesting can do much, so I don't bother participating in them.*

(Respondent 3)

### 4.3.3: Political Discussion Among Family Members, Peers and in Formal Institutions

Most respondents have stated while they do not participate in political activities, they do still discuss about politics with their peers and lecturers either academically or as a simple conversation:

*I talk about politics with my father, and then in school, there's some of my friends who are into politics and also with some my lecturers. Mostly academic but sometimes we would also talk about what is happening right now.*

(Respondent 2)

*If I usually talk to my friends, then it's mostly they are complaining about the policies or which YB's are not doing their work and mostly I guess it comes from the news. For example, like what Anwar is doing right now and I have friends who are discussing like "He shouldn't be doing that," you know, and he should be somewhat more like neutral because of how we are also depending on China and whatnot. Then besides with my friends, If I talk with my lecturers, then it will be more towards like academic side and policies as well, sometimes also how we talk about politics, political party and also how the coalitions right now are not doing what's right for the people.*

(Respondent 4)

However, there is also one respondent stated that discussing politics with other people won't necessarily help improve Malaysia's situation but only create conflict among the people:

*Discussion can't change anything; it can only increase dissatisfaction. Most people already have a strong political belief and I don't think a discussion or even a debate can change their mind.*

(Respondent 6)

#### **4.4: Political Disinterest Among Malaysian Youths**

Based on the findings and answers from the respondents, there is a strong suggestion that the respondents show similar traits to respondents from other research studies conducted in America where high political literacy leads to losing confidence towards the political system and climate.

##### **4.4.1: Negative Perception Towards Malaysian Politics**

The respondents showed varied levels of negative perception towards Malaysian politics, both towards the system itself and the political actors. While there are still some respondents remained optimistic and hope for improvement, others admitted that they are slowly growing disinterested in Malaysian politics:

*I guess I would describe Malaysia politics as horrible. I mean, for the people, at least in the voting part, even though I did vote myself. But, it's like we have no choice. We are given the illusion of a choice where it's all rotten apples and then we just pick the least rotten one and it's not really helping in terms of the political climate.*

(Respondent 3)

Other respondents expressed that the politicians themselves are one the main reasons why they grew disinterested in politics:

*In the past, before I went intern then I aligned myself towards the DAP because at the time I believe in their so-called multiracial and more liberal kind approach but as I interned under them. It seems like there's not much difference between them and the other parties and it's just a more well packaged one. To me, they're all the same.*

(Respondent 1)

*Speaking of like behaviour, I guess it's getting quite racist or sexist, especially the one that happened to that YB Teresa Kok recently with the YB from Langkawi. It was an issue about the whether they can wear short pants or not. Then it somehow went into some form of sexual harassment, which makes me feel like... They are supposed to be our representatives and they are wasting time and energy arguing while there are more important issues.*

(Respondent 7)

#### **4.4.2: Increasing Culture of Political Apathy**

All respondents agreed there is an increasing culture of political apathy from both highly politically literate youths and low politically literate youths. Most respondents gave their opinions that those with high political literacy are disinterested in politics because they've likely realized the internal and systematic issues of Malaysian politics while those with low political literacy find politics to be too confusing and negative which deters them from being interested:

*Why they have low understanding is also because of this negative experience or perception of politics. To them, politics is mainly about corruption, all the kleptocrats, and also how our government are so ineffective in governing and so on. And so, they feel like they disengaged from politics and because of that, they act with the lack of motivation to even understand what's happening politically. So, what they see usually on the news or from the social media are just like complain, complain, complain, complain. And they just don't want to get into it because they feel it's so negative.*

(Respondent 5)

*For people like us, like we've studied politics in class and yet there are also times where I feel like, will the things I learned actually help make Malaysia be more democratic? Like every day we just see them in the parliament and they just fight and they just scream at each other, like a "pasar" if you want to put it like that. And these are politicians, people who should know politics but they don't really act like it.*

(Respondent 6)

*I believe this is because that they felt that even by going to vote, nothing is going to change. For example, the last GE when we changed the government, they thought that "oh, this time after we vote, things are going to change,". But sadly, it's not changing. Well, of course we can't just blame it on the things that aren't changing right now because as we know, democracy, voting, policies and whatnot, take time to change, but to the youth right now, they feel that everything has to be instant. They see that things are not changing at the pace that they want, which is the instant gratification, instant and*



*immediate, that kind of thing, it kind of pushed them away from continuing to be interested. Because they feel that nothing is going to change. Sooner or later, they might also ask “why did I even vote?”.*

(Respondent 4)

#### **4.5: Malaysia’s Political Education Issue**

All respondents expressed similar views in that education is a vital factor to the youths’ political literacy and by extension, political participation. Most respondents said that Malaysia’s education system, particularly for primary and secondary level education, is still lacking in providing adequate political knowledge to the students, which forces them to either by chance learn in higher education or informally on their own.

##### **4.5.1: The Root Cause for Low Political Literacy and Low Political Participation**

Most respondents agreed that the lack of political education or subjects in Malaysia’s education syllabus is the most probable cause for low political literacy levels and low political participation rates among the youths. A few respondents narrow it down that because the youths don’t understand or learned about politics at an earlier age, this causes them to not foster an interest in the first place:

*I believe it's because of they're just not that interested about it in the first place because of their lack of awareness, the education of it. I don't think our education side like our schools, except for Form Six, teach them about “Pengajian Am” which teach them about what is our political system and that sort of stuff. And that sort of leads to the lack of political participations kind of activities, like I'm not even sure if the youth during UNDI18 actually know how to vote that time.*

(Respondent 1)

*I think through education because if you look at other countries like other Western countries, why are their youths are more engaging in political issues? It's because they have been taught politics. The system, democracy, etcetera. But we need some form of medium for them to engage in and create that sort of interest. And that could actually start from the classroom, which go back to education again.*

(Respondent 4)

A few other respondents also noted that political literacy is heavily related with political participation:

*Like through political awareness, the government need to create more campaigns or initiatives on what's happening right now, especially things that matters to them, like all those tax reliefs or benefits from the "Belanjawan 2024". Only when they know these things, then I think we can finally see some change and they will be more confident to discuss about politics and be more active in participating.*

(Respondent 3)

*The education ministry should promote engagement, but this engagement again comes back into our education system. Maybe create like a place for students to participate in like a town hall, this kind of thing.*

(Respondent 5)

#### 4.5.2: Political Education Reforms

The respondents also provided possible solutions to the issue, such as changes and reforms to the education system, especially on secondary level education:

*If we want to educate our new generations, then students need to know more about things regarding to politics in Malaysia. But I noticed during my secondary school time, they are more pushing and focusing on SPM subjects like science and mathematics. I think, they should also incorporate like a minor subject, that teaches them these politics stuff so that when they finished their SPM, at least they have some fundamental knowledge about politics.*

(Respondent 2)

*We can start in schools, but maybe just teach them the basics. Because since this is just my idea, I'm not sure they are able to understand the complexity of politics, especially if we're going to introduce them to like philosophy and that kind of political stuff that's more advanced. I guess the basic ones we can like tell them what the difference between like, democracy, socialism and what not. But just start like very basic and like tell them "What is what," and then we see how.*

(Respondent 4)

#### 4.6: Conclusion

The findings of this chapter showed that the respondents shared a similarly high level of political literacy as well as low rate of political participation. While there are some mild differences, their viewpoints and opinions on the issue of low political literacy and political participation among Malaysian youths are relatively the same with the main focus and

emphasis on the education system and how these issues need to be addressed when the youths are at a younger age such as primary and secondary school students. There is also a concern of negative perception towards politics from both high politically literate and low politically literate youths leading to political apathy which acts as a barrier towards achieving a higher political participation rate among Malaysians.

On a more positive perspective, a few respondents believed that the youths can still increase their political literacy informally through other means such as researching on the internet and Malaysia might see a slow gradual increase of politically literate citizens. But they also admit that this might not be as effective as through formal institutions and might take years.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

#### **5.1: Introduction**

This chapter will provide and discuss the interpretations of the aforementioned findings as well as explaining the main outcome or emerged theory from the interpretations of the findings using constructivist grounded theory approach. In addition, this chapter will also discuss the findings in relation with the three research objectives and provide the outcome for each of the research objectives based on what was found and analysed throughout this research's period. Lastly, this chapter will discuss the possible correlation between the findings and other research conducted as well as recommendations for possible projections and future research.

#### **5.2: The Connection Between the Findings and the Research Questions**

To remind and re-emphasize, the following are the three research questions that was used as a guide to achieve the objectives of this research project:

RQ1: How high is the political literacy level of media school university students in UTAR?

RQ2: What is the political participation rate of media school university students in UTAR?

RQ3: What causes low political literacy level and low political participation rate among media school university students in UTAR?

First and foremost, based on the findings of this research, it is reasonably safe to say that the political literacy level of media school university students in UTAR are relatively high, when taking into consideration of the average political literacy level of Malaysian youths as well as how the way they have expressed their ideas and knowledge is similar to another research conducted where it was measurable (Davies et al., 2013). This shows that, at least in this

context of university students and tertiary education, political education and subjects are successful in increasing the students' political literacy level.

However, in regards to their political participation rate, the findings surprisingly shows that even if they are politically literate, their political participation rate is still very low. Majority of the respondents have also stated that the most that they would do is going to vote. Even then, they would only go to vote during general elections, and not for the local or state elections. This is curiously similar to past research conducted in American and Japanese context where higher political literacy rates lead to lower political participation rates, especially among the youth, however it is due to other factors not related with their level of understanding about politics (Desilver, 2022; Regalado & French, 2021). This particular finding will be interpreted and elaborated in detail further in this chapter.

Besides that, in terms of the causes of low political literacy level and political participation rate, based on the findings, it implies that university students are expected to have high political literacy levels. However, it is worth bearing in mind that this research's sample are media school students who had the elective choice to either minor in media studies or politics. Other university students from other faculties or departments might not have this choice and were not given the opportunity to learn about politics. This argument also continues to widen further if one takes into consideration other private universities or expands the scope to public universities and other forms of tertiary education. In other words, as has been mentioned before, this implies that formal institutions and conventional methods of learning can increase Malaysian youths' political literacy levels but only if they were given the opportunity and exposure to political education and subjects in the first place.

In terms of causes for low political participation rates, the two most common causes expressed by the respondents seems to be related to political apathy and negative perception

towards Malaysian politics in general. This was strongly implied for highly politically literate youths such as the respondents and only suspected for low politically literate youths due a general consensus provided and explained by the respondents. However, keep in mind that this research's respondents are all highly politically literate individuals and the assumption that this specific finding can be applied for low politically literate youths is still questionable unless another future research focused on low politically literate youths can be conducted to clarify this argument.

In summary, the findings of this research managed to successfully provide an answer for each of the three vital research questions and unearth several notable discoveries that have expanded the depth of this research and perhaps created new angles and perspectives for future research to focus upon.

### **5.3 Interpretation of Findings**

First and foremost, one of the most arguably major discoveries of this research is the theme political disinterest among Malaysian youths, which have a strong relationship with other two themes which are Malaysian youths' political literacy, and Malaysian youths' political participation.

As mentioned, the respondents have high political literacy, but they have extremely low political participation rates in relation to their political literacy levels. They expressed that by understanding more about politics and how democracy should operate, they have noticed a dichotomy in the things that they have learned about politics and how politics is actually being practiced in Malaysia.

A majority placed the blame on the Malaysian politicians themselves, citing that they are not practicing democracy or being the ideal politicians that the respondents have in mind from their knowledge of politics. They have also started to develop a perception that almost all

Malaysian politicians, regardless of their political party or political beliefs, are the same in that they are only in politics for personal gain. While this perception was shaky and volatile in the beginning, the respondents felt that this belief continues to strengthen over time as they consume more news and information about the latest Malaysian politics.

All respondents admitted that they were more positive initially during the 15th General Elections in 2022 and were looking forward to a government under Anwar bin Ibrahim's leadership. However, a year later, the respondents' optimism has also started to slowly regress as they monitor Anwar bin Ibrahim's policies and actions throughout his tenure so far. All of the respondents have a preconceived positive idea and image of the Prime Minister and how Malaysia would develop under his leadership, particularly on his ideas of equality, good governance, and liberalism in general.

However, multiple respondents stated that they were disappointed in what they have observed so far, citing that the current situation is no different from when Malaysia was under a Barisan Nasional government and started to think that their vote in the previous general election does not matter at all. This has also started to give them the impression that political participation in general, even as basic as voting, is meaningless in Malaysia. From here, there are signs of political disinterest being formed among all of the respondents.

When asked about their opinions on low politically literate Malaysian youths and their political participation rates, the respondents provided some similar insights on the issue of low political literacy but also provided two possible outcomes in terms of political participation rates.

The common consensus for low political literacy among Malaysian youths is due to Malaysia's education system, which alludes to this research's fourth theme which is Malaysia's political education issue. The respondents believed that in order for the youths



to be more politically literate, they need to have an interest in learning about politics first and the most ideal method to foster this sense of interest is by exposing them to political knowledge and subjects at an early age, ideally secondary school students. A few respondents have considered primary school children as an option to start introducing political subjects, but have also cautiously voiced their concern of the possibility that the children might not be old or mature enough to understand these political concepts yet.

All of the respondents agreed that learning about politics formally is the most optimal way, as evident by their own political literacy level being increased simply by learning it in the university.

In terms of political participation rate among low politically literate Malaysian youths however, the respondents offered two possibilities in which the rate of political participation can be high or low depending on the individual.

The respondents stated that a youth with low political literacy will not be interested in participating in political activities simply because they do not understand the importance of such activities and might find them troublesome. Additionally, some of the respondents also believed that the youth with low political literacy levels also have a negative perception towards Malaysian politics in a similar way with how the politicians seem to have unknowingly present politics as something that is confrontational, hostile and pessimistic.

However, those who do participate in political activities actively are even more of a concern, in terms of Malaysia's political climate and practice of democracy. A common issue highlighted by the respondents is that they worried that the youth only politically participate, for example such as voting, simply due to hype as evident during GE15 where a few respondents shared that their peers and friends who do not have any interest in politics prior suddenly wanted to vote because there was large amount of coverage about the elections on

social media. Due to this, a few respondents expressed that there is a possibility that a significant number of votes from the youth during the previous election might be ill-informed votes which does not truly represent their actual beliefs and values which leads to an inaccurate representation of the Malaysian citizens' wants, needs, and expectations of the new government.

In general, however, most of the respondents believed that all of the aforementioned issues, including political disinterest among the youths, can still be solved by focusing back to the root cause of the issue which is the education system. They argued that if more youths are highly politically literate, then democracy will have more power and weight because the youths are making well-informed decisions as well as being able to scrutinize the government's actions in a rational and logical way due to having the knowledge to properly express their ideas and beliefs. In addition, when there is a significant number of politically literate Malaysian citizens, then the confidence and interest to participate in political activities, both conventional and non-conventional, will also increase.

To provide an overarching interpretation based on these findings, it can be said that education plays a vital role in political literacy and indirectly political participation as well. As evident with the respondents' level of political literacy, it is implied that education or formal institutions are capable and successful in increasing political literacy among individuals who had the opportunity to access them. However, this only extends to tertiary education such as colleges and universities and even so, not all diploma or degree programmes have political subjects as one of their mandatory courses, which still causes a disparity of political literacy levels among students in tertiary education.

In addition, those who are not fortunate enough or perhaps not interested to continue their studies after finishing their secondary education and getting their SPM results might not have

the opportunity to learn about politics in a formal manner and risk being politically illiterate throughout their whole life if they continue to be unaware of this issue. This of course, can also affect their political participation rate either to be low or high. While they can learn politics informally such as through research online and self-studying, the likelihood of it happening is improbable and might cause other issues such as biased information or misinterpreting objectively proven concepts and theories which other studies has found to be a likely scenario (Mahmud, Wutsqah, Atikah, & Kusnadi, 2020).

In terms of political participation among Malaysian youths as of now, there exist three types of groups which are high political literacy but low political participation, low political literacy and low political participation, and low political literacy but high political participation. Each of these three groups have their own disadvantages and can cause negative impact towards Malaysia's political climate as ideally, Malaysian youths with both high political literacy and high political participation should be the most common.

However, based on findings of this research, it is suggested that Malaysian youths with high political literacy and high political participation are extremely rare due to reasons such as the negative perception highly political literate youths have towards Malaysian politicians or not having enough politically literate Malaysians in general so that democratic actions have significant influence which can instil confidence among the youths participate in political activities.

Aside from education, perception also plays an unexpected role in influencing political participation rates among Malaysian youths. Though, based on the findings, this particular aspect seems to be more significant with those with high political literacy as it might be easier and clearer for them to notice the issues of Malaysian politics and its' politicians which lead them to form this negative perception in the first place. This unique issue also has some

semblances to other studies conducted on American youths where highly politically literate youths are least likely to participate in political related activities due having a negative perception towards the current development of their political climate, particularly after Donald Trump won the 2016 presidential election and causing them to distrust the voting system and gradually become apathetic towards politics (Desilver, 2022; Booth, 2023).

However, it is also worth remembering that their source of this negative perception mainly stems from the politicians themselves, which can be considered as a volatile source because they are human beings as well and can change or even be replaced by other politicians that are perhaps more in line to what the highly politically literate youths want.

A common name or politician that was mentioned by all the respondents was the tenth Prime Minister, Anwar bin Ibrahim and the respondents appeared to have used him as one of the primary sources for their perception towards Malaysia's political climate and situation. While the respondents did highlight other factors such as politicians showing signs of racism and sexism, it is implied that the country leader's actions and beliefs have more influence over forming their perception towards Malaysian politics in general. It can be said that, simply because Anwar bin Ibrahim is the Prime Minister and Malaysia's leader, he represents everything about Malaysia, including its' political climate.

The same issue of negative perception could also be applied to low politically literate youths, however, based on the findings, this does not necessarily deter them from having a high political participation rate. While it is suggested that politically illiterate youths do indeed get affected by the negative perception towards politics in a similar way highly politically literate youths do, it is still a very small number as evident based on the number of politically illiterate youths that voted in GE15 (Hui, 2022). Rather, the issue of Malaysia's political education takes precedent and higher importance for their case and context.

#### **5.4: Practical Research Implication**

Based on the findings, it is strongly suggested that education can significantly impact an individual's political literacy level and political participation rate. In the context of Malaysia, the Malaysia's education system that has neglected to include political subjects in their primary and secondary school syllabus has created Malaysian youths with severely low political literacy. This is further supported by other research and reports that noted there was an increased number of youths after UNDI18 was amended and went to vote in GE15 that did not have a strong understanding of basic to intermediate political knowledge (Hui, 2022; Farudin, 2021; Shah & Iskandar, 2022). Because of this, it is suspected that a significant number of first-time voters around the age of 18 years old and above from that election are politically ill-informed and have harmed the country's value of democracy.

In terms of tertiary education however, specific programmes that offered political courses are successful in increasing the youths' political literacy but at the cost lower political participation due to other factors such as negative perception towards Malaysian political climate. This also suggests that there is a lower voter turnout rate for highly politically literate youths as well. In general, this can affect the voting process of Malaysia and the overall quality of the country's policy making process as well.

As such, Malaysian policymakers may discern the findings of this research to be highly important and valuable to be further studied for purposes of implementing future policies that can address and hopefully solve these issues. Additionally, other researchers and scholars may also find these findings to be insightful and be able to use it to support their own research or expand upon this topic.

## 5.5: Recommendations

As the findings have been thoroughly discussed in this research, there are a few practical and reasonable recommendations that relevant parties should consider reviewing and implement to solve the issues that have been highlighted in this research.

Firstly, on the issue of the education system and political literacy levels among the Malaysian youths. As mentioned, educating the youths about politics needs to be started from an earlier age, preferably from the age of 13 years old or simply secondary school students. While this does imply that Malaysian policymakers need to amend the education system, this does not mean it requires a total reform. In fact, it would be more practical and pragmatic to view this recommendation as a long-term solution and gradually implement political subjects to maintain stability for both the students' learning process and teachers' workload.

The Malaysian government or Ministry of Education can consider adapting Japan's methods as a source of reference where they only started to slowly introduce political subjects in high schools recently to fix the issue of low political literacy (Tsukada, 2015). After a few years and the amendments have some level of stability, it is also recommended to create political literacy as one of the necessary skills and normalize it similar to other forms of literacy. This can help further reinforce it in terms of a long-term solution.

Besides that, the government should also take into consideration another issue that has acted as a barrier for higher political literacy and political participation rates which is the negative perception Malaysian youths have towards politics. While this issue is slightly more difficult and abstract to solve, there is indeed a recommendation that can be considered.

In general, it is recommended to focus on the root cause of the issue which is the politicians themselves. Based on the findings and statements from the respondents of this research, the live broadcast of the parliament sessions seemed to have the most potential to influence the

Malaysian youths' perception towards politics. While there are already rules and regulations on how the members of parliament should conduct themselves, there is still a sense of unprofessionalism that has likely caused the citizens that were watching the live parliament session to become disinterested and turn away from politics.

As such, it is recommended to try perhaps to create stricter rules and invoke harsher repercussions if any members of the parliament intentionally derail the session and not focus on more important matters such as social issues, economy, and policies. This can perhaps also indirectly solve the issue of the perceived racism and sexism that certain politicians have managed to exude because those individuals will now have to think their statements and choice of words clearly before speaking out loud.

While it is understandable to think that this solution might not be the most pragmatic, it is still worth considering and trying to change and adapt it so that it can be applicable somewhat in Malaysia's current state. At the very least, an effort to curb this issue should be made and not be left stagnant.

In terms of future studies for researchers, there are a few topics and perspectives that can be considered to be expanded upon. One of which is increasing the scope of this research topic. Despite its' geographical size, Malaysia is quite dense which suggests that even within the same state, the findings and data might differ. As this research is focused in Kampar, Perak, other researchers can expand upon this and contribute to any potential research gap and conduct studies in other universities in Perak. Other researchers who perhaps have more resources might consider doing a study on public and private universities as well.

They can also consider approaching from a slightly different perspective and focus on different programmes such as medicine and engineering and see if there are any differences or similarities. Besides that, a comparative study between West Malaysia and East Malaysia

has potential to be quite insightful for any researcher who has the capabilities to undertake this endeavour.

Needless to say, due the surprisingly low number of studies conducted on this topic and field, there is quite a number of potential research still left unexplored. However, at the very least, this research has contributed to the field of political science and Malaysian youth politics a bit and filled in a part of that research gap.

### **5.6: Conclusion**

Political literacy and political participation are crucial in fostering and maintaining a healthy democratic country. As the youths represent the long-term aspirations of the country, political literacy and political participation is an essential skill for them to have to ensure that democracy can be sustained as they are able to make politically well-informed decisions, able to scrutinize government policies, and rationally participate in the decision making and policy making process.

By interviewing a group of media school university students, this research shows that education is a vital element in creating Malaysian youths that are well versed in politics. However, this only limits to tertiary education whereas youths that do not have the opportunity to enrol in colleges or universities, are less likely to be as politically literate which can lead to low political participation or high political participation but politically ill-informed which in turn leads to a less democratic country and political climate. As such, efforts to amend the Malaysian education system are needed to ensure future generations of Malaysian citizens are well equipped with the necessary political knowledge to create a more sustainable democratic political climate.

The findings of this research project have hopefully provided insight and contributed knowledge to the field of political science, youth studies, and education as well as other



wider but relevant fields such as public administration and sociology. Future research may expand upon this topic and approach it from different perspectives and fields of study to further broaden and enrich the understanding of political literacy and political participation among the youths.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

## Interview Questions

Research Questions	Questions
<p>RQ1: How high is the political literacy level of media school university students in UTAR?</p>	<p>In general, how do you define “politics”?</p> <p>Can you, in your own words, define “democracy”?</p> <p>Can you explain Malaysia’s government system?</p> <p>Can you please name as many political parties or coalitions as you can and describe their ideologies?</p> <p>Where do you get most of your information related to politics from?</p> <p>Do you by chance get your political information from social media?</p> <p>6A. If yes, what social media do you use the most and why?</p> <p>6B. If no, is there a particular reason you don’t use social media for getting information about politics?</p> <p>In your opinion, how do you describe the current government's performance?</p>



	<p>In general, how do you describe Malaysia's current political climate or situation?</p>
<p>RQ2: What is the political participation rate of media school university students in UTAR?</p>	<p>Did you vote in the 15th General Elections?</p> <p>9A. If yes, what motivated you to vote?</p> <p>9B. If not, what are the reasons that made you not want to vote?</p> <p>Aside from voting, do you participate in other politically related activities?</p> <p>Do you discuss politics with other people?</p> <p>11A. If yes, who do you discuss it with and what do you usually talk about?</p> <p>11B. If no, then is there a reason why you don't discuss politics with other people?</p> <p>Do you align yourself with any specific political parties that we have in Malaysia?</p> <p>12A. If yes, then what are reasons that caused you to support and align with a specific political party?</p> <p>12B. If no, then what are the reasons for you to not have any personal attachment towards a specific political party?</p>
<p>RQ3: What causes low political literacy level and low political participation rate</p>	<p>In your opinion, what do you think are the causes for some Malaysian youths to have</p>

<p>among media school university students in UTAR?</p>	<p>such a low understanding on political matters?</p> <p>What do you think can be done to solve this issue of Malaysian youths having low political literacy?</p> <p>In your opinion, what do you think are the reasons as to why some Malaysian youths don't like to participate in political activities such as voting, demonstrating, petitioning and others?</p> <p>What do you think can be done to solve this issue of Malaysian youths having low political participation rates?</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Is there anything else you would like to share or add on?</p>

## Appendix B

### Audit Trail

Ali Imran Bin Asri's FYP 1 & 2 Audit Trail (2023)	
16 January	Briefing on FYP 1, official start of research project.
17 January – 22 January	Conducted research to search ideas for topic.
23 January – 29 January	Drafted initial topic about political literacy among Malaysian students, research about topic.
30 January – 5 February	Further research on topic.
6 February – 12 February	Meeting with supervisor to discuss abstract and topic.
13 February – 19 February	Revised topic based on supervisor's suggestions, drafted chapter 1, meeting with supervisor to check new title and chapter 1.
20 February – 26 February	Conducted research and drafted chapter 2.
27 February – 5 March	Further conducted research and revised chapter 2.
6 March – 12 March	Paused research to work on other assignments and midterms.
13 March – 19 March	Changed from quantitative to qualitative after discussion with supervisor, topic felt

	too incomplete if used quantitative approach.
20 March – 26 March	Research on methodology (Grounded Theory), revised chapter 1 and 2 to change to qualitative approach, drafted chapter 3.
27 March – 2 April	Revised chapter 3, changed to Constructivist Grounded Theory.
3 April – 9 April	Meeting with supervisor to discuss chapter 3 and overall FYP 1.
10 April – 16 April	Fixed previous chapters and updated with new information.
17 April – 23 April	Finalizing FYP 1 in terms of format and other necessary forms.
24 April – 30 April	Submitted first draft of FYP 1, start focusing on presentation and final exams in the meantime.
1 May – 7 May	Present on FYP 1.
8 May – 12 May	Submitted FYP 1 final draft, went for final exams.
13 May – 24 October	Hiatus from doing FYP research, had semester break and went from industrial training from 5th June till 8th September, semester break again until 24th October.
25 October	Briefing for FYP 2 and resume research.

26 October – 5 November	Applied for ethical clearance form, refresh knowledge on research topic, conducted light research to see if there's any new findings and discoveries during the hiatus break.
6 November – 12 November	Meeting with supervisor to discuss plan and outline for the semester, started to look for respondents.
13 November – 19 November	Managed to interviewed three respondents, all three shared surprisingly similar answers, started coding process and drafted chapter 4, went to look for more respondents and managed to book for one next week.
20 November – 26 November	Interviewed one respondent, their answers were also about the same and fits existing themes that emerged from previous respondents, started to feel that this research is about to reach data saturation, meeting with supervisor to get help and advice in getting new respondents.
27 November – 3 December	Managed to interview three additional respondents, answers were also the same, no new findings and data can be found,

	reached saturation point, started drafting chapter 4 and 5.
4 December – 10 December	Submission of first draft as per requirement.
11 December – 17 December	Presentation of FYP research to supervisor and co-supervisor.
18 December – 29 December	Submission of final draft and hardcopy version of the completed FYP. Official end of research.

## Turnitin Report (FYP 1)

### Ali Imran Bin Asri FPY1 Turnitin Report Checking

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

**6**%

SIMILARITY INDEX

**5**%

INTERNET SOURCES

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STUDENT PAPERS

#### PRIMARY SOURCES

**1**

[etheses.whiterose.ac.uk](https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk)

Internet Source

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Internet Source

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**4**

"Handbook of Positive Youth Development",  
Springer Science and Business Media LLC,  
2021

Publication

<1%

**5**

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## Turnitin Report (FYP 2)

### FYP 2 Turnitin Plagiarism Checker ReSubmit 2

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

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SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS









#### PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	Submitted to Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Student Paper	<b>1</b> %
<b>2</b>	<a href="http://orca.cardiff.ac.uk">orca.cardiff.ac.uk</a> Internet Source	< <b>1</b> %
<b>3</b>	Submitted to Napier University Student Paper	< <b>1</b> %
<b>4</b>	Ed Atkins, Lycia Harper, Jessica Paddock, Martin Parker, Chris Preist. "Collecting Local Views on the Post-Covid Future of Flying Using Online Qualitative Methods", Case Studies in the Environment, 2022	< <b>1</b> %



Consultation Form

APPENDIX II: FYP MEETINGS WITH SUPERVISOR

FYP Student Name		ID:	HP Number :
1. Ali Imran Bin Asri		20AAB00324	014-3979749
Date	Attended by	Progress	Signature
1.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	Abstract and Topic	
2.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 1 Draft	
3.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 1 & 2	
4.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 1 & 2	
5.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 1, 2, 3	
6.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 4	
7.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 4	
8.	AFI KASHFARIZY ASRI IMRAN	chapter 4.	
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8/2/2023  
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17/4/2023  
6/11/2023  
20/11/2023  
28/11/2023

**APPENDIX III: STUDENT DECLARATION FORM**

Department of Journalism  
Academic Honesty Regarding Final Year Projects

The following are examples of academic dishonesty extracted from “Student Handbook” that are more applicable to final year projects.

- plagiarism, i.e., the failure to properly acknowledge the use of another person’s work;
- submission for assessment of material that is not the student’s own work;
- collusion, i.e., obtaining assistance in doing work which is meant to be solely the student’s own work;
- use of fabricated data claimed to be obtained by experimental work, or data copied or obtained by unfair means;

It is important that the student reads the Student Handbook and understands the seriousness of academic dishonesty. The student should pay particular attention on how to avoid plagiarism.

**Student Final Year Project Declaration**

I have read the student handbook and I understand the meaning of academic dishonesty, in particular plagiarism and collusion. I declare that the work submitted for the final year project does not involve academic dishonesty. I give permission for my final year project work to be electronically scanned and if found to involve academic dishonesty, I am aware of the consequences as stated in the Student Handbook.

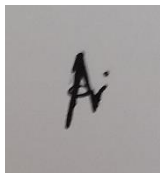
**FYP Title:**

Political Literacy Level and Political Participation Rate Among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Kampar Campus Media School Students

Student Name: Ali Imran Bin Asri

Student ID: 20AAB00324

Signature:



Date: 10 December 2023

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATION (HONS) JOURNALISM

UAMJ 3083 PROJECT II

Research Report Evaluation Form (80%)

Academic Trimester & Year: Y3S3 \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor / Moderator\*: Mr Afi Roshezry Abu Bakar \_\_\_\_\_

(\*Delete whichever is not applicable)

No.	Student's Name	Student ID No.
1.	Ali Imran Bin Asri	20AAB00324

Research Project Title: Political Literacy Level and Political Participation Rate Among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman Kampar Campus Media School Students \_\_\_\_\_

Weak 1	Below Average 2	Average 3	Good 4	Excellent 5	Mark Awarded		
					CO1	CO2	CO3
<b>Abstract 5% (CO3)</b>							
Description of the research study, problem statement, research design, methods, findings and implication are irrelevant.	Description of the research study, problem statement, research design, methods, findings and implication incomplete.	Description of the research study, problem statement, research design, methods, findings and implication are present.	Contains a concise description of the research study, problem statement, research design, methods, findings and implication.	Contains a comprehensive description of the research study, problem statement, research design, methods, findings and implication.			
<b>Introduction 5% (CO3)</b>							
<i>Important elements: background of study, research purpose, research objectives, hypothesis / research questions, problem statement, scope of study and significance of study</i>							
All the important elements are included but irrelevant.	All the important elements are included, relevant but poorly	All the important elements are included, relevant and briefly	All the important elements are included, relevant and well describe.	Well written. Each of the important elements is distinguish highlighted.			

	describe.	describe.				
<b>Literature Review 10%(CO3)</b>						
Literature review used is not relevant.	Literature review used is relevant but insufficient and mostly outdated.	Sufficient literature review used is relevant.	Most of the literature review used is relevant to the study.	All the literature review are relevant to the study.		
The quality of the literature referred to is questionable or not relevant to the project's background or context. Few key studies referred to.	Points are supported with relevant literature, but scope of literature review is limited, as is background and context for project. Some key studies not referred to at all or only inferred.	Good range of literature examined throughout presentation that is mostly relevant to the project's background and context. Key studies contrasted but little evidence of evaluation.	Well-argued and logical literature review that provides a good overview of the background and context for the research project. Evaluation of key literature quite evident throughout.	Creative and highly organized literature review that outlines the background and context for the research project. Critical reading of the key literature clearly evident throughout.		
<b>Methodology 15% (CO3)</b>						
Description of the research methods are questionable.	Description of the research methods are incomplete.	Description of the research methods are present.	Contains a concise description of the research methods.	Contains a comprehensive description of the research methods.		
Description of the research design / framework are questionable.	Description of the research design / framework are incomplete.	Description of the research design / framework are present.	Contains a concise description of the research design / framework	Contains a comprehensive description of the research design / framework.		
Description of the sample size and sampling techniques are questionable.	Description of the sample size and sampling techniques are incomplete.	Description of the sample size and sampling techniques are present.	Contains a concise description of the sample size and sampling techniques.	Contains a comprehensive description of the sample size and sampling techniques.		

**Finding and Analysis 15% (CO1)**

Inaccurate representation of results and difficult to understand.	The results analyzed have no clear link between interpretation of the data and the research objectives.	The results are analyzed but vaguely interpreted. Analysis of findings inconsistent with the research objectives.	The results are analyzed and interpreted clearly. Analysis of findings is clearly related to research objectives.	The results are synthesized and interpreted. Analysis of findings is compelling in accordance with research objectives.			
Figures, graphs, charts, are of poor quality, numerous inaccuracies and mislabeling, or missing. There is no corresponding explanatory text or redundancy with the text.	Numerous inaccuracies, missing and mislabeling in figures, graphs, charts. Incorrect corresponding explanatory text.	For the most part, figures, graphs, charts, are accurate and consistent with the text. They are generally labeled correctly and are referred to in the text.	All figures, graphs, charts, are accurate and consistent with the text. All are labeled correctly and are referred to in the text.	All figures, graphs, charts, are accurate, consistent with the text and enhance understanding of the text. All are labeled correctly and are referred to in the text.			
Results of the data collection are unclear and insignificant. Further elaboration of the results is needed and interpretation of findings needs further analysis.	Results of the data collection are presented but incomplete and findings are not related to the research question. The evidence or data presented confused relationships that exist among these findings.	Results of the data collection presented have limited connection to the research question. Evidence is discussed but does not offer any explanation.	Results of the data collection are presented accordingly to the research question. The evidence is described, able to identify relationships that exist among the findings.	Results of the data collection are presented and organized according to major findings for each research question. The evidence is described, explained, analyzed and revealed meaningful relationships that exist among the findings.			

<b>Discussion and Conclusion 20%(CO2)</b>							
Obtained findings are not integrated with research literature and no/ very limited discussion is included.	Obtained findings are partially integrated with research literature but the discussion is incomplete.	Obtained findings are moderately integrated with research literature and a brief discussion is included.	Obtained findings are well integrated with research literature and discussion is expansive.	Obtained findings are very well integrated with research literature and discussion is well-articulated.			
No discussion of implications of the findings in the study conducted.	Minimal discussion of implications of the findings in the study conducted.	Moderate discussion of implications of the findings in the study conducted.	Thorough discussion of implications of the findings in the study conducted.	A very thorough discussion of implications of the findings in the study conducted.			
Project is not completed and the conclusion is poorly written and hard to understand.	Project outcome is partially met and conclusion is not clearly described.	Project outcome is met and conclusion is not clearly described.	Project outcome is achieved and conclusion is clear and precise on the accomplishment.	Project outcome exceeds expectation with conclusion highlighting the achievements.			
No future work is suggested.	Vague or irrelevant description of future work.	Future work is described but not relevant with the progress of current research	Future work is clearly described but less relevant with the progress of current research.	Future work is clearly described and relevant to the progress of current research.			
<b>Citations 5% (CO3)</b>							
Citations in APA format in the report were not present.	Citations in APA format in the report were partially presented.	50% of the citations in APA format were presented.	75% of the citations in APA format were presented.	All needed citations in APA format were included in the report.			
<b>Organization 5% (CO3)</b>							
Deliver ideas unclearly, loosely and disorganized.	Deliver ideas with minimal clarity, comprehensiveness and organization.	Deliver ideas with satisfactory clarity, comprehensiveness and organization.	Deliver ideas with good clarity, comprehensiveness and organization.	Deliver ideas with excellent clarity, comprehensiveness and organization.			
<b>Sub-Total</b>					<b>/15</b>	<b>/20</b>	<b>/45</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>/80</b>		