



**SOCIAL MEDIA MOTIVATIONS AND POLITICAL
ENGAGEMENT AMONG UTAR STUDENTS**

LEE YI LING

**A RESEARCH PROJECT
SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATION (HONS)
JOURNALISM
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN**

JAN. 2024

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LEE YI LING

APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled “Social Media Motivations and Political Engagement among UTAR Students” prepared and submitted by Lee Yi Ling in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Journalism is hereby accepted.

Supervisor

Supervisor's name

Date: _____

Abstract

Social media is used to fulfilled certain purposes. Young people are digital natives who use social media frequently, hence a lot of research has been done to examine the relationship—both direct and indirect—between their use of social media and political participation. Most of these studies tend to confirm to the findings of each other that there are direct and indirect relationships through mediating factors such as political knowledge. However, some scholars argue that social media use may not as impactful towards youths' subsequent political engagement as proposed as youths use social media to gratify their certain needs. Applying Uses and Gratification theory (U&G Theory) and O-S-R-O-R model, this study attempts to explore the complex relationship between political involvement and social media motives among University Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) students. The O-S-R-O-R model, a rational structure that integrates information, expression, and motivation, was frequently used in research to study how social media influences political engagement. The study employs quota sampling technique via survey method to collect data from a sample of 377 UTAR students to explore their motives in using social media. Findings show that social media need is the strongest motive in determining UTAR students' political engagement, both directly and indirectly via mediating factors. Also, surprisingly, political knowledge tend to have a detrimental effect on their subsequent political engagement, which may be due to factors such as disillusionment which lead to discouragement as a result of deeper understanding. The research will help scholars and policymakers to understand and take advantage of these dynamics in adjusting strategy to involve more youths in politics.

DECLARATION

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

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Signed :



Date : 5 MAY 2024

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The way individuals connect and engage with one another has changed dramatically as a result of the development of social networking sites and the Internet, including how they get involved in politics. Citizens' political engagement is crucial in a democratic society. According to Putnam (2000, as cited in Coleman, S. & Freelon, D., 2015)., dynamic participation of citizens in political affairs indicates a strong and flourishing democracy. High rates of political and civic engagement enhance the probability of ordinary citizens' voices being acknowledged in important discussions, contributing a sense of legitimacy to democratic establishments (Richard, W. & Alexandra, C., 2018). The proliferation and widespread use of the Internet and social media has created a large window of opportunity for increased citizen participation in politics (Kamiloglu, F. & Erdogan, E., 2014). According to Statista (2023)., about 65.7 percent of people worldwide are Internet users by October 2023, while 61.4 percent of the people on the planet are social media users.

Numerous past studies conducted over years has indicated that social media tend to increase political engagement and participation among citizens. Diverse features of social media encourage more citizen participation in the political environment, facilitate digital transformation of political public sphere and create a new way of engagement via online. It serves as a fresh way for its users to obtain data from various sources and perspectives, engage in two-way communication and express their thoughts freely at low cost in time, money, and effort, as compared to hegemony conventional mass media (Kamiloglu, F. & Erdogan, E., 2014; Breuer, A. & Groshek, J., 2014). Given the effectiveness of social media in public sphere, political actors across the globe started to utilise it actively to share their political beliefs, intentions, and actions as well as their attitudes to everyday political and non-political events to their followers and, to the public (Kurt, H. & Karaduman, S., 2012).

Malaysia's politics somewhat adhere to this digital shift in the political environment with political actors actively building their presence in social media to engage with the public (Lee, 2017). In fact, social media continues to hold significant position in Malaysia's last few elections with great impact towards the changes of its political landscape (Nur Nadhirah & Safawi, 2018).

As the arrival of social media has fundamentally altered political communication and led to a new way of engagement, many scholars have been concerning about how its uses may influence citizens' political engagement, particularly among the youths. Youths have been noted as among those who use social media heavily and early on (Rosyidah Muhamad, Rohana Ahmad & Jumadil Saputra, 2021)., who are deemed to be more technologically capable than older adults (Omotayo, F. & Folorunso, M. B., 2020). In Malaysia context, social media users constitute to 78.5 percent of the total population, while over 25% of Malaysians under 25 use social media, making up nearly a quarter of the country's user base. (Howe, S., 2023). Several studies conducted worldwide has shown that youths are generally less engaged in traditional politics than older generations (Delli Carpini, M. X., 2017)., exhibit reduced interest in politics, possess lesser political knowledge, show disengagement from social and political events, express more apathy, and generally display lower levels of political interest (Quintelier, E., 2007).

The presence of social media increased the involvement of young individuals in politics, as they start to use digital media to obtain political information (Rosyidah Muhamad, Rohana Ahmad & Jumadil Saputra, 2021). Countless research done between social media and youths' political engagement have found a positive correlation between the two. However, on the other hand, there are also question raised in recent years on whether youths' political engagement is heightened or decreased via social media, as youths can use social media for different purposes. Political activity is not the only reason why young people use

social media, and some might never ever utilise it for that reason. (Knoll, J., Matthes, J. & Heiss, R., 2018). Voter turnout stands out as a crucial gauge of citizens' involvement in the democratic process, which is a key indicator of democratic advancement (Adigun, O. W., 2020). In this case, although the problem of low youth voter turnout internationally remains a concern until today, Malaysia has a surprisingly high turnout rate for young voters aged between 18 to 30 years old in GE15 last year, at a startlingly high rate of 75.6% (“BERNAMA”, 2023). Lowering of voting age and automatic voter registration has produced more than 5 million first time voters (Gibaja, A. F., 2022), with voters aged between 18 to 40 years old comprising more than half of the electorate in GE15 (“Bernama”, 2022). As youths have grown to become a powerful political force (Gibaja, A. F., 2022), it is crucial to continue explore their consumption of social media and its implications on political sphere to guarantee governance that is both well-informed and effective in a democratic society.

1.2 Problem Statement

The term “youth” encompasses individuals ranging from their teenage years to young adulthood, representing a span from physical adolescence to full maturity (Omotayo, F. & Folorunso, M. B., 2020). The 2019 Malaysian National Youth Development Policy defines youth as individuals in the 15–30 range of age. According to Ministry of Youths and Sports (2022), youth constituted about 30.5% of the Malaysia’s population, while children under the age of 18 made up about 28.1% of the population (“The Star” 2022). Therefore, it can be assumed that a sizable section of Malaysians are youthful and active. The minimum voting age reduction to 18 in 2019 by Malaysian government provides abundant opportunities for its young citizens to engage in politics and be part of the country’s democratic process. Similar to global pattern, Malaysian youths are active users of social media which use social media for a range of activities, including communicating, amusement and information

gathering (“Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission” 2016). The majority of previous studies suggested that social media caused a rise in youths’ participation in politics. However, there are also studies which opposes to the political-oriented uses of social media among youths. Matthes (2022) in his research theorize that the extensive use of social media could considerably reduce youths’ political involvement, primarily because they predominantly utilize social media for non-political activities, thus leading to distraction rather than mobilization.

Numerous studies which have been done in local context tend to concentrate on analysing the connection between young people’s use of social media, various mediators such as political knowledge and online political engagement, with little focus on the motivations behind the applications of social media and the potential effects on political engagement. As suggested by Matthes (2022) that youths’ primarily employ social media for non-political goals which could possibly reduce their political engagement, there is a need to further examine the relationship between different motivations and their impact on youths’ political participation. Besides, most research of social media and political engagement were done on public universities with majority Malay students, thus the results may not necessarily represent all the youths from different ethnic groups. Taking UTAR students as target population, this present study seek to fill in the gap by examining private university’s students’ extent of social media uses towards engagement and their motivation behind the utilization of social media for political objectives.

1.3 Research Objective

1. To examine the influence of social media gratification needs on UTAR students’ online and offline political engagement.
2. To investigate the relationship between online political participation and offline political engagement among UTAR students.

1.4 Research Question

1. How do different motivations influence UTAR students to use social media to engage in political activities, and how does this affect their political behaviour?
2. How political engagement online is connected to offline political participation among UTAR students, and how does it shape their overall political engagement experience?

1.5 Research Significance

By presenting empirical data on the connection between university students' motivations for using social media and their political engagement, present research can contribute to the scholarly comprehension of the changing interplay among reasons for social media use and involvement in politics among university students, expanding the information corpus on digital citizenship and the engagement of youths. Besides, investigating the reasons behind using social media concerning involvement in politics can illuminate the factors that influence youths' enthusiastic participation in political conversations and actions. Recognizing the varied motivations propelling political involvement via social media can reveal disparities in sharing information and assist in customizing content to effectively bridge these informational gaps. The outcomes of this investigation can offer direction to decision-makers, educators, and political campaigners on the optimal strategies for utilizing social media to foster substantial political involvement among youths. Finally, as most UTAR students are of Chinese ethnic, study done on the variety of social media platforms, political activities performed and motivations will also provide an insight about how civic engagement among them is changing in the digital era, shedding lights on the way these platforms can mould and impact their political behaviour.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Defining Youth

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (SOED, 1983, as cited in Jones, G., 2009), the Old English term ‘youth’ refers to the time between childhood and adulthood. There are manifold definitions for this term. It is generally accepted that youth is a stage of life marked by particular transitions in the legal, psychological, social, and physiological domains of life, as well as the transition from childhood to adulthood and from a dependent to an independent state (“UNFPA Indonesia”, 2014 , as cited in, “UNESCO”, 2013; “UNFPA”, 2007; “United Nations”, 2012). Youth identity, according to Ahn (2011), presents teens and twentysomethings as part of a shared social experience that is different from that of other age or cultural communities. There's no agreed-upon legal definition of youth, while different age constraints are introduced when addressing young people in political and programme papers that are established at different regional levels of international legal control (Riekkinen, M., 2019). For instance, for statistics aims, the United Nations (2013) considered folks who are between the ages of 15 and 24 as “youth”. Meanwhile, In Malaysia context, “youth” were formerly referred to people aged between 15 and 40, but redefined in 2019 by amending the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act of 2007 (“Act 668”), which lower the youth maximum age limit to 30 years old. This amendment according to former Youth and Sports Minister Syed Saddiq aims to close the generational divide, hasten youth development, and curtail risky behaviour in young people's circles (Yunus, A. & Landau, E., 2019).

Nevertheless, youths across the globe are often described using similar characteristics, including energetic, adventurous, and eager to learn. They are also often referred by phrases such as “the future of society” or “the leaders of tomorrow”, and it did make sense. As they are young, capable, and full of energy, youths are said to be essential to

a nation's existence, survival, and socioeconomic progress (Omotayo, F. & Folorunso, M. B., 2020). According to latest statistics, global population for teenagers and youth (ages 10 to 24) officially surpassed 1.8 billion in mid-November 2022, recorded the largest cohort of young people in history which constitute to 22.5% of the total population (Bartley, C., 2022). Given that more than one in three people are under the age of thirty, the population growth of youth in some nations is surpassing the expansion of the economy (“UNFPA State of the World Population”, 2014, as cited in Omotayo, F. & Folorunso, M. B., 2020). For instance, 70% of people in sub-Saharan Africa are under 30, making Africa the continent with the youngest and fastest-growing population in the world. (“United Nations”, n.d.). This youthful and expanding working-age population has potential to spearhead economic transformation and inclusive, sustainable, green economic growth in Africa if properly utilized (“African Development Institute”, 2023). It highlights the significance of youth for the development of nations. According to Ministry of Youths and Sports Malaysia (2022), Malaysia’s youth constituted about 30.5% of the total population, while children under the age of 18 made up about 28.1% of the population (“The Star”, 2022).

2.2 Youth and Social Media

Conventional media including radio, newspaper, magazine and television has been an essential part of human life until Internet and social media come into play in mid-1900s. Wong et al. (2020, as cited in Obar & Wildman, 2015). define social media as “interactive computer-mediated technologies that enable the creation or exchange of ideas, information, career interests, and other expression mediums through virtual communities and networks”. In general, social media refers to any digital tools or programmes that facilitate social interaction between people. Differ from traditional media, social media enables users to produce and consume information (Nesi, J., 2020), allowing the occurrences of two-way communication. Social networking sites (eg. Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat), text

messaging and messaging apps (eg. Whatsapp), social gaming tools, and YouTube are among some examples of social media. Due to its extensive accessibility and diverse opportunities offered, using social media platforms has become one of the most favoured forms of social behaviours (Kirchaburun, K., et.al., 2020). As per Digital 2023 Global Overview Reports (2023), the global number of Internet users stands at 5.30 billion, with social media user “identities” accounting for 4.96 billion, which amounts to 61.4 percent of the globe’s populace (“Data Reportal”, n.d.). Globally, the number of social media users is increasing by 4.5 percent annually, and on average, these users dedicates 2 hours and 24 minutes to social media daily. Meanwhile, in Malaysia context, active social media users constitute to 78.5 percent (26.80 million) of the total population, with Malaysians on average clocking in over 2 hours and 47 minutes daily on social media, surpassing the global average by an additional 16 minutes (Howe, S., 2023). The top three reasons for Malaysia’s Internet users to browse include seeking for information (76.2%), staying informed with the latest news (65.8%), and keeping up relationship with family and friends (64.2%) (Nurul Huda Husain & Mukhriz Mat Husin, 2023).

When it comes to new technology, youths are frequently the first to adopt, the fastest to adapt, and the serve as the innovators, leading to both heightened opportunities and risks (Magis-Weinberg et al., 2021), similarly with regard to social media usage. Millennial generation and Generation Z who born after 1980s (currently 11 – 42 years old) are often referred together as ‘digital natives’. As they were exposed to all sorts of digital technologies at a young age, digital natives typically immersed themselves in a networked world and were able to learn and apply digital technologies more adeptly than their peers (Kesharwani, A., 2020). The lives of young people now revolve around digital technologies (Nesi, J., 2020), and numerous studies conducted worldwide has revealed that youth are generally heavy social media users (Untari, D. T. et al., 2020; Tunc-Aksan, A. & Evin, S., 2019; Lenhart, A.,

Anderson, M. & Smith, A., 2015). For instance, in 2022, Pew Research Center stated that 95% of the youth in United States use Youtube, followed by Tiktok (67%), Instagram (62%), Snapchat (59%), and Facebook (32%), while 35% of all U.S. teens claims that they are on at least one of these five platforms almost constantly (Vogels, E. A., Gelles-Watnick, R. & Massarat, N, 2022). In Malaysia context, youth also constitute to a large proportion of social media users and makes up nearly a quarter of the total population. Malaysians aged between 25 to 35 years old are the most active social media users (31.5%), followed by those aged between 18 to 24 years old (22.2%) (Sue, 2023). Numerous studies conducted has found out Malaysian youth use social media in various aspects, most prominently to socialize and communicate, to seek for information, entertainment and for education and learning (Safurah Abd Jalil et al., 2010; Saodah Wok & Norealyna Misman, 2015; Wong, F. M., Lean, M. L. & Fernandez, P. R., 2011).

2.3 Defining Digital Public Sphere

In recent years, academics are paying attention to the rise of a digital public sphere., who see it as a viable supplement to or even replacement for the well-established “old” public sphere—a crucial element of contemporary democracies (Schäfer, M. S., 2015). Jurgen Habermas is credited with coining the term "public sphere" in his book *The Structural Transformation of Public Sphere*, describes the term ‘public sphere’ as “a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed,” and into which “[a]ccess is guaranteed to all citizens” (Nichols, R., Nutter, N. & Moore, E., n.d.). In Habermas's conceptual vision, he established a platform where all citizens could assemble and participate in discussions of shared concerns, particularly on nation’s socio-political issues, in an open and unrestrained manner. It stands as a crucial element of socio-political structure, serving as the arena where individuals convene as citizens to express their individual perspectives and influence the societal political institutions (Muhammad Zubair

Khan, Ijaz Shafi Gilani & Allah Nawaz, 2012). However, this concept of public sphere is regarded as way too idealistic and ambitious which can hardly be found in real-life democracies. Conventional media which act as the mean of communication of public sphere such as television and newspaper (Habermas, J., Lennox, S. & Lennox, F., 1974) are often affected by commercial pressures and influenced by large corporations, thus making public sphere to operate as a platform promoting capitalist dominance and the perpetuation of specific ideologies instead. Hence, the rise of online platforms, including Internet and social media, which built on an infrastructure that offers boundless and unregulated communication transcending geographical limits, hints at a virtual revival of the public sphere (Papacharissi, Z., 2008).

Following the evolution of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), the public sphere has transformed from a mass-media-focused sphere reliant on broadcasting to a digitally interconnected public sphere, characterized by networked communication facilitating a two-way exchange of information (Giannelos, K., 2022, as cited in Cohen & Fung, 2021). and ultimately evolving into the contemporary battleground of politics (Thompson, J. B., 2020). Casero-Ripollés, Micó-Sanz and Díez-Bosch (2020). stated that three significant changes can be pinpointed as particularly impactful, which are diversification, polyphony, and connectivity. Politicians and journalists used to dominate the public sphere, but this is no longer the case. (Giannelos, K., 2022, as cited in Chadwick, A., 2017)., digitalization enables more people to express their opinions freely to engage in discussion, allows more new voices to be heard in society (Schäfer, M. S., 2015)., and connects those with shared interests virtually (Tufekci, Z., 2017). The broadening range of producers and information outlets, along with the proliferation of platforms for news consumption, fosters a mixed system of political communication which accommodates both traditional and modern media (Giannelos, K., 2022, as cited in Chadwick, A., 2017).,

promoting the development of fresh patterns in information absorption and political engagement (Gil de Zuñiga, H., Huber, B., & Strauß, N., 2018). The emergence of new media improve individuals' access to political knowledge, encourage broader discussions on political matters, and promote active engagement and involvement (Owen, D., n.d.).

2.4 Social Media and Politics

Globally, politicians and political parties have been utilizing social media sites like Facebook and Twitter more frequently as political communication tools to connect with their electorates at low cost. Social media is frequently utilized by politicians to raise their public profile, interact with public through sharing both their public and private sphere of life, promote themselves by showcasing the ideas and policies they intend to implement, and held campaigns during elections (Enli, G. S. & Skogerbø, E., 2013; Manning, N. et al., 2016; Sahly, A., Shao, C. & Kwon, K. H., 2019). Effective use of social media during elections period has the potential to mobilize more citizens to engage and take action, including those who used to lack of interest in politics. One of the successful digital campaign examples will be Barack Obama's presidential campaign in 2008, which is also the first "social media election". The campaign make use of multiple social media tools including website, Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, Emails and the Change.gov site (Cogburn, D. L. & Espinoza-Vasquez, F. K., 2011). Barack Obama connected with millions through blogs and video-sharing, granting voters the chance to access information and actively engage with the campaign and one another, which foster direct involvement (Wattal, S. et al., 2010). Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez (2011) in their study found out that in addition to mobilising nearly 5 million grassroots volunteers and 3.1 million individual funders, the campaign also created a vast internet network, went beyond public education and funding to include community action, improved political engagement, and higher voter participation.

Given 96.8% of Internet penetration rate in the nation, with a total of 96.8% Internet users and 78.5% social media users of the total population (Kemp, S., 2023), the power that Internet and social media can bring towards Malaysia's political landscape is not to be underestimated. In Malaysia, it is not unusual for politicians, political parties, and coalitions to use social media and the Internet. Indeed, the effect of the social media revolution have go beyond the results of the U.S. elections (Sern, T. J. & Zanuddin, H., 2014), transforming Malaysia's political terrain from 2008 until 2022. It has been demonstrated that social media plays a critical role in the nation's general election and able to influence the election landscape. Malaysia's 12th General Election in 2008 was the first "Internet election" which marked a historic moment as new media emerged as an effective alternative for disseminating information throughout the election campaign period. The accessibility of information becoming more effortless for public, resulted in the traditional government-controlled mainstream media losing its dominance and authority over the flow of information (Liow, J. C., 2012). This resulted in for the first time long-ruling political coalition in Malaysia – Barisan National (BN) lost their the majority two-thirds of seats.

Then, the next three general election in 2013, 2018 and 2022 are referred as "social media election" where various social media platforms were used massively during the campaign period and exerts significant impact on the election outcomes. After the "Facebook election" in 2013, WhatsApp in turn significantly contributed to political marketing and campaigning during the 14th general election. When it comes to politics and agenda-setting, WhatsApp content is much more influential than content on other social media sites and instant messaging apps during election season (Mohd Azmir Mohd Nizah & Afi Roshezry Abu Bakar, 2019). According to Statista (2018), 68 percent of Malaysians were using WhatsApp in the same quarter, indicating a significant user base of 21.9 million users. Hence, its impact on Malaysians' access to information and their capacity to share various news,

including political updates, should not be underestimated (Sedu, N. & Wan Norshira Wan Mohd Ghazali, W. N., 2020). In this case, Whatsapp convenience and user-friendly of access play a pivotal role in obtaining information, leveraging it, and subsequently distributing political campaign content, thereby supporting the political marketing agenda. Besides, it was also utilized as a space for political discussion, in which its interactive and user-friendly features allow users to express their views and exchange opinions freely (Sedu, N. & Wan Norshira Wan Mohd Ghazali, W. N., 2020). Worth noting that assumption of their hidden identity on Whatsapp is also a factor that drive youths to engage in political discussions. Given the political use of the Sedition Act and CMA, Malaysians prioritized concerns about safety and having a voice within social media networks. In a world of government surveillance and control on increasingly public social media platforms, encrypted group chats offered a safe space for people to engage in political discourse and action (Johns, A., 2020). All these makes the election stands as a major defining event in the nation's history which ended BN long-ruling for 61 years.

Meanwhile, in the latest general election last year, political parties and politicians unexpectedly turned Tiktok into a political arena where parties followers compete for popularity and limelight within mere seconds of short-form videos and infectious challenges (Kasinathan, S., 2023). According to political analyst, this transformation not only made political materials more accessible to the public, but also facilitated stronger bonds between parties and younger demographics, particularly with the 'Undi18' group, and the trend is expected to persist in the upcoming election. The significant influence of Tiktok can be noticed as The Islamist Party (PAS) under Perikatan Nasional coalition which is flourishing on Tiktok became the biggest winner of the election, winning the most seat – 43 seats as a party. All these previous elections has shown the powerfulness of social media as an effective

political communication tool and its ability in mobilizing citizens to engage in politics, particularly among young and active social media young users.

2.5 Youth and Political Participation

According to Salisbury (1975, as cited in Verba, S. & Nie, N. H., 1970). by utilizing a commonly observed definition, political participation involves “actions taken by individuals outside of the government sphere that aim to have an influence, either directly or indirectly, on the choice of government officials or their subsequent decisions and actions”. Through political involvement, citizens can select and vote for those who create policies benefiting them. It also entails citizens to actively participating in conversations about sociopolitical and economic matters, which serve as criteria for choosing future decision-makers (Omotayo, F., & Folorunso, M. B., 2020). Acknowledging that participation extends beyond just the electoral process (Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L. & Brady, H. E., 1995). such as voting and campaigning, traditional political participation encompasses a variety of activities including engaging in political discussions, composing and endorsing petitions, engaging in civil demonstrations, attending public consultations, contributing financially to elections, joining advocacy groups involved in lobbying, advocating for political causes, overseeing and reporting instances of electoral process violations (Omotayo, F., & Folorunso, M. B., 2020, as cited in, Abubakar, A. A., 2011; Gibson, R. B., et al., 2005; Unwuchola, A. A., 2017).

However, conventional modes of political engagement have seen declining popularity in numerous nations lately, particularly among the youths (Alodat, A. M., Al-Qora'n, L. F. & Abu Hamoud, M., 2023). This pattern is attributed to various factors, including diminished faith in political establishments, suspicion of political factions, and a feeling of disengagement from politics (Zagidullin, M., Aziz, N. & Kozhakhmet, S., 2011).

Citizens especially youths have shifted to online political engagement instead through social media, which lowers the traditional barriers to political participation and broaden the range of unofficial political actions (Bahtiar Mohamad, Shamsu Abdu Dauda, Haslina Halim, 2018). It has been praised as a fresh and creative method for empowering youth in political engagement and motivating them to participate actively (Kenna, J. L. & Hensley, M. A., 2019). Because of the consistent low voter turnout and declining engagement in conventional political activities in most countries, young people today are frequently regarded as one of the most disengaged demographics in politics. (Kitanova, M., 2019; Mengistu, M. M., 2017). However, some scholars argued that this trend does not necessarily proves that youths are disengaging from politics, instead, many have transformed and opt for alternative modes of engagement beyond elections, such as involvement via social media and the Internet, civic projects, protests, and volunteer work (Soler-i-Martí, R., 2014; Sloam, J., 2013).

2.6 The Relationship between Youths, Social media, and Political Participation

Numerous researchers have studied the connection between social media and youth political participation, as young people are acknowledged as early adopters and frequent users of social media. Omotayo and Folorunso (2020) proposed conceptual expansion of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM 2) introduced by Venkatesh and Davis (2020) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) developed by Bandura (1986) in their research to explore how social media might influence youths' political engagement in Nigeria and Malaysia context. The hypotheses testing indicates a noteworthy and positive connection between perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) concerning the youths' engagement in political participation through social media, validated past studies which confirmed the importance of these two variables in forecasting ICT use and its impact towards political engagement (Borrero, J. D. et al., 2014; Cegarra-Navarro, J.-G., Garcia-Perez, A., & Moreno-Cegarra, J. L., 2014. Akter, S. & Islam, M. A., 2019). It means that

youths will be more inclined to use social media to engage in politics if they believe that it offers many advantages and user-friendly. Since young people are typically tech-savvy, using social media should be easy and effortless for them, thus they are expected to use it for political engagement just as how they use it for other purposes. In addition, subjective norms (SN) and computer-self efficacy (CSE) of social media do play a role in influencing youths' participation, though not as influential as the previous variables. Subjective norms (SN) is a quite important determinant of youth political engagement through social media. It is anticipated that youths will feel more pressure to participate in politics using social media in addition to their other online activities if they believe that these significant others (eg. parents, peers etc.) will place behavioural expectations on them about social media use.

Numerous studies conducted abroad and in local context have found that youths' social media uses is usually positively correlated to their political participation within society, either directly or indirectly by exerting impact on other determinants which are able to motivate participation. Certain academics contend that youth online political participation is directly related to the use of social media. For instance, a recent study done by Haslina Halim, Farah Lina Azizan and Bahtiar Mohamad (2022) in Malaysia context confirmed the result of past research (Masiha et al., 2018; Gil de Zúñiga, H. et.al., 2017) that youths political participation can be directly impacted by their use of social media. Through commenting and opinion-sharing on political issues, social media use has dramatically increased political engagement. These findings demonstrate a strong correlation between the ability of political ideas from various points of view to spread across social media platforms and their potential to encourage youths' political engagement. Besides, social media (eg. Facebook) also motivate youths to have political expression online due to higher possibility of being exposed to collective political intelligence unintentionally and connect with prominent political figures on the platforms (Tang, G & Lee, F. L. F., 2013). One worth noting finding here is

that opposed to Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2012). research, Tang and Lee found that more connections do not necessarily guarantee greater participation, but heterogeneity of the social media network do, and those with a more diverse online network were more likely to engage in offline political activities.

Meanwhile, while the result of a study conducted among Pakistan youths show that students who dedicate a greater amount of time on Facebook tend to be more engaged in utilizing it for political objectives (Zaheer, L., 2016)., a quite recent study conducted on youths living in East Coast Malaysia revealed that the youths' social media usage duration lacked predictive capability in relation to their engagement, and that majority of them actually do not employ social media for political reasons (Rosyidah Muhamad, Rohana Ahmad and Jumadil Saputra, 2021). While social media has greatly facilitated young people's political engagement compared to earlier times and proving to be more favourable mode of participation among them, it has also opened avenues for the execution of other purposes. On the other hand, young people rarely employ social networking sites for political causes; in fact, several of them may never use them for such reason at all. Heiss, Knoll and Matthes (2019) in their study examining the connection between the main drivers of social media use and political participation through two exposure methods concluded that the particular way youths utilize social networking sites could dictate whether the impact on political involvement is positive or negative. According to the result, information motivation was discovered to have a positive correlation, through the intentional method of exposure, with both conventional and digital political engagement. On the other hand, incentives for entertainment were adversely associated with offline (as opposed to online) interaction through the incidental method of exposure. It showed that other uses of social media such as for entertainment are rarely aligned with shaping political aspirations and might divert them from engaging in more demanding political endeavours, while it was also the strongest user

motivation in the sample. In conclusion, time spent on social media usage may not always promote political participation, the impact is greatest only when youths use it for political purposes.

Rahmawati (2014). in her thesis suggested that greater usage of social media in general does not directly affect political engagement, political knowledge, or efficacy, instead, other mediating elements may be at play as well. Social media uses can indirectly motivate political engagement with the presence of these mediating factors. As social media reduces the expense of acquiring information and expands users' exposure to current events, young people can more easily access information, learn faster, and consequently develop increased knowledge and a greater interest in political matters (Asher, D. E. et al., 2018). Mohd Sufiean Hassan et al. (2016) stated that social media will lead to political news exposure, which increase youths' political knowledge and hence greater participation. Political knowledge and political interest are two important factors frequently tested by scholars which exhibits significant influence on youths' participation. Applicable to Pollock's political information efficacy model (1983), political knowledge particularly has consistently demonstrated a favourable correlation with online political participation (Weeks, B. E. et al., 2015). Political interest is also a significant factor in influencing political participation as suggested by studies abroad and in local context (Mohd Sufiean Hassan et al., 2016; Muhammad Yarkhan et al., 2019; Haslina Halim et al., 2021)., as offersthe drive to acquire political expertise, knowledge, or information necessary for evaluating political options (Gil de Zuniga, H. & Diehl, T., 2018). Besides, policy satisfaction is one ofthe determinants with contradicting result abroad and local. For instance, Muhammad Yarkhan et al. (2019) study which conducted comparison analysis between Pakistanis and Malaysian shows that though policy satisfaction casts a major impact on Pakistanis youths, but it tend to have minimal effect on Malaysian, in line with the result done by previous

study (Aishat Adebisi Abdul Rauf et al., 2016). which finds no evidence of a significant correlation between this variable and political participation via online.

2.6.1 Facebook Political Participation

Established in 2004, Facebook persists as the foremost globally recognized social networking platform, boasting a user base exceeding 3.03 billion monthly active users in 2023 (Shewale, R., 2023). It provides users a platform to express themselves freely, while connecting and interacting with others. Being among the first social media sites to be used for political purposes, Facebook has been subject to comprehensive research conducted across diverse nations and over extended periods. These investigations seek to assess its influence on political engagement, particularly among the youth demographic which frequently characterized as disengaged or distant from traditional political spheres (Farthing, R., 2010). Masiha et al. (2018) in research found that the duration of Facebook usage, the average weekly time spent on the platform, the total count of Facebook friends, and the number of close friends on Facebook could potentially elevate political engagement levels among youths. Increase in online political engagement will also significantly increase their levels of offline participation. Youths utilize Facebook to share their opinions and comment on political matters, in which the exchange of opinions and interactions demonstrates a grasp of political issues and motivates them to get involved in politics. An interesting finding here is that there is an inverse correlation between the amount of time spent on Facebook with political participation in both real life and online. The longer the users have been on this platform, the more likely they will be shift towards other entertainment options, and thus the higher the possibility they are to disengage from political activities.

Masiha et al. (2018) findings somehow validate with the results of some of the previous studies, such as study done by Tang and Lee (2013) and Cheung (2019) in Hong Kong context. As Facebook is the most popular social networking sites in Hong Kong,

research on this platform will be highly relevant. Youths use Facebook to obtain political information and connect to public political figures, which drive them towards engagement. According to Tang and Lee (2013), although time spent on Facebook does not show direct correlation with political participation, but it does have a major indirect effect on participation in both online and offline activities due to increased exposure to political content shared on Facebook. They concluded that those who had more diverse Facebook networks, connected with public political figures on the platform, and were subjected to frequently circulated political content were more likely to engage in political activity, and these variables tend to mediate one another. Cheung's research in 2019 echoes the study done by Tang and Lee (2013) and enhances the discussions on how social media impacts political involvement, specifically by considering the Facebook mobilization of emotions. He stated that Facebook decreases the obstacles and minimizes the expenses, which motivates youths to engage in expressive political actions. However, these responses and choices made regarding political involvement are often spontaneous, rather than solely relying on reasoned and well-informed debates. Also, the forms of tie generated is more towards "weak tie", which tend to have a lower likelihood of inspiring them to take part in high-risk activism that demands significant personal sacrifices or investments. Another interesting finding here is that perceived reliability of information shared on Facebook is found to be not serving a positive intermediary factor in how Facebook usage influences political participation. When choosing whether to engage in offline and online politics, young people do not primarily rely on the veracity and depth of the information they find on Facebook.

Differ from Cheung's research findings, Haslina Halim et al. (2021) research among Malaysian youth found positive relationship between perceived information quality on Facebook and political engagement, in which the youths indicated that the quality of

information they acquired in Facebook has supported their involvement in online political participation. This findings in line with the findings of Abdu et al. (2016) and Taufiq Ahmad et al. (2019), which stated that the effectiveness of the online interactions was greatly influenced by the quality of the information, which have an impact on youths' participation in political activities. Meanwhile, research conducted by Muhammad Amir Syafiq Asri and Ismail Sualman (2019). revealed that the credibility of online information significantly impacts the youths' political behaviour, where their degree of political engagement is determined by how credible they perceive the information to be. At the same time, while usage data indicates that Malaysian youths extensively use Facebook for political information, they still perceive it as lacking credibility. Yet, the presumption is that if they were to exclusively rely on Facebook for their political information, they would probably have faith towards it. Worth noting that Facebook is argued to be both direct antecedent (Haslina Halim et al, 2022; Weeks, B. E, Ardevol-Abreu, A. & Zuniga, H. G., 2015). and indirect antecedent of youths' political engagement by increasing the level of political knowledge, political interest, and political efficacy among youths (Haslina Halim et al., 2021; Taufiq Ahmad et al., 2019). As many past studies have suggested that increase in these variables will lead to a significant increase in youth political participation, Facebook usage can thus enhance youth political participation.

2.6.2 Twitter Political Participation

With 540 million active users per month and 225 million users daily globally, Twitter is one of the most popular social networking sites worldwide as of October 2023 (Lorenz, T., 2023). The age range of Twitter users worldwide is relatively young, mostly fall between the ages of 25 to 34, constitute to 38.5% of the total users (Shephard, J., 2023). By using Twitter, users are able to share concise messages, commonly termed as "tweets", which can stretch up to 280 words and may encompass text, visuals, videos, and links to website with

their followers (Orellana-Rodriguez, C. & Keane, M. T., 2018). Users can interact with each other's posts by liking, retweeting, or responding to them. They can also follow other users to see their posts in feeds. People, businesses, and entities utilize Twitter to communicate with the public, promote goods and services, and exchange information. Meanwhile, despite a perceived decline in Twitter's traffic, revenue, and user base in recent years, trailing behind other social media platforms as noted by Binder, M. (2023), its significance which serve as a platform for political communication and public discourses remains intact. According to a study conducted by Twiplomacy (2018)., Twitter surpasses Facebook in terms of political communication, with 187 governments and world leaders uphold an official presence on Twitter. It is an important tool for political actors and citizens to disseminate information and engage in political issues discussion via online (Ausserhofer, J. & Maireder, A., 2013). Social media can be used for a variety of reasons, some of these reasons include entertainment, socializing and status-seeking (Whiting, A. & William, D., 2013). Bookes (2019). however, stated that Twitter is primarily utilized for informational purposes rather than other purposes. Users perceive this platform as a hub for information due to the presence of numerous news sources such as journalists, politicians, civic activists, media outlets, and everyday users who utilize Twitter to share news (Park, 2017). Hence, it is regarded as a valuable resource for individuals seeking significant political information. Ayomide and Oluwatosin (2023). study confirms that Twitter is an essential platform which provides users with news about political parties, politicians, and politics itself, particularly during election, as users can obtain information about candidates and their policies more easily through it.

Meanwhile, Noor Hayat, Muniba Fatima Zahra and Ashbeelah Shafaqat Ali (2022). emphasize the important role of Twitter in creating political awareness among youths. By provide them with information and insight into the political process and letting them know that they can make meaningful contributions by voting, result shows that the microblogging

platform Twitter helps youths to become more engaged in politics. This in line with Mellon and Prosser (2017). findings that Twitter users exhibited a greater degree of political awareness than non-users of the platforms and Morpeau (2011). work which shows that individuals who use Twitter are more likely than non-users to engage in political activities. Political knowledge can have direct influence or act as a moderator tested in studies done by Aishat Adebisi Abdulrauf et al. (2017) and Muhammad Yar Khan et al. (2019) which facilitate political participation. While Caliendo et al. (2016). argued that Twitter use only amplifies or potentially intensifies the pre-existing interest and activism among highly motivated students rather than stimulating interest among those who yet to show any, later studies result tend to oppose to it. For instance, Basyouni (2021). research result suggests that the utilization of Twitter shows a positive correlation with the acquisition of political knowledge, and people tend to exposed to a greater amount of political and current affairs news on Twitter than other platforms. Boukes (2019). study add on to the findings that Twitter's beneficial impact on knowledge acquisition remains equally potent for both engaged and disengaged citizens. A valid argument would be that Twitter timelines are overrun with information about current events, facilitated by a multitude of political or journalistic accounts followed by the users, the lack of a screening algorithm, and high frequency of trending retweet on newsworthy items (Ju, A., Jeong, S. H. & Chyi, H. I., 2013; Kwak, H., Lee, C., Park, H., & Moon, S. 2010).

Moreover, Twitter also provide a platform for politicians and citizens to come together and interact and have conversations on public issues, particularly during election. For instance, in Noor Hayat, Muniba Fatima Zahra and Ashbeelah Shafaqat Ali (2022). Research among Pakistanis youths, most respondent acknowledge that Twitter offers them an immensely valuable platform which allow them to easily connect with political leaders and voice their concerns to them. Ayomide and Oluwatosin (2023). indicated that Twitter

creates an opportunity for political conversations between politicians and citizens, at the same time both parties are able to voice their views, disseminate information, and mobilise support for the preferred politicians. Given its significance in political communication, Twitter is also often put together with Facebook by scholars to examine their influence towards involving youths in political activities and conduct comparison analysis in different countries. Cognitive Engagement Theory is frequently used by scholars in this case. For instance, Aishat Adebisi Abdul Rauf et al. (2017). found that there is a favourable correlation between access to information on Twitter and Facebook, political interest and youths' political participation. Muhammad Yar Khan et al. (2019) build upon the work of Aishat Adebisi Abdul Rauf, Norsiah Abdul Hamid, and Mohd Sohbi Ishak (2017). by verifying how political knowledge, as a moderating factor, boosts various elements contributing to and influencing participation. Although Twitter use are found to be able to mobilize users directly or indirectly towards political participation, there have been contradicting findings regarding its strengths of correlations between online and actual political participation. Hopeke et al. (2016). in his study indicated that Twitter use is linked to an increased probability of engaging in political activities, regardless of online or offline, and online expressive communication through as "like", "retweet" and "comment". Valenzuela (2017). on the other way suggested that differences in types of social ties across different social media platforms may causes variations in users' political behaviour. Twitter as an efficient medium for accessing weak ties may exhibits a more significant relationship with real life participation, for instance protesting.

2.6.3 Tiktok Political Participation

Since 2020, TikTok has maintained its position as the most frequently downloaded app globally for three consecutive years (Iqbal, M., 2023)., surpassing well-known social networking platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. As of 2023, it boasts 1.677 billion users

worldwide, with high proportion of 1.1 billion users engaging with the app on a monthly basis (Shewale, R., 2023). Originally established in 2016 as a social media platform enabling users to produce and share brief mobile videos lasting 15 seconds or less, TikTok initially focused on content involving lip-syncing, acting, or dancing to popular songs or cultural references (Vijay, D. & Gekker, A., 2021). It has then undergone tremendous growth over time and emerging as leading non-gaming application globally, particularly favoured among the younger demographic (Seppala. M., 2022). Today, TikTok has evolved into a primary outlet for youth expression. This statement is proven by Statista (2022). which indicate that more than 80% of TikTok's global creators of content are under 25 despite a rising presence of older users on the platform. Although Tiktok tend to be used for entertainment than other purposes by frequently showcases teenagers performing dance routines, miming songs, or participating in daring challenges (Kennedy. M., 2020)., it has also slowly become a place for politics simultaneously. As of November 2023, videos labelled with hastag #politics amassed a total of 45.2 billion views on Tiktok. The use of Tiktok for political engagement is a quite recent topic in research field, nevertheless, few studies conducted are able to provide an overview on its impact.

The first and foremost important outcome is that Tiktok has pave way to a new and creative way of political participation that is more favourable to young citizens (Seppala, M., 2022). and encouraging political expression. According to Bennett (2008), civic models have changed from conventional, obedient citizenship to an actualizing citizenship. These changes are also attributed to evolving views over generations regarding what constitutes good citizenship. Engaging in creative self-expression through online politics, in the view of self-actualizing citizen, 'can be seen by the self-actualizing citizen as more meaningful than voting', making online political participation a crucial component of civic engagement. TikTok serves as a dynamic platform for youth involvement in activism and politics by

encouraging individuals to express their opinions in ways that resonate with them. It enables connections with peers and intertwining seamlessly with their interests and experiences of culture (Literat, I. & Kligler-Vilenchik, N., 2021; Zeng, J & Abidin, C., 2021). Departing from the traditional dominant ideal form of political expression, youths can engage in politics and express themselves around political matters in a 'playful manner' via Tiktok features. For instance, they can easily and richly express themselves through interpretative dance, use the latest audio meme to refute a prejudiced media coverage, and generate a duetto show support for transgender rights (Literat, I. & Kligler-Vilenchik, N., 2023). An example of this creative participation is TikTok's role during the U.S. Presidential Election 2020. Seppala (2020) categorized the participation into three ways: creative self-expression, where users choreograph dance to the beat of popular songs, serving as a means to convey support or dissent towards various values and policy stances intricately linked to the user's political identity; Creating community by debating, where users through the duet function, can respond to political claims made by other users and construct networks with peers; Trolling and protest, which act as an effective method for a transformed citizen to challenge and oppose political cultures and ideologies that do not align with their personal values.

On the other hand, Karimi and Fox (2023) found that Tiktok use is able to influence youths' political behaviour, and in fact, result shows that TikTok stands out as the most influential social media platform in predicting political attitudes and engagement ahead of other platforms. It may be due to youths' relatively limited attention span which makes them more attracted to short-form video, while Tiktok features that take the least amount of time to consume information kind of suit their style. In addition, Tiktok's fostering of creativity and humour also match their social media tastes well. As Tiktok is so successful at luring people in with amusement and emotional appeal, it is frequently used by politicians to promote political matters (Cervi, R. et al., 2021). One interesting finding is the connection

between political engagement and communication with political figures on Tiktok. Narido et al. (2022) in their study in Philippines context found that positive social media interactions between candidates and voters raise the probability that the former will become involved in the politics, and vice versa. This findings kind of resonates Mohd Faizal Kasmani (2022). findings in Malaysia that even individuals who acknowledged they had no interest in politics were exposed to and engaged with the contents posted by politicians on Tiktok. Despite the claim that TikTok can more accurately predict both offline and online modes of political engagement, its influence on offline participation yet to explored further. Sodani and Mendenhall (2021). in U.S. found that TikTok usage and offline political activity, such as voting, demonstrating, or marching, show little to no correlation. It was acknowledged that the content creators were not as focused on getting young people to go for offline events, and if there is, it will only be voting. However, it appears that their efforts may have been in vain based on the survey results.

Meanwhile, Sodani and Mendenhall (2021). also revealed that Tiktok is the primary platform for Tiktok users to acquire political content as compared to other platform. For instance, most users of Instagram and TikTok actually receive more political information on TikTok, which may make them more political literacy. According to a study conducted in Malaysia, most millennials used TikTok to increase their political literacy. They might choose to vote differently given additional information obtained from Tiktok (Nur Syahira Md Subre et al., 2022). This result somehow contradicts with Mohd Faizal Kasmani (2022). who stated that Tiktok is among the least popular platforms for Malaysian youths to obtain political information and express public opinion due to their primary purpose being entertainment and general lack of credibility. Ling (2023). build her research based on previous research done on other social media to examine the impact of TikTok on the political engagement of novice voters in Malaysia. Her findings found significantly positive

relationship between Tiktok usage, political knowledge, political interest, and engagement. One interesting finding in this study is that young voters may not as “knowledgeable” as how they perceived themselves. Voters on Tiktok is found to be having their own party affiliation, and they will only be watching videos that related to their bias. Tiktok has developed into a potent tool that helps users support the party or coalition they were initially in favour of even more. This can be explained by Tiktok algorithm feature which analyze users’ interest and preference through their interaction with content and provides a personalized information flow through For You page (Celvi, R., 2021). Political affiliation ease the formation of echo chambers and further causing political polarization among users of different political bias (Lund, C. and Zhong, 2022).

In conclusion, this paper delved into the political participation of young people on social media, with an emphasis on examining the distinct roles that Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok played in this process. Through the discussion of each platform, distinct impacts of different social media tools on sparking political engagement have been uncovered. While Facebook serves as motivator which reduces obstacles for youths to engage in expressive political actions, Twitter excels by serving as a platform mainly for political information and communication, and TikTok stands out for its role in realizing self-actualizing citizenship by allowing engagement in creative self-expression through online politics. Overall, these social media platforms provide young individuals with a distinctive space for political participation, shaping their political perspectives and encouraging more active involvement in public affairs. However, there are still limitations possessed by these platforms. For instance, social media platforms might only motivating youths in participating in political expression online where less efforts is required. The forms of tie generated is more towards “weak tie”, which tend to have a lower likelihood of inspiring them to take part in offline political activities that require significant personal sacrifices or investments.

2.7 Applications of The Uses and Gratification Theory

According to Ruggiero (2009, as cited in Wimmer & Dominick, 1994), the Uses and Gratification Theory was first proposed in 1940s, a period during which scholars began to wonder why audiences engaged in specific media behaviours such as reading newspapers or listening to the radio. Mass communication specialists frequently employ the U & G Theory to look into, explain, and provide answers to the issues of why people use specific media and what benefits or satisfactions they receive from doing so (Aisa Salihu Musa et.al., 2016). Since the emergence of new Information Communication Technology (ICT). It has been massively used by academics to examine users' gratifications for using social media. This theory holds relevance in the realm of social media due to its foundation within communications literature, which serves as a valuable tool in elucidating the purposes and behaviours associated with social media utilization (Whiting, A. & Williams, D., 2013). Scholars usually examined what motivates people to use social media based on five distinct needs as proposed by Katz et al. (1973): social integrative needs, affective needs, integrative needs, cognitive needs, and escapism.

In reviewing the literature, the most notable aspects of the U&G in connection to youths SNSs usage were discovered by Valenzuela et al. (2009). and Ancu and Cozma (2009). By conducting a study among 1715 college students, Valenzuela et al. (2009). found out that youths use Facebook most prominently to fulfil their needs of socializing with friends, followed by entertainment, self-status seeking and information-seeking. Ancu and Cozma (2009). discovered analogous factors, identifying that the primary drivers for youths using social media are the inclination towards social interaction, seeking information, and entertainment. Urista et al. (2009). through focus group research stated that most youths used SNS as a productive means of connecting with friends. A recent research carried out by Xu (2022). somehow tend to resonate previous study in which university students were

prompted to use online social media for information gathering, entertainment, life and leisure, socialising, and work-related purposes. Worth noting that all studies above were conducted among youths across different countries, thus the results seems to be having little variations between one another in terms of the ranking of motivations. For example, Khodabandelou et al. (2014). in their research compared motivations among students pursuing tertiary education in South Africa, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, and Iran, revealing variations in how students from these countries prioritize motivations, and these differences were said could be attributed to cultural distinctions. For instance, the results revealed that majority Malaysian students' primary motivation for using social media is "interpersonal utility", which is second motivation among UK students and non-significant among Iranian and African students. Malaysians enjoyed belong to a group, express themselves freely, meet new people, and help others. Although there is no in-depth analysis done to examine this situation, but it may refer to the comparison study conducted between the people of China and US (Jackson, L. A. & Wang, J. L., 2013). It is reasonable to consider that social motives may have evolved over time, and newer studies may provide more insights into the current motivations behind social media use.

While extensive research exists on why young people use social media, there remains a notable scarcity of studies focusing on their uses and gratifications of social networking site and how it may influence their political engagement. Scholars are also more likely to apply other theories, such as cognitive engagement theory and social cognitive theory when conducting research related to ICT and political behaviour, instead of U&G theory. Nevertheless, most of these studies are applying quantitative survey method and using likert scale to set the question, which enable scholars to actually quantify youths' attitudes or opinions towards the impact of social media, thus be able to comprehend their points of view in detail, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Moreover, they often utilize correlation

analysis to assess the connection between different variables, which is an effective approach to explore the interplay among youth, social media usage, and involvement in political activities. However, likert scale still possess some weaknesses such as limited granularity as it only provide fixed ranges of choices and social desirability bias, which may influence the accuracy of data collected. Correlation analysis may also be influenced by other unrelated third variables, which lead to misleading correlations. In addition, some scholars also applying focus group interview which allow them to explore youths' opinions, attitudes and experiences in details, yet it still possesses some weaknesses. Participants might be influenced and confirm to group opinions and the findings might not be able to represent the larger population view. For instance, one study done by Penney (2019). using this method found that the result might not be able to address the opinions of all youths towards memes and humours in their online expression, as recruitment is only made on those who actively post political content. In spite of all the strengths and weaknesses, likert scale may be still the best option for U&G theory in this case, as it will be able to paint a picture of the degree to which youth use social media to pursue particular motivations and how that use will affect their involvement in politics.

One study which examined the effect of U & G Theory on subsequent political behaviour found that political news use behaviours are clearly influenced by cognitive factors (Curnalia, R. M. L. & Mermer, D., 2013). The number of sources people reported using and their average consumption of political news were both predicted by cognitive motives. Scholars referred it as making sense as people who are looking for information are probably going to visit a range of sites and spend a lot of time on news sites. Interestingly, this factor only tangentially associated to activism by encouraging an increase in average news consumption, not voting or political activism, despite the expectation that they would predict more politically involved behaviour. In fact, affective motives are seems to be more

strongly associated with political activity and predict other political behaviour than diverse political news use. This result, which suggests that emotions play a significant role in the study of campaign effects, is somewhat supported by other research. (Weber, C., 2013; Gruning, D. J. & Schubert, T. W., 2021; Young, 2021).

There is a scarcity in research which examine impact of different needs on social media use and its influence towards political engagement. Most of the study conducted is only focusing on the most popular social media platform – Facebook. Early research found that cognitive need is lead to more diverse news use while affective need led to more inclusive engagement. A recent study done by Tan (2020). on Facebook in Malaysia context indicates that entertainment need surprisingly suppress other needs and exert more significant impact on Malaysian users to involve in online political participation, alongside with demographic factors such as gender, race, and education level. This finding contradicts the findings of earlier research, which concluded that there was no discernible correlation between the need for entertainment and digital political activities, instead, two main gratification needs that drives Facebook usage in Malaysia are information need and education need (Chang et al., 2015). Tan's research also showed inconsistent result to previous and later research abroad which suggests that Facebook use for entertainment purpose show no relationship to users' online and offline political engagement (Chen and Chan, 2017; Cayas, E. J. S., 2020). Cayas (2020) suggested that guidance and social utility motivations are more strongly correlated with online engagement, whereas surveillance are more strongly correlated with offline participation.

In conclusion, the literature review highlights the complex connection between youth political participation and social media. Began by providing an insight into youths' definition, digital public sphere, social media and politics, youths and political participation, the literature review then delves into an overview of the relationship between youths, social

media and political participation. Apart from direct impact of social media use through time spent and diverse features which encourage expression and communication, social media use may also influence youths' political communication indirectly through mediating factors such as political knowledge, political efficacy, political interest and policy satisfaction. Mohd Sufiean Hassan et al. (2016) stated that social media will lead to increasing political news exposure and causes an increase in youths' political knowledge, which is a factor that shows consistent favourable correlation with their political participation. Moreover, the roles portrayed by three different social media platforms – Facebook, Twitter and TikTok in encouraging youths' engagement have also been explored thoroughly. However, the literature review also reveals contradiction between different viewpoints in terms of duration of time spent and youths' political participation. Zaheer (2016) stated that youths who dedicate a greater amount of time on Facebook tend to be more engaged in utilizing it for political objectives. Meanwhile, Rosyidah Muhamad, Rohana Ahmad and Jumadil Saputra (2021) revealed that majority of youths do not employ social media for political reasons, and hence the amount of time they spend on it does not accurately predict their level of engagement.

Rosyidah Muhamad, Rohana Ahmad and Jumadil Saputra (2021) findings resonate Heiss, Knoll and Matthes (2019) study which stated that the effect of social media is strong in involving youths in political engagement only when youths use it for political objectives. However, young people are not consistently utilizing social media for political engagement, and other motivations might therefore hinder them from participating in politics instead (Matthes, J., 2022). The literature review then looks into past studies that investigate the relationship between youths' social media use motivations and their consequent participation, found that there is a scarcity of studies which explore the effect of youths' different social media use motivations on their political participation. Chen and Chan (2017) research in

China context is the most prominent one which combined the cognitive/communication mediation models (O-S-R-O-R) with the Uses and Gratification theory. Their findings shows that through political efficacy, social media news and discussion, in terms of both online and offline political engagement, guidance and social utility motivations showed distinct indirect effects. Cayas (2020) research using the same framework shows similar results with additional surveillance factors showcase positive indirect relationship between youths' online and offline participation. In Malaysia context, similar research done will be Tan (2020) research which employ U&G Theory and found that entertainment motivation exerts most prominent effect on political participation, as opposed to Chen and Chan (2017) and Cayas (2020), and it was done among users between 21-59 years old. All these research are conducted on social media Facebook. Hence, the discrepancy emphasises the need for more research on other social media platform that frequently used by youths and youths' motivation to use the particular social media and its consequent impact on their political engagement.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study aims to examine Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) students' purposes for using social media and its impact on their political engagement. Uses and gratification theory is applied in this study to provide more understanding on gratifications that youths seek from using social media and how these motivations might influence their possibility of taking part in political activities. Gratifying the Uses and Gratification theory, a number of prior studies have advanced understanding of the various functions that social media can perform—such as entertainment, guidance, and surveillance—in both directly and indirectly impacting the political involvement of young individuals. The study will be adopting O-S-R-O-R model as well together with U& G theory to provide a clearer picture on the relationships between different variables. The theory and model is apt for use in this context as varied motivations can result in distinct media exposures, thus fostering varying levels of engagement among youths. It will contribute new insights to the current body of literature by exploring how different motivations for using social media can lead to diverse degrees of political involvement among young people.

This study will utilize a quantitative survey approach, employing Google Forms as the tool to collect data from UTAR students. The number of respondents for the sample will be 377 respondents, in which the figure is calculated using Raosoft sample size calculator. It is an online application which aids in determining the appropriate size for research sample in order to ensure statistically significant study results. To calculate the proper sample size, this calculator considers a number of variables, such as population size, confidence level, and confidence interval. Survey questionnaires will be purposefully crafted to address the research objectives and explore how the social media gratification needs of young individuals influence their engagement in politics. All instruments of the variables such as

motivations, political knowledge and political activities will be adopted from past studies. With the exception of political knowledge, each variable is assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. This scale is well-suited for the study as it quantifies and visually represents the strength of various motivations, levels of news consumption, online and offline political activities, enabling broader implications drawn from the results.

3.2 Research Framework

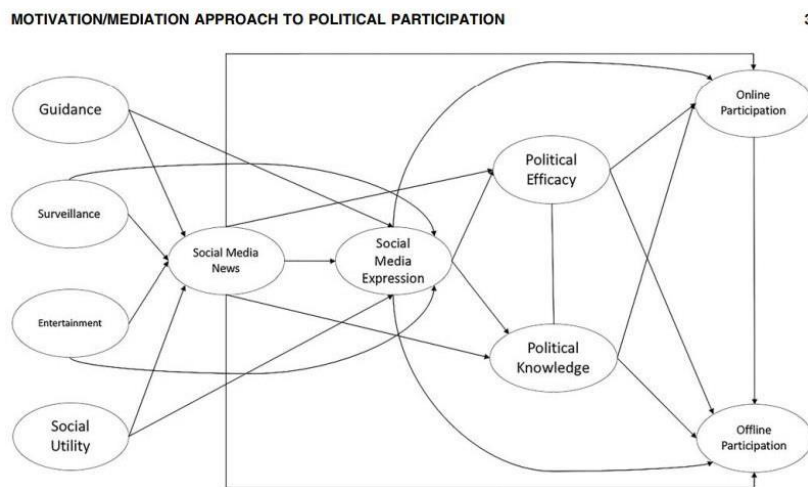


Figure 3.1: Model of mediation for motivated media consumption and its effects

The goal of this study is to investigate the relationship between social media use and political engagement among UTAR students in Malaysia by adopting and modifying Chen and Chan's (2017) framework. Chen and Chan's (2017) research combined the cognitive/communication mediation models (O-S-R-O-R) with the Uses and Gratification theory (U & G theory) in China. According to the U & G theory, media consumers ingest media information to fulfil a variety of needs, wants, and objectives (Katz, E. et al., 1973; Shao, 2009; Whiting, A. & Williams, D., 2013). Meanwhile, the O-S-R-O-R framework (O-orientation, S-stimuli, R-reasoning, O-outcome, R-response) was frequently employed to investigate the connection between citizen communication and engagement, and it was often adopted in examining the way how political engagement can be influenced by social media

use (Rehan Tariq et al., 2022; Teo, 2022). O-S-R-O-R model is a logical framework that combines motivation, information, and expression. Some contend that both traditional and online news consumption, along with political discussions, have an impact on public and political engagement through demographic, dispositional, and contextual influences (Muhammad Raza Majid et al., 2021).

According to Chen and Chan (2017), different people use media for different reasons, and such motivated media exposure may have varied consequences on their subsequent media usage, attitudes, and engagement. Thus, incorporating both theory and model is essential in examining the influences of different social media use on users' political participation. Their findings show that four motivations have no direct impact on participation, however each exert different indirect impact on factors which lead to participation. In short, the outcome demonstrates the degree to which all of the listed factors jointly affect political engagement via both direct and indirect channels. As a result, Chen and Chan's (2017) study offers a strong theoretical framework with the following variable to help identify the solutions to the particular concerns of the current research in the Malaysian context.

Motivations (first O): According to U&G Theory, audiences' desire for satisfaction influences how they utilize a particular media. Entertainment and surveillance were found to be regularly correlated with media consumption in the most research. In order to complete the four main reasons why internet users look up political material online, Chen and Chan (2017) added two more motivations: guidance (e.g. way to evaluate political contenders) & social utility (e.g. to interact with people) as suggested by Kaye and Johnson (2004). in their research.

Social media news use / consumption (S) and expression (R): News exposure has long been known to encourage political participation, and social media is a crucial source for young people to obtain information on current events and political issues. (Chen & Chan, 2017). As a result of this exposure, social media platforms then provide an easily accessible platform for political expression because of their commenting tools which allow users to respond quickly and interactively.

Political knowledge and political efficacy: For an extended period of time, political scholars have shown that political knowledge—that is, how much people know about politics—and political efficacy—that is, how much people believe they can influence politics—have a substantial impact on citizens' engagement in politics (Lewis-Beck, M. S. et al., 2008; Campbell, A. et al., 1954) It is believed that social media news exposure will increase one's political consciousness and knowledge, while engaging in discussions about politics might make one feel as though they are knowledgeable about politics (internal political efficacy).

Online and offline political participation (R) Chen and Chan (2017) highlighted that “online political participation pays more attention to the mobilisation action, that is, how they actively connect with others for political purposes”, while offline political participation is defined as the “individual's engagement in collective activities related to the public interest or political appeals”.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

Quota sampling techniques will be used in this research targeted UTAR students aged 18 to 30 years old from different faculties. Quota sampling is a significant sampling approach that utilizes a non-probability method, depending on the deliberate selection of a pre-established quantity or percentage of units, rather than random selection. In this method,

researchers will determine the sample selection according to specific quotas, ensuring that the final sample aligns with predetermined quota criteria. The strength of Quota sampling techniques is that it allows researchers to capture diversity of the sample through the setting of quotas based on certain characteristic. In addition, it ensures a more comprehensive representation of UTAR students given small population size. For this study, researchers will set a quota for the number of male and female respondents, along with the number of respondents from each faculty. This approach will lead to more inclusive research findings concerning UTAR students, while facilitating the exploration of potential distinctions in the connection between students of diverse genders and faculties.

3.4 Measurement Items

3.4.1 Independent Variables

Table 1 outlines descriptive data for each variable and items underneath. Some instrument utilized in this study was taken from Chen and Chan (2017), who also used the items under variables motivations, social media news, social media exposure, political efficacy from the literature (Kaye, B. K. & Johnson, T. J., 2002; Niemi, R.G. et al., 1988).

3.4.2 Motivation

Motivation in this case is the reason for youths to use social media. Instrument comes in the form of 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “Strongly agree”, which is the highest scale equivalent to 5, “Agree” which is equal to 4, “Neither agree nor disagree” which is equivalent to 3, “Disagree” which is equivalent to 2, and “Strongly disagree” which is the lowest scale equal to 1, to measure respondents’ level of agreement to the statements.

3.4.3 Social Media News and Social Media Expression

It has long been known that news exposure encourages political participation (Chen & Chan, 2017). Social media news is the information about political and current affairs that youths are exposed to either intentionally or unintentionally through the using of social media. Meanwhile, it also in turn encourage political expression using social media platform due to the low barrier of entry. Utilising a 5-point Likert scale, the regularity of usage and expression is gauged, ranging from “Never” equivalent to 1, the lowest in the scale, followed by “Rarely” equivalent to 2, “Sometimes” equivalent to 3, “Frequently” equivalent to 4, and “Very frequently”, which is the highest scale, equivalent to 5.

3.4.4 Political Knowledge and Political Efficacy

Political knowledge is the politics-related knowledge owned by a person. To measure political knowledge, the respondents will be required to answer six questions, such as the name of Malaysia present Prime Minister (Table 1). An accurate response will be coded as 1, while an incorrect or blank response will be coded as 0, all answers will then be summed to form the scale ($M=0.32$, $SD=0.26$). On the other hand, political internal efficacy which refer to the extent to which a person thinks he/she could influence the political process, will utilize 5-point Likert scale to measure respondents’ level of agreement. The scale will be ranging from “Strongly agree”, which is equivalent to 5, “Agree” which is equal to 4, “Neither agree nor disagree” which is equivalent to 3, “Disagree” which is equivalent to 2, and “Strongly disagree” which is the lowest scale equal to 1.

3.5 Dependent Variables

Offline political participation is any type of participation or engagement in political activities that takes place away from digital or online platforms. Items under this variable will be adapted from Valenzuela et al. (2011)., Gibson and Cantijoch (2013) to measure the frequency of participation. Meanwhile, online political participation which refers to

involvement in political activities through digital media, will be measured using items adapted from Waeterloos et al. (2021). Both variables will be measured using 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Never” being the lowest in the scale, equivalent to 1, “Rarely” equivalent to 2, “Sometimes” which equivalent to 3, “Frequently” equivalent to 4, and “Veryfrequently” as the highest in scale equivalent to 5.

Table 3.1: Measurement of essential factors

Factors	Items for inquiry
Guidance	<p>I utilize social media...</p> <p>...to assist me in making decisions regarding crucial matters.</p> <p>...to let me learn more about public servants.</p> <p>...to assist me in learning what other people think.</p> <p>... to give me greater confidence in regard to public issues.</p>
Surveillance	<p>I utilize social media...</p> <p>...because it is simple to acquire information.</p> <p>...to locate particular political info that captures my interest.</p> <p>...to stay informed about significant political issues.</p> <p>...to enhance my understanding.</p>
Entertainment	<p>I utilize social media...</p> <p>...because it is fascinating.</p> <p>...because it is thrilling.</p> <p>...because it is soothing.</p>
Social utility	<p>I utilize social media...</p> <p>...to interact among one another.</p> <p>...to have a topic of conversation with others.</p>

	...to share my thoughts.
Social media news consumption	How frequent do you utilize social media... ...to read news articles about public affairs? ...to obtain data from local or federal government accounts? ...to obtain data from the accounts of others? ... to keep track of the developments of particular public campaigns or issues?
Social media expression	How frequent do you utilize social media... ...to send messages about political campaigns? ...to critique a government initiative or policy? ...to engage with the official government accounts? ...to have discussion on governmental actions or policies?
Internal political efficacy	I have enough ability... ... to comprehend issues related to politics. ... to engage in public affairs discourse and participation.
Political knowledge	Who is the present Prime Minister of Malaysia? Which party coalition won in Malaysia GE15 last year? Which parties do present Deputy Prime Ministers of Malaysia come from? How frequent is the general election of Malaysia? How many members of Parliament (MPs) are there in Malaysia? Which government branch is responsible for the interpretation of law?
Offline political participation	How frequent do you participate in... ...a political campaign.

	<p>...a demonstration, protest, or political rally</p> <p>...calling or mailing to a politician.</p> <p>...volunteering for a party or candidates</p>
Online political participation	<p>How frequent do you...</p> <p>...actively launched/mobilized an online campaign (eg. protest).</p> <p>... took part in an online group activity.</p> <p>... connected to individuals who hold comparable viewpoints.</p>

This study will be utilizing a quantitative approach to assess the influences of various social media usage motivations on UTAR students' political engagement. The measurement of key variables, as outlined in Table 1, aims to capture the nuances of social media engagement and its influence on political activities, both offline and online. The use of quota sampling techniques in data collection ensures a balanced representation of gender and faculty among respondents for accurate result. Data will be collected through Google form and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics 23. While potential self-reporting biases and limitations in generalizability are acknowledged, this research seeks to provide insightful analysis of the dynamic relationship between youths' political engagement and social media motivations.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

4.1 Introduction

While digital natives' youths have grown to become a powerful political force in Malaysia with high turnout rate in election, in-depth research on how different social media motivations might influence their political engagement, particularly on private university students, has yet to be explored further. This chapter presents the results of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) students' motivations for using social media and their subsequent political engagement. It consists of descriptive statistics of the samples, findings of correlation analyses between political engagement and social media motivations, and interpretation on these findings. Moreover, this chapter also discusses any unexpected findings and study limitations from the research, compares present results with the body of existing literature.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

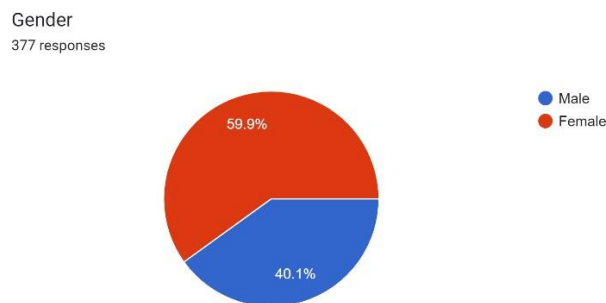


Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution

The research sample comprises of 377 UTAR students, with most respondents, which is 239 of them (63.4%) fall between the range of 18 to 21 years old, followed by 134 respondents (35.5%) between 22 to 25 years old and 4 respondents (1.1%) aged 25 years old and above.

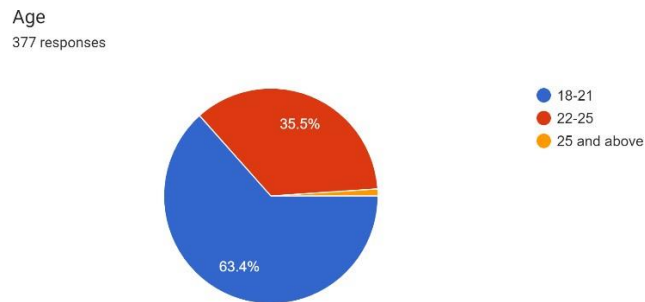


Figure 4.2: Age distribution

Of these participants, 226 of them (59.9%) are identified as female while 151 (40.1%) are male.

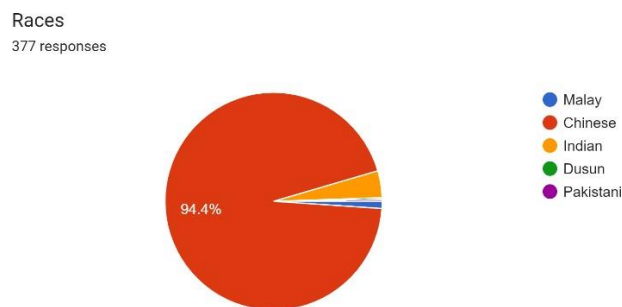


Figure 4.3: Races distribution

In terms of races, Chinese constitute to majority of the respondents, in which 356 respondents (94.4%) are Chinese. This is followed by 15 Indian respondents (4%), 4 Malay respondents (1.1%) and 2 respondents (0.5%) of other races. The huge difference in terms of respondents' races may be due to the university's student composition itself in which majority of students are Chinese.

Faculties
377 responses

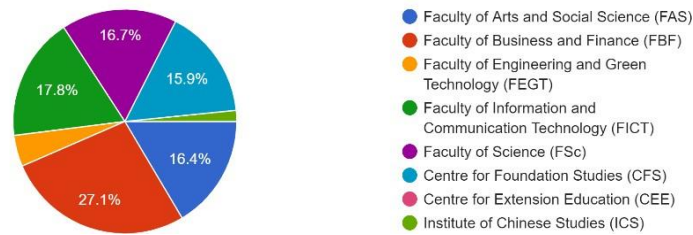


Figure 4.4: Faculties distribution

On the other hand, the overall distribution of respondents’ faculties is fairly average, 27.1% of respondents are from Faculty of Business and Finance (FBF), 17.8% from Faculty of Information and Communication Technology (FICT), 16.7% from Faculty of Science (FSc), 16.4% from Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FAS), 15.9% from Centre of Foundation Studies (CFS), 4.5% from Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology (FEGT), and 1.6% from Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS).

Table 4.1: Measurement of key variable items

Variables	Question items	M	SD	Alpha
Guidance	I utilize social media...	3.78	0.73	0.77
	...to assist me in making decisions regarding crucial matters.			
to let me learn more about public servants.			
	...to assist me in learning what other people think.			
	... to give me greater confidence in regard to public issues.			
Surveillance	I utilize social media...	3.93	0.72	0.78
	...because it is simple to acquire information.			
	...to locate particular political info that			

	captures my interest.			
	...to stay informed about significant political issues.			
	...to enhance my understanding.			
Entertainment	I utilize social media...	3.92	0.78	0.80
	...because it is fascinating.			
	...because it is thrilling.			
	...because it is soothing.			
Social utility	I utilize social media...	3.82	0.79	0.72
	...to interact among one another.			
	...to have a topic of conversation with others.			
Social media news	...to share my thoughts.			
	How frequent do you utilize social media...	3.46	0.82	
	...to read news articles about public affairs?			
	...to obtain data from local or federal government accounts?			
	...to obtain data from the accounts of others?			
	... to keep track of the developments of particular public campaigns or issues?			
Social media expression	How frequent do you utilize social media...	2.72	1.44	0.92
	...to send messages about political campaigns?			
	...to critique a government initiative or policy?			
	...to engage with the official government accounts?			
	...to have discussion on governmental actions or policies?			

Political knowledge	<p>Who is the present Prime Minister of Malaysia?</p> <p>Malaysia's current ruling unity government is a result of alliance between different party coalitions. Which of the following coalitions is not part of the unity government?</p> <p>Deputy Prime Minister often assists the Prime Minister in various governmental duties and may also act as the Prime Minister in their absence. How many Deputy Prime Minister does Malaysia currently have?</p> <p>Malaysia practices parliamentary democracy in which Members of the House of Representatives (MPs) are elected by the people through general elections. How frequent is a general election held in Malaysia under normal circumstances?</p> <p>How many members of Parliament (MPs) are there in Malaysia?</p> <p>Which government branch is responsible for the interpretation of law?</p>	3.75	1.26	
Internal political efficacy	<p>I have enough ability...</p> <p>... to comprehend issues related to politics.</p> <p>... to engage in public affairs discourse and participation.</p>	3.19	0.96	0.77
Online political engagement	<p>How frequent do you...</p> <p>...actively launched/mobilized an online campaign (eg. protest).</p> <p>... took part in an online group activity.</p> <p>... connected to individuals who hold comparable viewpoints.</p>	2.67	1.05	0.83
Offline political engagement	<p>How frequent do you participate in...</p> <p>...a political campaign.</p> <p>...a demonstration, protest, or political rally.</p> <p>...calling or mailing to a politician.</p> <p>...volunteering for a party or candidates.</p>	2.12	1.21	0.95

Each variable were measured using 5-point Likert, which is a widely utilized method in research for gauging attitudes, opinions, perceptions, and levels of agreement among the respondents. When a variable in research produces a high mean, it generally suggests that on average most respondents tend to score at the higher range of the scale for that specific variable. For example, in terms of attitudes and agreement level, higher mean figure means that on average most respondents tend to have positive attitude and strong agreement or consensus towards the particular item. In this study, scale used for variables under social media motivations and internal political efficacy ranging from “Strongly disagree” (1), “Disagree” (2), “Neither agree nor disagree” (3), “Agree” (4), and “Strongly agree” (5). The mean will show the average level of agreement among respondents. For social media news, social media expression, online political engagement and offline political engagement, the scale range from “Never” (1), followed by “Rarely” (2), “Sometimes” (3), “Frequently” (4), and “Very frequently” (5). This is to test the regularity of engaging in various activities among respondents.

Standard deviation is a vital aspect of quantitative research, which offers valuable insights into the dispersion and uniformity of data. The SD value of a variable provides an insight on variability and consistency of the data collected. A smaller standard deviation indicates less variability and higher level of consistency of respondents’ answers, suggesting that the data points are clustered around the mean. Overall, the average mean for social media motivations was 3.86 (SD=0.6) on a 5-point scale, indicates that respondents have a relatively high motivation for using social media, and most of them sharing a similar level of motivations. Meanwhile, in terms of level of political engagement, inclusive of both online and offline, respondents in general tend to have a relatively low level of political engagement (M=2.39). However, the level of political engagement among respondents might be diverse among one another as suggested by high standard deviation (SD=1.1).

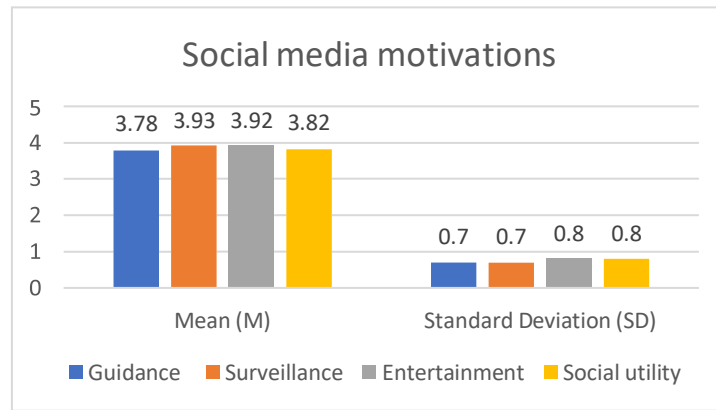


Figure 4.5: Mean and Standard deviation of social media motivations

The survey result indicates that respondents generally agree with and are motivated to utilize social media for different purposes. The mean score for each item is relatively high ranging from surveillance ($M=3.93$), entertainment ($M=3.92$), and social utility ($M=3.82$) and guidance ($M=3.78$). Low standard deviation range from 0.7 to 0.8 show moderate variability in responses for each of the motivations, indicating that overall respondents are quite consistent in their motivations without much variations.

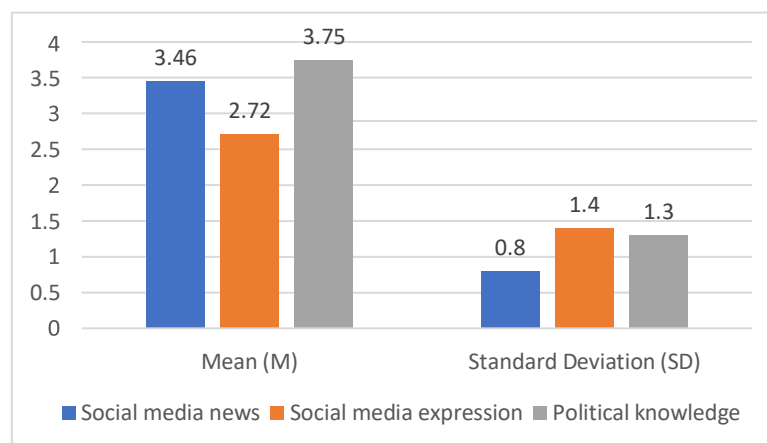


Figure 4.6: Mean and standard deviation of social media news, expression & political knowledge

Findings show that respondents somewhat agree that they use social media to read news articles and obtain information from various sources ($M=3.46$, $SD=0.8$). However, a mean of 2.72 suggest that, on average, respondents tend to express their political opinions

moderately or mildly through social media. Nevertheless, a relatively high standard deviation of 1.4 suggests that there might be considerable differences among respondents in their level of expression through social media ($SD=1.4$). On the other hand, respondents possess a moderate-to-high level of political knowledge with a mean score of 3.75. Yet, a moderate standard deviation of 1.3 indicates that though respondents' knowledge is moderately high, there might still be some variability in terms of knowledge level among respondents. The variability is not excessive, suggesting a relatively steady level of political knowledge within respondents.

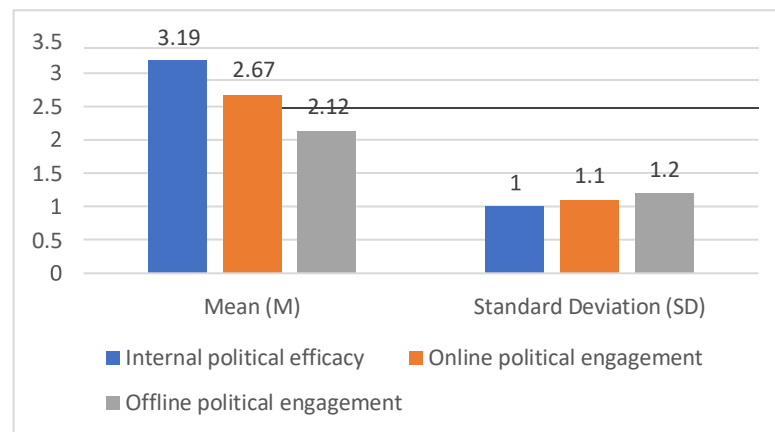


Figure 4.7: Mean and standard deviation of internal political efficacy, online political engagement & offline political engagement

On average, survey participants demonstrate a significantly high degree of internal political effectiveness, with an average score of 3.19. The moderate standard deviation of 1.0 indicates some variability in responses, highlighting differing levels of this sense among individuals despite the majority feeling politically effective. In terms of online political engagement, a mean of 2.67 suggests a moderate level of engagement through digital platforms, while a standard deviation of 1.1 indicates that while many people are involved in online political activities, the degree of participation differs among individuals. On the other hand, the average score for offline political involvement is the least among

all (M=2.12), indicates that participants typically show lower levels of participation in conventional offline political activities as compared to online. The moderate standard deviation of 1.2 suggests some variability in responses, showing that although there is generally less involvement in offline activities, there are still differences among respondents.

4.3 Correlation analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to understand the relationship between different variables in the research. In general, the analysis revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.22 ($p < 0.001$) between social media motivations and political engagement, indicating a weak positive relationship between two variables. This suggests that higher levels of motivations for using social media somehow associated with higher levels of political engagement among UTAR students.

Table 4.2: Pearson Correlations of Key Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Guidance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.Surveillance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.Entertainment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.Social utility	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.Social media news	0.48**	0.54**	0.35**	0.52**	-	-	-	-	-
6.Social media expression	0.31**	0.31**	0.17**	0.36**	0.59**	-	-	-	-
7.Political knowledge	0.15**	0.15**	0.09	0.05	0.12*	-0.04	-	-	-
8.Internal political efficacy	0.34**	0.29**	0.23**	0.39**	0.49**	0.61**	0.04	-	-
9.Online engagement	0.24**	0.16**	0.17**	0.34**	0.38**	0.58**	-0.06	0.45**	-
10.Offline engagement	0.16**	0.04	0.07	0.21**	0.33**	0.64**	-0.10	0.47**	0.75**

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

The range of Pearson correlation coefficients is -1 to 1, where a perfect negative relationship is denoted by a value of -1, a perfect positive relationship by a value of 1, and no relationship is indicated by a value of 0. Coefficients closer to -1 or 1 suggest stronger relationships, while coefficients close to 0 suggest weak relationships.

4.4 Interpretation of Results

Table reveals the strength and significance of the relationships between the variables. Surveillance ($r=0.54$), social utility ($r=0.52$) and guidance ($r=0.48$) motivations in using social media have a very highly significant relationship to social media news use. This discovery validates the concept that initial orientation (first O) or reasons impact the stimuli (S) or utilization of social media news. It implies that the interest to learn more about public servants, to stay informed and understand others' opinions on political affairs encourage UTAR students to access or consume news information from social media. Therefore, these findings support earlier research done by Cayas (2020) and Chen and Chan (2017), in which an individual's inclination to stay politically informed and their proactive pursuit of information are likely to enhance their consumption of news on social media. Social media algorithm may also play a part here as people will be more likely to be exposed to related news when they regularly search for it (Lee & Xenos, 2020). Moreover, though correlation is not as strong as other motivations, entertainment motivation still showcase significant moderate positive relationship with social media news consumption ($r=0.35$), indicating that UTAR students' motive in using social media somehow still likely to enhance their consumption, maybe through incidental exposure.

However, the drive for entertainment overall does not predict UTAR students' political engagement, as it has no significant impact on other variables include internal political efficacy ($r=0.23$), social media expression ($r=0.17$) and online political engagement

($r=0.16$), presenting weak but significant positive correlation. Also, insignificant and weak positive relationship exist between this motive with political knowledge ($r=0.09$) and offline political engagement ($r=0.07$). It suggests that the motivations for seeking entertainment on social media are not connected with an individual's political involvement, both online and offline, echoing similar conclusions reached by past scholars (Cayas, 2020; Chen and Chan, 2017). However, its weak but significant positive correlation with online engagement but not offline engagement validates findings by other past scholars (Matthes et al., 2019; Matthes et al., 2023; Tan, 2020), in which exposure to entertainment-focused material on social media was linked to an increase in low-effort online political engagement via incidental mode, but not offline.

With regard to mediating variables, UTAR students' consumption of news on social media shows a strong and positive association with their use of social media for political expression ($r=0.59$). This supports previous findings by researchers (Cayas, 2020; Chen and Chan, 2017; Abdu et al., 2017; Zhou and Lu, 2023) which demonstrate that engaging with news on social media predicts political expression. Ali Salman et al. (2018) in their study contend that social media offers the benefit of disseminating political information over traditional media, enhance audiences' understandings on current political affairs, and empower more individuals to share their thoughts and have discussion on certain issue. It suggests that UTAR students' exposure to and consumption of relevant content on social media possibly lead to their subsequent political expression. Therefore, the continuous stream of responses, viewpoints, and critiques regarding government policy on social media is a result of users' desire to seek out information.

Findings also indicate that significant and moderate to strong positive relationships exist between the social media news consumption with social media expression ($r=0.59$) and online political engagement ($r=0.38$). This supports the idea that access to political news

information via social media can enhance political involvement via online as proposed by previous studies (Cayas, 2020; Chen and Chan, 2017; Kim, 2022). Expression of political thoughts and engaging in political issue discussion via social media itself is already a way of online engagement. Vacarri et al. (2013) posited that social media's role in sharing political issues, inspiring communal motivation to take action, and minimizing the costs of collective action can lead to increased civic involvement. The increased use of social media has significantly boosted political involvement through the exchange of comments and opinions on political issues. These results highlight a clear connection between the dissemination of diverse political viewpoints on social media platforms and their ability to stimulate the engagement of young people in politics (Gil de Zúñiga, H. et.al., 2017; Masihaet al., 2018; Haslina Halim, Farah Lina Azizan & Bahtiar Mohamad, 2022). Therefore, UTAR students' exposure to news on social media will increase their probability of expressing societal issues or dissent on these platforms, providing them more significant opportunities for involvement in collective online political efforts.

Moreover, the consumption social media news is observed to have a positive but weak and insignificant correlation with UTAR students' political knowledge ($r=0.05$). This finding supports Cayas (2020) and Chen and Chan (2017) findings in similar research, and other existing studies done by scholars (Cacciatore et al., 2018; Lee, 2020; Haugsgjerd et al., 2023) which found negative relationship between social media news exposure and factual political knowledge. This can be due to the reason that information found on social media platforms may not always be reliable or comprehensive as compared to traditional media. According to Thorson and Wells (2016)., social media is an environment that offers a set of "curated flow", as news through social media is not offered by professional news provider, also there tend to be less varied and informative selection of news content as news is typically chosen based on recommendations from friends, algorithms, and personal

preferences. Moreover, information in social media may be presented incompletely in isolation and indicate a displacement effect that makes people feel well-informed that they need not to search for other sources (Dreston & Neubaum, 2023). All these could potentially lead to misunderstanding and less in-depth knowledge, thus failing to offer a thorough political education among respondents.

Worth noting that the result shows a weak, negative and insignificant relationship between UTAR students' use of social media to express political opinions and their political knowledge. This result conforms previous research done by Cayas (2020). and Chen and Chan (2017). which shows an absence of correlation exists between respondents' social media political expression and the political knowledge that they possess. It indicates that practicing freedom of expression or speech on social media may not reflect a substantial understanding of users on political matters. This might be due to echo chambers and political polarization environment created by social media, in which users tend to interact mainly with content that corresponds to their existing beliefs, instead of actively searching for a variety of viewpoints or factual knowledge. This behaviour can lead them to express strong opinions on social media without necessarily having in-depth and accurate political understanding. However, contrary to this result, some existing literatures present contrasting result, for instance Hopp et al. (2023). study found that textual-based political expression, especially those with high levels of elaboration is positively and strongly associated with political knowledge.

Next, both consuming news ($r=0.49$) and expressing opinions ($r=0.61$) via social media has a moderate positive and significant relationship with UTAR students' subsequent internal political efficacy. The finding confirms research done by Cayas (2020). and Chen and Chan (2017)., indicates that participants' exposure to relevant news content and their confidence in expressing their thoughts on social media may have a positive

influence on their perceived ability to comprehend and influence political processes. Similarly, this outcome aligns with Chan (2016). emphasis on 'the news media as a crucial factor for political efficacy because it enables learning and understanding of significant political and social issues.' Therefore, the belief in one's ability to effect change in politics is linked to extensive consumption of news media and the expression of well-informed views on social media.

Surprisingly, given a good mean score in knowledge questions ($M=3.75$), UTAR students' political knowledge in general tend to have weak and insignificant relationship with social media motivations, and even weak negative relationship with some of the variables. Two motivations - Guidance ($r=0.15$) and Surveillance ($r=0.15$) own significant but weak positive correlation with political knowledge, while correlations with the other two motivations appears to be insignificant. It may imply that motives for using social media will not have any impact on UTAR students' political knowledge, and even there is, the minor influence will be on those who use social media to search for information and stay informed. Additionally, contrary to most previous literatures, findings show that UTAR students' political knowledge have weak, negative, and insignificant relationship with their consequent online ($r=-0.06$) and offline political engagement ($r=-0.10$). This may be due to a combination of factors such as disillusionment with the political situation and more aware of the time and resource constraints required as a result of deeper understanding, leading them to feel discouraged to involve in political activities.

The findings also indicate that engaging in online political participation has a highly significant correlation with offline political engagement ($r=0.75$). This supports the previous research by Cayas (2020). and Chen and Chan (2017). which suggests that increased online participation is predictive of active involvement in offline activities. This implies that taking part in collective political activities on social media is positively

associated with offline political engagement. Therefore, individuals who are more actively involved in online political movements tend to be more engaged in offline political activities as well. On the other hand, direct correlation between various social media motivations and political engagement appear to be weak, except for social utility motive which have moderate positive relationship with online engagement ($r=0.34$). It validates Cayas (2020). and Chen and Chan (2017). study, indicates that increases in the desire to connect with others and share opinions via social media will lead to increases in online engagement. Nevertheless, even though the direct relationship is not prevalent, extensive use of social media for different needs may impact both online and offline political activism through other mediating factors such as consumption of news, expression of viewpoints, and cognitive processing of politics among UTAR students.

Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

The adaption of the Cognitive and Communication Mediation Model of Chen and Chan (2017) in the Malaysia context has allowed this paper to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of social media motivations on political engagement among Chinese youths. Most previous studies on youths' political engagement in Malaysia setting tend to focus on public university students in which majority are Malay. Moreover, little focus has been given on how different social media motivations may influence youths' political engagement though they have significant precursor roles in determining which media behaviours people pay attention to. Significant and positive correlations between nearly all variables confirm social media's potential influence in fostering political engagement among UTAR students, both online and offline forms. One notable aspect of this research is the discovery that various motivations seem to have differ impacts on political engagement, either directly or indirectly via mediating factors. Weak relationship between motivations and engagement suggests that though social media motivations might play a role in encouraging youths' political engagement, the effects may not be strong enough to directly determine their subsequent engagement and may need to be strengthen via other mediating factors.

Overall, social media motivations (first O-orientation) exhibit weak positive direct relationship with UTAR students' political engagement (second R-responses), both online and offline. In addition, surveillance and entertainment motives in using social media even correlates insignificantly with students' subsequent offline engagement. This finding contradicts with Cayas (2020) study which indicates that surveillance motivations shows significant impact on offline engagement, but validates past research done by Tan (2020) that surveillance need exerts negative direct on offline engagement. Tan (2020) research

also found contradict result in which entertainment has a significant influence on users' online political engagement. Interestingly, social utility motivation display a more moderate and significant relationship with online political engagement, further suggesting that UTAR students' motivations in using social media to involves in social activities or behaviour that contribute to the well-being of society can positively result in their joining of political mobilization or other activities online. This finding support the study of Khodabandelou et al. (2014). which revealed that majority Malaysian students' social media use is strongly related to "interpersonal utility" in which they gained satisfaction from their interactions with peers, friends, family, and broader network. Thus, the affordance and convenience of social media features which allow easier interaction to facilitate a stronger correlation between social utility motivations to online political activities.

Adhering to the O-S-R-O-R framework, UTAR students' social media motivations (first O-orientation) overall showcase moderate to strong and significant positive relationships with social media news (S-stimuli) and social media expression (first R-responses), and internal political efficacy (second O-orientation), which may indirectly encourage political engagement. There is a significant alignment between respondents' desire to acquire more knowledge, stay updated, be entertained, and maintain connections with exposure to news, expression on social media, and internal political efficacy. Unexpectedly, contrary to majority existing literature, social utility motivation which exaggerate significant direct impact on political engagement also display a relatively strong positive relationship with these three variables. Some of the reasons may be due to the nature of social media which allow youths to easily share their ideas and connect with each other. Socially driven youths understand the impact of social media in amplifying less-heard voices in traditional political conversations. Social media platforms can be utilized to boost the voices of marginalized groups, support social justice issues, and

question prevailing narratives, thus ultimately fostering a more comprehensive and diverse political environment. Moreover, Online communities on social media are instrumental in bringing together individuals with similar interests, including those interested in politics. Youths with social utility often engage in these online groups to interact with peers who share their beliefs, address mutual issues, and coordinate unified efforts like voter registration campaigns or demonstrations. Also, motivated by aspiration to create beneficial influence on society, youths may be more inclined to convert their online involvement into real-world participation. This can involve taking part in political demonstrations, offering their time for campaigns, or becoming members of advocacy organizations.

It is surprising that UTAR students' political knowledge (one of the second O-orientation) has a detrimental effect on both types of political engagement (second R-responses), in contrast to the widely accepted belief among researchers that knowledge plays a crucial role in political participation. Political knowledge is also either a weak or insignificant predictors of the rest of the variables. Though these findings in line with Chen and Chan (2017) research, possible reasons of such result may need to consider of Malaysia's context. The negative impact of political knowledge on political engagement could be a result of the intricate relationship between people's perceptions, beliefs, and experiences in the political environment. While increased political knowledge can improve individuals' comprehension of political issues and procedures, it may also influence their reasons, priorities, and approaches to getting involved in the political system. Political knowledgeable youths may have deeper understanding of the complexity and limitations of the political situation, resulting them to have emotions of scepticism, disappointment, or lack of trust toward political entities, procedures, and participants. Thus, discouraging them to engage in politics.

5.2 Implications

In summary, the findings illustrate how gratification needs impact the political engagement of UTAR students. Also, the results indicate that specific gratification needs on social media, particularly those related to seeking entertainment and social utility, have a strong influence on political engagement. The research adds to the current knowledge about the impact of different social media motivations on youths' political engagement, filling in the absence of such study on young Malaysian Chinese. Policymakers can make use of social media to encourage positive motivations, for instance, social utility by supporting meaningful interactions, community-building, and online activism. Besides, they can also support youth-led initiatives and campaigns that promote social change and political engagement through social media.

Since entertainment motivation also brings significant impact, policymakers may work together with content creators, influencers, and media entities in creating compelling and educational political content that aligns with the interests and principles of youths to encourage participation. Next, since the findings do address a political knowledge gap, policymakers may cater to this by providing inclusive and applicable political learning and information customized to the needs and interests of young people, with a focus on equipping them with the understanding and abilities to thoughtfully address political matters and engage in democratic activities. Moreover, to address the issues of doubt, disappointment, and distrust towards political institutions and procedures among young people who are knowledgeable about politics, they may also advocate for open communication, responsibility, and honesty in political leadership and decision-making to restore faith and certainty in the political framework, encouraging more involvement in politics.

5.3 Limitations and Suggestions

The study has certain limitations that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, due to time restraints, the research though employing O-S-R-O-R Framework from previous studies, it did not employ exactly the same model as applied by those studies. The research only employ SPSS Statistics to run the correlation test, more sophisticated techniques like structural equation model (SEM) is absence here. While SPSS has the potential to offer valuable insights into the connections between variables, its constraints in managing intricate structural models could impede a comprehensive analysis of the O-S-R-O-R model. For instance, SPSS is unable to test intricate connections and pathways among variables, encompassing direct and indirect impacts, mediation, moderation, and modelling latent variables. As such, researchers may only have the ability to assess basic two-variable or multi-variable relationships, possibly failing to consider detailed interactions and underlying mechanisms within the O-S-R-O-R model. Besides, the study may fail to consider the perspective of all Malaysian youths in general, as the study is done on private university students with most Chinese students.

Future study could consider controlling the number of respondents from different background and conduct the research on a bigger population and sample to ensure the generalizability of the result. Besides, research could also consider employing similar method used by previous research, for instance structural equation model (SEM) to have more in-depth exploration on the index of path, which will be able to provide more valuable interpretation on the relationships between variables. Moreover, future study could conduct comparison analysis between motives for using social media and participation in politics among young people from various ethnicities in Malaysia, including Malay, Indian, and indigenous communities. Investigating the differences in social media usage and political involvement among different ethnic groups could provide

more nuanced insight into how identity intersects with political activities. Additionally, further researchers may also investigate the enduring impacts of social media incentives on civic participation through longitudinal research. Last but not least, studying the influence of particular forms of social media platforms and types of social media posts on political viewpoints and actions may also be able to offer additional insights on this topic.

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Appendix A

Social Media Motivations and Political Engagement among Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Students

Good day! My name is Lee Yi Ling, and I am a student currently pursuing a Bachelor of Communication (Hons) in Journalism at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). I am conducting a survey **to understand how social media uses influences political engagement among UTAR students** for my final year project titled 'Social Media Motivations and Political Engagement among UTAR Students'. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at yling03@utar.my.

* Indicates required question

1. **PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION NOTICE**

*Please be informed that in accordance with Personal Data Protection Act 2010 (“PDPA”) which came into force on 15 November 2013, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (“UTAR”) is hereby bound to make notice and require consent in relation to collection, recording, storage, usage and retention of personal information.

1. Personal data refers to any information which may directly or indirectly identify a person which could include sensitive personal data and expression of opinion. Among others it includes:

- a) Name
- b) Identity card
- c) Place of Birth
- d) Address
- e) Education History
- f) Employment History
- g) Medical History
- h) Blood type
- i) Race
- j) Religion
- k) Photo
- l) Personal Information and Associated Research Data

2. The purposes for which your personal data may be used are inclusive but not limited to:

- a) For assessment of any application to UTAR
- b) For processing any benefits and services
- c) For communication purposes
- d) For advertorial and news
- e) For general administration and record purposes
- f) For enhancing the value of education
- g) For educational and related purposes consequential to UTAR
- h) For replying any responds to complaints and enquiries
- i) For the purpose of our corporate governance
- j) For the purposes of conducting research/ collaboration

3. Your personal data may be transferred and/or disclosed to third party and/or UTAR collaborative partners including but not limited to the respective and appointed outsourcing agents for purpose of fulfilling our obligations to you in respect of the purposes and all such other purposes that are related to the purposes and also in providing integrated services, maintaining and storing

records. Your data may be shared when required by laws and when disclosure is necessary to comply with applicable laws.

4. Any personal information retained by UTAR shall be destroyed and/or deleted in accordance with our retention policy applicable for us in the event such information is no longer required.

5. UTAR is committed in ensuring the confidentiality, protection, security and accuracy of your personal information made available to us and it has been our ongoing strict policy to ensure that your personal information is accurate, complete, not misleading and updated. UTAR would also ensure that your personal data shall not be used for political and commercial purposes.

Consent:

6. By submitting or providing your personal data to UTAR, you had consented and agreed for your personal data to be used in accordance to the terms and conditions in the Notice and our relevant policy.

7. If you do not consent or subsequently withdraw your consent to the processing and disclosure of your personal data, UTAR will not be able to fulfill our obligations or to contact you or to assist you in respect of the purposes and/or for any other purposes related to the purpose.

8. You may access and update your personal data by writing to me via email yling03@1utar.my or whatsapp 016-3137110.

Acknowledgment of Notice:

Mark only one oval.

I have been notified and that I hereby understood, consented and agreed perUTAR above notice.

I disagree, my personal data will not be processed.

2. Name *

3. Date (Today's date) *

Example: January 7, 2019

Section A: Demographic information

4. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

Male

Female

5. Age *

Mark only one oval.

18-21

22-25

25 and above

6. Races *

Mark only one oval.

Malay

Chinese

Indian Other:

7. **Faculties ****Mark only one oval.*

- Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FAS)
- Faculty of Business and Finance (FBF)
- Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology (FEGT)
- Faculty of Information and Communication Technology (FICT)
- Faculty of Science (FSc)
- Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS)
- Centre for Extension Education (CEE)
- Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS)

Section B: Social Media Motivations

Please answer each of the following questions by rating from 1 "Strongly disagree", 2 "Disagree", 3 "Neither agree nor disagree", 4 "Agree", 5 "Strongly agree".

8. I utilize social media to **assist me in making decisions** regarding crucial matters. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

9. I utilize social media to let me **learn more about public servants**. (e.g. Ministers) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disag ree Strongly agree

10. I utilize social media to **assist me in learning what other people think**. (e.g. by looking at comments under posts in social media) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

11. I utilize social media to **give me greater confidence in regard to public issues** (e.g. get to know what is going on in the country currently) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

12. I utilize social media because it is **simple to acquire information**. (e.g. all information can be obtained easily) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

13. I utilize social media to **locate particular political information that captures my interest**. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

14. I utilize social media to **stay informed about significant political issues**. *
(e.g. Sheraton Move in 2020)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

15. I utilize social media to **enhance my understanding**. (e.g. improve *
understanding on a variety of issues via information available)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

16. I utilize social media because it is **fascinating**. (e.g. content on social media *
are interesting)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

17. I utilize social media because it is **thrilling**. (e.g. using social media bring *
excitement)

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

18. I utilize social media because it is **soothing**. (e.g. feel relax when using social media) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

19. I utilize social media to **interact among one another**. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

20. I utilize social media to **have a topic of conversation with others**. (e.g. discuss about current issues / trend on viral) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

21. I utilize social media to **share my thoughts**. (e.g. posting/share post on my account or comment in comment section under online news) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Stro Strongly agree

Section C: Social Media News and Social Media Expression

Please answer each of the following questions by rating from “Never” equivalent to 1, followed by “Rarely” equivalent to 2, “Sometimes” equivalent to 3, “Frequently” equivalent to 4, and “Very frequently”, equivalent to 5.

22. How frequent do you utilize social media to **read news articles about public affairs?** (e.g. articles' link posted by news media like The Star & China Press on their Facebook account) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very Frequently

23. How frequent do you utilize social media to **obtain information from local or federal government accounts?** (e.g. get information about the duration of water disruption via the Facebook account of local water authority) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

24. How frequent do you utilize social media to **obtain information from the accounts of others?** *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

25. How frequent do you utilize social media to **keep track of the developments of particular public campaigns or issues?** (e.g. white flag campaign during Covid-19 lockdown period, Najib's 1MDB case etc.) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

26. How frequent do you utilize social media to **send messages about political campaigns?** (e.g. share thoughts about campaigns done by party coalitions before election) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

27. How frequent do you utilize social media to **critique a government initiative or policy?** (e.g. posting thoughts/ sharing related news articles on timeline or comment under related posts) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

28. How frequent do you utilize social media to **engage with the official government accounts?** (e.g. like/comment/share) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

29. How frequent do you utilize social media to have **discussion on governmental actions or policies?** (e.g. E-Belia) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

Section D: Political knowledge and Political Efficacy

Please answer the first two questions by rating from 1 "Strongly disagree", 2 "Disagree", 3 "Neither agree nor disagree", 4 "Agree", 5 "Strongly agree" & answer the remaining multiple choice questions according to your knowledge.

30. I have enough ability to **comprehend issues related to politics.** (e.g. able to understand political issues) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

31. I have enough ability to **engage in public affairs discourse and participation.** (e.g. able to talk and participate in public affairs) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

32. Who is the present **Prime Minister** of Malaysia? *

Mark only one oval.

- Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin
- Dato' Sri Anwar Ibrahim
- Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Bin YaakobTan
- Sri Abdul Hadi Awang

33. Malaysia's current ruling unity government is a result of alliance between *different party coalitions. Which of the following coalitions is **not part of the unity government**?

Mark only one oval.

- Pakatan Harapan (PH)
- Barisan Nasional (BN)
- Perikatan Nasional (PN)
- Borneo Bloc (GPS & GRS)

34. Deputy Prime Minister often assists the Prime Minister in various governmental * duties and may also act as the Prime Minister in their absence. **How many Deputy Prime Minister** does Malaysia currently have?

Mark only one oval.

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3

35. Malaysia practices parliamentary democracy in which Members of the House of Representatives (MPs) are elected by the people through general elections. **How frequently is a general election held** in Malaysia under normal circumstances? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1 year
- 2 years
- 5 years
- 10 years

36. How many **members of Parliament (MPs)** are there in Malaysia? *

Mark only one oval.

- 99
- 212
- 222
- 333

37. Which government branch is responsible for the **interpretation of law**? *

Mark only one oval.

- Executive Senate
- Judiciary
- Legislature
-

Section E: Political Engagement

Please answer each of the following questions by rating from “Never” equivalent to 1, followed by “Rarely” equivalent to 2, “Sometimes” equivalent to 3, “Frequently” equivalent to 4, and “Very frequently”, equivalent to 5.

38. How frequent do you actively **launched/mobilized an online campaign** (e.g. start / actively engage in online protest/petition) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

39. How frequent do you took part in an **online group activity**? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

40. How frequent do you **connected to individuals who hold comparable viewpoints**? (e.g. socialize with people who share similar opinion with you) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

41. How frequent do you **participate in a political campaign**? (e.g. talks held by political parties etc. during election period) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

42. How frequent do you **participate in a demonstration, protest, or political rally**? *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very Frequently

43. How frequent do you participate in **calling or mailing to a politician**? (e.g. to express opinions regarding certain issue / filing a complaint about something to local state representatives) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

44. How frequent do you **participate in volunteering for a party or candidates**? (e.g. Align with a party/candidate whose values and goals you support, attend to event hosted and stay committed especially during election period) *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Very frequently

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