EXPOSURE OF DISPARITIES IN MALAYSIAN SOCIAL MEDIA POLITICAL PORTRAYAL TOWARDS RACIAL INEQUALITY EXPERIENCE BY ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT: *This study consists of the analysis on the exposure of the Malaysian social media political portrayal towards racial inequality experience by adolescents. The objective of this study is to explore the exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media political portrayals experience by adolescents and to measure its differences according to gender and age. It also tends to find out racial inequality experience by adolescents and to measure its differences according to gender and age. The statistic said that both male and female are having almost the same time spent on the usage of the social media. Thus, this indicates that the both genders have the same amount of the exposure to the social media. In addition, based on the age group, it is found that from all ranges of age, majority conveyed that social media is unlimited where everyone has the right to receive and publish information. Political content that is deemed as unequal is being portrayed to the public without the surveillance and this somehow brings turmoil among the society, especially the Malaysian society as we are built with multiracial community.*

Keywords: Social Media, Political Portrayal, Racial Inequality

1.   INTRODUCTION

Social media can be understood as a group of internet based application and are based on the foundation of ideology as well as the technology of the web and it allows the swap among user generated content[1]. However, the usage of social media by individuals, may lead to a harmful effect to its users. The use of social media without proper practice would lead to disarray and, what we do not see is that, the online media, especially the social media has its own disparities that portray the inequality among the various group of ethnicity in Malaysia. *Problem Statement:*Media is a tool that indirectly promotes such inequalities within the people. The drawback of social media can be seen when too much information is being shared that will cause a threat to the society [2]. Social media, as such the Twitter is found to be the most offender media platforms for conveying political issue, as in America, Mitt Romney received a lot of negativity from the tweets[3]. Though emotion can be pleasant to the politics, as it may stimulate civic involvement and grab the attention of the public[4], somehow this emotion could not be controlled and thus will lead people to be emotional and caused people to write without a deep thought of it consequences to the public. The portrayal of political content in the social media made by the users themselves can cause disorder among the society especially a state with a diverse background.

Research Questions

RQ 1: What is the exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media political portrayal according to gender and age?

RQ 2: Is there any differences on the exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media political portrayals according to gender and age?

RQ 3: What are the exposure of racial inequality according to gender and age?

RQ 4: Is there any differences on racial inequality according to gender and age?

RQ 5: Is there any influences on exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media political portrayals with racial inequality experienced by the adolescents?

Research Hypotheses

RH1:   Gender influences the exposure on the disparities of Malaysian social media of political portrayal experienced by adolescents.

RH2:   Age influence on the exposure of disparities on Malaysian media portrayals experienced by the adolescents.

RH3:   Gender influence on the racial inequality experienced by the adolescents.

RH4:   Age influence on racial inequality experienced by adolescents.

RH5:   There is a relationship between exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media portrayals and racial inequality experienced by the adolescents.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Portrayal of Political Issues – As technology has taken its place, political movement has started to use the benefits of the internet and as such the tools are the Facebook, Twitter and others and have been proved that political purposes are now being employed by the use of the online tools[5]. There are some political experts, academics as well as journalists have been using the social media as it is considered as the force for good and claimed that democracy is just a tweet away[6]. In 2008, social media were often still portrayed as a threat to traditional media, but since 2012 they had become more accepted as an interrelated or supplementary tool[7]. Considering activism in a wide sense, the formula digital activism refers to contemporary forms of political participation strongly anchored in tools and mechanisms provided by the Internet-new social media[8]. *Racial Inequality Experience by Adolescents* – The racial inequality experienced by the adolescents is considered as bad when on the 27th of February, year 2011, there were a rally that happened in peaceful stage that focuses to oppose the racial discrimination participated by 54 participants[9]. Based on a previous research, it was found that 73 % of the adolescents have experienced a racial or ethnic discrimination and another 42 % felt disturbed[10]. According to a study, seven percent of adults often faced discrimination due to their different race or ethnicity[11]. Therefore, it is important to note that the phase of as an adolescents is the best time for the prevention for the

continuing of racial-ethnic inequality in the adulthood[12].

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative method. The researcher chose to apply the quantitative correlational survey since it is precise to be employed in the study as the researcher wants to see the relationship of the exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media political portrayal towards the racial inequality among the adolescents. Data was collected through the means of a survey. The populations that involved in this research were the adolescents that which aged from 18 to 60 years. In this study, probability sampling was adopted which uses the simple random sampling technique. This study chose a population as accordance with the limitation of the time limit for this study to be completed. The sample size of 100 respondents was chosen in order to pursue the study.

Research Instrument

This study operated a closed ended questionnaire which consisted of three major sections that are the demographic profile of the respondent, the exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media political portrayals as well and racial inequality. The questionnaire in this research is divided into three sections:To measure these variable, Likert scale method approach was used for the respondents to answer the questionnaires given. A number of statements were developed with respect to a topic and the score will be calculated in order to get accurate data. These questions were developed based on the research objectives in which later will answer the early stated hypotheses made in this study.

Data Collection and Processing

The data was collected through an online survey, whereby respondents were given a link that connected them to the questionnaires. Data will automatically save on an online platform, for this study we used google form, and through this, google form recorded all the data sent by the respondents. Following the step, data then transferred to SPSS 10 to be analyzed.

4. DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Respondents' Demographic

Table 1. Respondents' Distribution According to Profile (n=100)

Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	52	52
Female	48	48
Age		
18-33	73	73
34-49	16	16
50 and above	11	11

From the table above, the number of male being interviewed for this study was 52 and women were 48, which made a total of 100 respondents. Based on the gender, there were only four differences in number for both men and women. Therefore, there was not much dissimilar. Number of male and female being interviewed were considered stable as there were not too much for the group of male or more too many participants from the group of female. The number of

respondent who is aged 18 to 33 is 73 people and following it, respondents whom aged 34 to 49 is 16 people. For respondents aged 50 and above only 11 people participated in the survey. The total number made up 100 respondents which largely came from people aged 18 to 33 years old and participants whom age are 50 and above made the least number of participants in the survey that has been carried out. Majority of the respondents came from the group of young adult.

Hypotheses Testing

Independent t-test, anova and Pearson Correlation were used in order to test the hypothesis of this current study.

H1: Gender and influence of exposure towards Political Content

Based on the conducted independent t-test, we compared male and female respondents on the influence of exposure on the disparities of Malaysian social media political portrayal.

Hypothesis 1	Gender	Mean	Std Deviation	Sig (2 tailed)
Gender influence on the disparities of Malaysian social media portrayals of political attribution experienced by the adolescents	Male	29.9423	7.95431	.113
	Female	31.4375	8.92500	

There was a slight significant difference in the score for Male (M=29.94, SD=7.95) and for Female (M=31.44, SD=8.93). Conditions t (100), p=0.113. It is the rule of thumb that if the value of p more than alpha level α=0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it shows that gender does not influence the exposure of disparities of Malaysian social media political portrayal experience by adolescents.

H2: Age influence on the exposure of disparities on Malaysian media portrayals

Hypothesis 2	Age	Mean Square	F	Sig (2 tailed)
Age influence on the disparities of Malaysian Social Media political portrayals experience by adolescents	Between Groups	322.906	4.909	.009
	Within Groups	65.780		

Table above shows that the null hypothesis is rejected. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, thus the result is significant. The result suggests that there is a significance difference between ages towards the social media portrayal of political attribution that lead to racial inequality among the adolescent.

H3: Gender influence on the racial inequality experienced by the adolescents.

Hypothesis 3	Gender	Mean	Std Deviation	Sig (2 tailed)
Gender influence on racial inequality experienced by adolescents.	Male	35.9231	8.54709	.046
	Female	37.1667	6.11010	

The above table describes that the p-value is .046 which is below the alpha level of .05. Thereof, as the p-values is less than the alpha level. The hypothesis is accepted and thus rejected the null hypothesis. This explains that there is a significance difference between male and female on the racial inequality experienced by the adolescents.

H4: Age influence on racial inequality experienced by adolescents.

Hypothesis 4	Age	Mean Square	F	Sig (2 tailed)
Age influence on racial inequality experienced by adolescents.	Between Groups	437.519	9.139	.000
	Within Groups	47.875		

Based on the table above, it has been calculated that the p-value is .00 which clearly stated that it is below the alpha level of .05. Thereof, since it is below the level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, it indicates that there is a significant difference whereby the age influenced in the racial inequality among the adolescents.

H5: There is a relationship between exposure of disparities on Malaysian social media portrayals and racial inequality experienced by the adolescents

Hypothesis 5		Media Portrayal	Racial Inequality
Media Portrayal	Pearson Correlation	1	.320
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Racial Inequality		.320	1
	Pearson Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

According to the table above, the value is .001 and thus concludes that there is a significant relationship between Malaysia social media political portrayal towards racial inequality experienced by the adolescents. However, the relationship is not strong as the other 68 % of the relationship might come from the other factors than the political portrayal of the social media that led to the racial inequality in Malaysia.

5. DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the study

The first hypothesis argued that gender influence the exposure on the disparities of Malaysian social media of political portrayal experienced by adolescents. The hypothesis was rejected as the gender is not an important predictor to the exposure of the political content in the social media. Based on a study, it stated that the numbers of men that are using social media are 74 % and for women it is 76 %[13]. From the statistic, it can be said that both male and female are having almost the same time spent on the usage of the social media. Thus, this indicates that the both genders have the same amount of the exposure to the social media. In addition, based on the age group, it is found that from all ranges of age, majority conveyed that social media is unlimited where everyone has the right to receive and publish information. Based on the survey employed, the hypothesis was accepted and thus tells that the age does have an influence towards the exposure on disparities of Malaysian social media political portrayal experienced by the adolescents.

There are some political experts, academics as well as journalists have been using the social media as it is considered as the force for good and claimed that democracy is just a tweet away[14]. Hypothesis 3 assumed that the gender influenced on the racial inequality experienced by the adolescents and the hypothesis was a success which means that gender does have an influence on the racial inequality experienced by the adolescents. It indicates that both male and female influence racial inequalities in a different way or degree. This trait has somehow may affect how men deal with racism. The result shows that there is a significant influence which denotes that the exposure of disparities on political content portrayed by social media have a significant influence to the racial inequality experienced by the adolescents. Exposure to such content that is unfair or unequal, that contains a lot of uncertainty has caused these behaviors of racial inequality to happen as people are thinking that they are not given the privileges that should have as a nation. The online media have provided a strong function in the shaping of the public opinion and so thus in the political agenda settings[15].

6. CONCLUSION

The inequality of political content portrayed in the social media has affected the instability of the racial status in Malaysia. Political content that is deemed as unequal is being portrayed to the public without the surveillance and this somehow brings turmoil among the society, especially the Malaysian society as we are built with multiracial community. Social media is limitless that means everyone is able to reach the information that is uncertain, but it's a new tools and increasing online population that contribute to social media attractiveness[16]. Political content as such the edited pictures of the politicians would trigger anger from the individuals that support that politicians and this perhaps has been roots of the racial problem in the country. The emergence of many new social media sites as such the Facebook and Twitter have given the individual new platform to attack and others without having to make a one to one communication.

Limitation of Study

Limitation of the current study is that the time given was too short but still it is manageable to execute the research. Meaning that, researchers did not have ample time to cover the whole Malaysian perception on the study of the topic. Moreover, there are several limitations that researcher has to endure, especially in terms of finding sources for the past research as social media are still considered a new platform being used by the adolescents.

Recommendation

There are few things that the researcher could recommend for the future study that related to this field of study. In order to understand more about the study, future research should be done in a qualitative method, whereby an in depth interview can be done. In order to understand how unequal media content on political issues could affect the people into becoming racist and thus creating the racism problem among the society.

In doing a qualitative study, what makes it important is that, the researcher should first be part of the environment in order to understand the situation that is happening in the environment that he or she wants to study. Following that, it is recommended that the future research will give an outcome that will make people see how the content of the media is harmful if it is not being utilized in the correct way and can lead to turmoil.

7.   REFERENCES

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