PATTERN OF NEWS MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NEWS DISCUSSION

AMONG YOUTH: A TEST OF AGENDA SETTING THEORY

Saodah Wok, Ph.D[1]
Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge & Human Sciences
International Islamic University Malaysia
Malaysia
wsaodah@iium.edu.my

Ezhar Tamam, Ph.D
Department of Communication
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
Malaysia
ezhar@fbmk.upm.edy.my

Jusang Bolong, Ph.D
Department of Communication
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Malaysia

jusang@fbmk.upm.edu.my

Abdul Mua'ti @ Zamri Ahmad, Ph.D
Department of Communication
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
Malaysia
abmuati@putra.upm.edu.my

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[1] Coressponding author

ABSTRACT

Many studies on media consumption habits among youth have been conducted. Previous studies have reported that youth prefer news on online media compared to other forms of news media. This study tries to explore the pattern of news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions among youth. The specific objectives of the study are (1) to determine the level of perceived news media credibility, (2) to find out the level of news media consumption, (3) to find out the extent of interpersonal news discussions, (4) to analyze the relationship between perceived media credibility and news media consumption with interpersonal news discussions, and (5) to differentiate the effect of selected demographic characteristics on news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. The survey research design method was used in the study. Data was collected using a set of self-administered questionnaires. A sample of 1363 was randomly selected using stratified random sampling. Malaysian youth aged 15-25 years old were gathered for the study. The data were analyzed using SPSS WIN 16.0 and descriptive and Inferential statistics were used. Findings of the study show that television (TV) is the most credible media followed by newspaper and the Internet. TV consumption is the highest among the youth. Findings also indicate that youth do discuss current news with family members and friends and that there are positive relationships between media credibility and news consumption which in turn influence family and friends news discussion. Within the sample investigated, male, Malay older youth are found to consume TV news the most. Older Indian youth depend on newspapers for news consumption and they discuss current national news with their family members and friends. In conclusion, the findings are in support of Agenda Setting Theory which states that news media consumption strongly influences interpersonal news discussion.

Keywords: News media consumption, News discussion, Media credibility, Agenda setting theory, Youth.

INTRODUCTION

Most research pertaining to agenda setting tests the reception of the audience on salient news presented by the media. Both content analysis and complementary survey on the news content most received were analyzed in these studies. However, very few studies have investigated outcomes of the news, that is, discussions between the audience with their family members and with their friends; and youth is no exception to this issue. As a

result, it is pertinent that a study beyond the coverage and reception of news is explored. This study tries to explore the pattern of news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions.

The specific objectives of the study are (1) to determine the level of perceived news media credibility, (2) to find out the level of news media consumption, (3) to find out the extent of interpersonal news discussions, (4) to analyze the relationship between perceived media credibility and news media consumption with interpersonal news discussions, and (5) to differentiate between selected demographic characteristics with news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Agenda Setting Theory

According to McCombs and Shaw (1972), mass media have an agenda setting function. Agenda setting describes the process by which the mass media select and concentrate on certain issues, leading people to perceive those issues as more salient or important than others. This also means that the media actually gives greater emphasis to certain news and places these news more prominently in the newspapers or the newscast.

Rogers (2002) suggested that "intermedia processes" of media affect the ways in which media messages stimulate interpersonal communication. He pointed out that the mass media often have effects through interpersonal communication with others and that these media effects can be perceived to be more important especially when media messages

encourage interpersonal communication about certain issues. In other words, mass media coverage of a certain important issue can stimulate interpersonal communication among people, which may in turn, influence behavior.

While agenda setting may have societal effects, the process of agenda setting takes place within individuals. Utilizing this agenda-setting effect, Wanta (1997) employed a path analysis model of agenda-setting effects. According to his results, individuals first form opinions regarding the perceived credibility of the mass media. Based on these perceptions, individuals form a level of reliance on the mass media for information. Individuals, then, expose themselves to media content based on this level of reliance. Finally, exposure to the media leads to agenda-setting effects. Thus, the results showed that agenda-setting effects were strongest for active processors of media messages. Miller and Wanta (1996) also used this agenda-setting susceptibility measure to examine agenda-setting differences between different racial groups. They found that whites and minorities do not have different issue agendas ad do not differ on the magnitude of agenda-setting effects.

Perceived Media Credibility

Media credibility is the degree of believability of the source of information as perceived by an audience (Syed Arabi & Saodah, 2004). According to Bucy (2003), the audience's perceptions of news channel believability is distinct from the believability of journalists, media organizations, or the content of the news itself. A number of factors contribute to making a source or channel credible, namely, objectivity, accessibility, freedom to

report, currency of the report, and relative expertise. Gunther (1992) argued that a person's involvement in an issue is a good predictor of perceived credibility. People depend on the media to get information to make decisions and judgments. Information from the media is also used to augment information obtained from interpersonal sources.

Many researchers discovered that a lot of factors affected media credibility, with media use and media reliance being frequently examined. Existing literature contends that increases in media use are usually accompanied by enhanced credibility perception, regardless of media type (Bucy, 2003; Seo & Lim, 2008; Stavrositu & Sundar, 2006). That means that media use (or media exposure) is always related to media credibility. Previous research on media credibility focused on comparing news credibility among media channels, for example, comparing television to newspapers (Kiousis, 2001; Schafer, 2010; Yuan & Kosicki, 2003). The results of these studies have been mixed, with some studies suggesting that television is the most credible medium, followed by newspapers, and radio (Ibelema & Powell, 2001) while others provide evidence that newspapers have surpassed television in credibility rating (Kiousis, 2001; Flanagan & Metzger, 2000). A few other studies compared credibility of both new media and traditional media. These studies showed that Internet credibility is making its mark alongside TV (Kiousis, 2001) and newspapers (Schafer, 2010). Additionally, a study by the Pew Research Center and Online News Association in 2002 found that new media is perceived to be more credible than traditional media.

Wanta (1997) found that individuals' perceptions of the credibility of the media and their level of reliance on news media content for information play important roles in the agenda-setting process. If individuals believe in the news media and are highly reliant on the news media for political information, they will tend to demonstrate strong agenda-setting effects (Wanta & Ghanem, 2001).

News Media Consumption

Media consumption is a measure of audience exposure and measures attention given to the mass media, encompassing TV, newspaper, and the Internet. Audience exposure to each medium is calculated as the time spent in minutes per day for TV and for newspapers whereas for the Internet, it is the time spent in minutes per week. On the other hand, the attention to the mass media is deemed the focus given while watching TV, reading newspapers, and surfing the Internet. The result of audience exposure to each medium with attention given to a particular medium is labeled as media consumption, specifically, TV consumption, newspaper consumption, and Internet consumption.

The primary mission of the news media is to provide the public with information that helps them make informed decisions about important public or civic affairs (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). Several studies show that younger people read newspapers and watch TV news less than the older generations (Lauf, 2001; Poulus, 2010). Older people are more likely to use newspapers, TV news, and magazines for information than are younger people (Lauf, 2001). Currently, the younger generation use the Internet more

than TV and newspapers (Dimmick, Chen & Li, 2004; Schafer, 2010 ;) as a source of information. Since there now exists online TV and online newspapers, the younger generation tends to use multiple media for information (Jeong, Fishbein, & Jordan, 2006).

However, in these modern times, the Internet has become an influential political news media, more than the newspapers. A study by World Association of Newspapers (WAN) (2007) revealed that young people considered the Internet as their first choice for news and information. Young people become more dependent on the Internet for all purposes, including news gathering (Lee, 2006; Vissers & Quintelier, 2009). This may partly be due to the fact that youth often seek online news sources more readily and intensively than older people do (Jung, Qiu & Kim, 2001; Vissers & Quintelier, 2009).

Malaysian youth use the Internet as a significant communication tool for gathering political information. For example, in the 12th Malaysian National Election, the blog media was the political news medium that young voters used the most for gathering information on political news (Abdullah, 2008). Similarly, the use of online news media is also common in the political arena in Singapore for distributing political news and information to communities (Soon & Kluver, 2007). Thus, the type of media used in gathering political information and/or other information seems to have switched from newspapers and television to the Internet as a source of information.

News Discussions

Scheufele (2002) found that there was a positive relationship between mass media use, including newspapers and television hard news with interpersonal discussions on politics. Through a survey administered to a randomly selected sample of residents in Austin, Texas, Kiousis (2001) discovered a moderate negative link between interpersonal communication and credibility perception for television news but not for newspapers.

The WAN Young Readership Development Project (2007) revealed that young people listed 'discussion with friends' as the top source for news and information, and this was ranked higher than TV and newspapers. In particular, social networks on in the Internet such as facebook, MySpace, twitter, etc. appear to be key resources for spreading news for most young people.

Active participation of interpersonal discussions about the news is important. Through discussion people develop and validate their own thoughts and opinions on issues. Scheufele (2002) argued that talking about certain issues with other citizens is a necessary condition in order to fully understand those issues. Interpersonal discussions with peers or family helps not only to reinforce pre-existing information, but also help makes people aware of most new information.

However, these effects seem to vary according to gender, age, and ethnicity. In Malaysia, such effects have yet to be explored, tested and confirmed. This study aims to

add to the body of literature by exploring, testing and confirming these effects. A theoretical framework is developed to aid in the mapping of the investigation in this study (Figure 1).
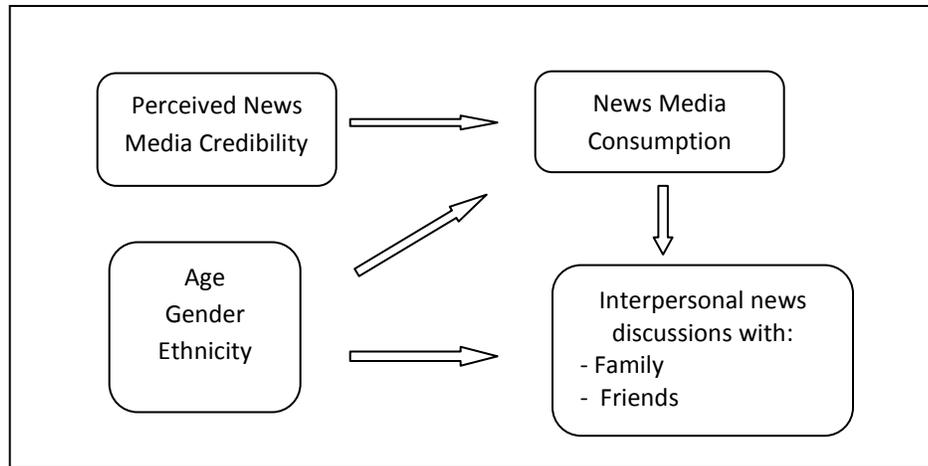
Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample obtained for the study is representative of the Malaysian youth population in terms of ethnicity (Malay=56.4%, Chinese=33.9%, and Indian=9.7%) and gender (Male=49.1% and Female=50.9%). The sample also comes from the four main geographical regions in peninsular Malaysia, namely, Northern Region (23.5%), Central Region (33.6%), Southern Region (21.0%), and Eastern Region (21.9%).

Procedure

All data were gathered using self-administered questionnaires and these questionnaires were written in Bahasa Malaysia. The questionnaires were administered in various social settings - residential areas, schools, and universities/colleges. The respondents were randomly selected from secondary schools and universities/colleges after approval was obtained from the relevant authorities.

Trained enumerators were assigned to residential areas, schools, and universities/colleges. For the residential areas, the enumerators would go to the houses where the students live, approaching them and asking them for their voluntary participation in the study and to get them to fill in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were filled in by the selected respondents in their houses. As for the schools, assigned enumerators would go to the secondary schools around the selected areas. The enumerators would approach the principal to ask for permission to collect data from Form 4 students. Once permission was granted, the questionnaires were distributed during class periods, with the permission from the class teachers concerned. For university/college students, the assigned enumerators would go to the selected faculties to distribute the questionnaires to the students in the selected classes, with permission obtained from the lecturers concerned. The respondents' participations were on a voluntary basis. The respondents were given ample time to fill in the questionnaires, and most of them took them between 20 to 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Measures

Perceived Media Credibility

Television, newspapers and Internet credibility were each measured using a 5-point Likert scale where 1=not believe at all, 2=not believe, 3=somewhat believe, 4=believe, and 5=believe totally.

News Media Consumption

News media consumption tapped the respondents' exposure and attention to news of national and public affairs on television, in the newspapers, and Internet. Respondents were asked to respond to items by estimating how frequently they watched national and public affairs news. For example, in TV news programs, the codes for the scale are 0=none, 1=less than 15 minutes, 2=16-30 minutes, 3=31-60 minutes, and 4= more than 60 minutes a day. For each medium exposure, respondents were also asked to indicate how much attention they paid to the news on a four-point scale. The codes for that are 1=no attention at all, 2=little attention, 3=some attention, and 4=much attention.

Likewise, the respondents were also asked to self-report how much time they spent reading newspapers for national and public affairs news where the codes 0=none, 1=less than 15 minutes; 2=16-30 minutes, 3=31-60 minutes a day, and 4=more than 1 hour; and how much attention they paid reading news with the codes 1=no attention at all, 2=little attention, 3=some attention, 4=much attention being used.

For the Internet, the respondents were asked to indicate the amount of time spent per week with 0=none, 1=less than 15 minutes, 2=16-30 minutes, 3=31-60 minutes, and 4=more than 1 hour and how much attention they paid to the news with the codes 1=no attention at all, 2=little attention, 3=some attention, 4=much attention. In addition, media consumption is measured using the product of media exposure and media attention for each medium, as shown below.

TV Consumption = TV Exposure (time) x TV Attention
Newspaper Consumption = Newspaper Reading (time) x Newspaper Attention
Internet Consumption = Internet Exposure (time) x Internet Attention

Interpersonal News Discussions

Two questions were asked in relation to news discussion. The respondents were asked "how often they discuss current national news with family". Their responses could range from 0=none, 1=once in a month, 2=once in a week, 3=once in 2-3 days, 4=almost every day, and 5=everyday. Similarly, the same codes were used to tap their frequency of discussing current national news with friends.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS WIN 16.0 for both descriptive and inferential statistics. For the descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used. For the inferential statistics, correlation analyses were used. T-test was also used

to test differences according to gender and age group to news media consumption and

interpersonal news discussions. In addition, ONEWAY ANOVA was used to

differentiate between various ethnicities in relation to their news media consumption and

interpersonal news discussions.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The Respondents of the Study

Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of the respondents according to gender,

ethnicity, age group, educational level, marital status, and family income.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (N=1363):		
Male	669	49.1
Female	694	50.9
Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Ethnicity (N=1350):		
Malay	762	56.4
Chinese	457	33.9
Indian	131	9.7
Total	**1350**	**100.0**
Age Group (N=1363):		
20 years old and less	803	58.9
21 and more years old	560	41.1
Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Educational Level (N=1357):		
UPSR	48	3.5
PMR	311	22.9
SPM/SPMV	392	28.9
STPM/Matriculation	376	27.7
Diploma	111	8.2
Degree	109	8.0
Others	10	0.7
Total	**1357**	**100.0**
Marital Status (N=1363):		
Single	1314	96.4
Married	42	3.1

Divorced	7	0.5
Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Family Income (N=1225):		
Less than RM1000	514	42.0
RM1001-RM3000	523	42.7
RM3001-RM5000	106	8.7
RM5001-RM7000	40	3.3
RM7001 and above	42	3.4
Total	**1225**	**100.0**

A nearly equal number of male (49.1%) and female (50.9%) respondents participated in this study. As for ethnicity, more than half of the respondents are Malays (56.4%), followed by Chinese (33.9%), and Indian (9.7%). More than half of the respondents are aged 20 years old and less (58.9%) while the rest (41.1%) are more than 21 years of age. With regard to educational level, 28.8% of the respondents have SPM/SPMV, 27.6% STPM/Matriculation, and 22.8% with PMR qualifications. Almost all of the respondents (96.4%) are single and a large majority of them (84.7%) have a family income of less than RM3000.

Level of Perceived News Media Credibility

Table 2 presents the level of perceived media credibility among youth. In terms of the news media, more than two-fifths of the respondents (44.2%) said that they believed in the news on TV while 36.5% of them cited that they somewhat believe the news on TV. Only 11.3% of the respondents confirmed that they totally believed the news on TV. The mean for TV news credibility is 3.56, indicating some degree of believability for the news among the respondents.

With regards to the newspapers, more than two-fifths of the respondents (41.2%) believed that the newspaper is a credible source of news. The mean for newspaper credibility is 3.49, indicating that there is some degree of believability. On the other hand, only 23.4% of the respondents believe the news on the Internet and more than two-fifths of the respondents (42.9%) cited that they only somewhat believe in the news on the Internet. The mean for Internet credibility is 3.02, indicating that they somewhat believe in the internet.

Table 2: News Media Credibility

Perceived Media Credibility	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television (N=1363)	Not believe at all	31	2.3
	Not believe	79	5.8
	Somewhat believe	495	36.5
	Believe	600	44.2
	Believe totally	153	11.3
	Total	**1358**	**100.0**
	Mean= 3.56, SD=0.852		
Newspapers (N=1362)	Not believe at all	24	1.8
	Not believe	110	8.1
	Somewhat believe	529	39.0
	Believe	560	41.2
	Believe totally	135	9.9
	Total	**1358**	**100.0**
	Mean=3.49, SD=0.847		
Internet (N=1363)	Not believe at all	72	5.3
	Not believe	306	22.5
	Somewhat believe	582	42.9
	Believe	318	23.4
	Believe totally	80	5.9
	Total	**1358**	**100.0**
	Mean=3.02, SD=0.953		

(Row label spanning Television, Newspapers, and Internet sections: **Level of News Media**)

Consumption

News media consumption is a product of media exposure and media attention for each of the media, that is, television, newspaper, and Internet. Tables 3a and 3b below present media exposure and media attention respectively.

News Media Exposure

Table 3a presents the level of news media exposure among youth. It is found that about one-third of the respondents (34.0%) spent more than 16-30 minutes watching news on TV every day. Almost two-fifths of the respondents (37.8%) read newspapers for less than 15 minutes a day. Some of the respondents (22.0%) spent less than 15 minutes on Internet per week. However, two-fifths of the respondents (40.8%) said that they were not exposed to news on the Internet.

Table 3a: News Media Exposure

Media	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television	None	181	13.3
	Less than15 minutes per day	287	21.1
	16-30 minutes per day	464	34.0
	31-60 minutes per day	222	16.3
	More than 1 hour per day	209	15.3
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Newspapers	None	144	10.6
	Less than15 minutes per day	515	37.8
	16-30 minutes per day	458	33.6
	31-60 minutes per day	143	10.5
	More than 1 hour per day	103	7.6
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Internet	None	553	40.8
	Less than15 minutes per week	299	22.0
	16-30 minutes per week	211	15.5
	31-60 minutes per week	118	8.7
	More than 1 hour per week	176	13.0
	Total	**1357**	**100.0**

News Media Attention

Table 3b presents the distribution of the respondents' responses in relation to attention given to the media on news. More than half of the respondents gave some attention to the news on TV (55.0%) and to the news on newspapers (50.2%). There are some respondents who give much attention to watching TV news program (16.9%). More than

one-third of the respondents also gave some attention to the news on the Internet
(34.5%). Finally, almost one-third of the respondents (30.2%) reported that they did not
pay any attention to the news on the Internet.

Table 3b: News Media Attention

Media	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television	No attention at all	128	9.4
	Little attention	255	18.7
	Some attention	750	55.0
	Much attention	230	16.9
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Newspapers	No attention at all	131	9.6
	Little attention	354	26.0
	Some attention	684	50.2
	Much attention	194	14.2
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Internet	No attention at all	411	30.2
	Little attention	378	27.8
	Some attention	470	34.5
	Much attention	103	7.6
	Total	**1362**	**100.0**

News Media Consumption

News media consumption is measured by multiplying using the product of the exposure
to news by attention given to the news (Table 3c). The findings revealed that many of
the respondents are high consumers of TV news, newspapers news, and Internet news.
They consumed a lot of news from TV (59.1%), followed by newspapers (47.6%) and
Internet (43.5%), but almost one-third of the respondents (27.4%) reported that they did
not consume news on the Internet.

Table 3c: News Media Consumption

Media	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television	None	99	7.3
(M=8.8797, SD=4.93350)	Low	458	33.6
	High	806	59.1
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Newspapers	None	96	7.0
(M=7.6596, SD=4.42925)	Low	619	45.4
	High	648	47.6
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
Internet	None	327	27.4
(M=5.9550, SD=5.28077)	Low	395	29.1
	High	589	43.5
	Total	**1356**	**100.0**

Extent of Interpersonal News Discussions

Table 4 demonstrates that most of the respondents did not engage in any interpersonal news discussions, either with their family (34.6%) or with their friends (32.1%). However, some respondents (22.1%) did report that they have interpersonal news discussions with their family once in a month and only 1.8% of the respondents said that they discussed news with their family members on a daily basis. Regarding interpersonal news discussions with friends, 21.5% of the respondents said that they had news discussion with their friends once in a week. The mean for interpersonal news discussions with family is 2.42 and the mean for discussion with friends is 2.57. This implies that youth discuss more with friends than with family members (t=-4.467, p=0.000). Those who discuss more with friends tend to discuss more with their family members, too (r=0.648, p=0.000). This is because there is a strong positive relationship between news discussion with family members and news discussion with friends.

Table 4: Interpersonal news discussions

Interpersonal News Discussions	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Family	None	472	34.6
	Once in a month	301	22.1
	Once in a week	271	19.9
	Once in 2-3 days	202	14.8
	Almost everyday	93	6.8
	Everyday	24	1.8
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
	Mean=2.42, SD=1.362		
Friend	None	437	32.1
	Once in a month	278	20.4
	Once in a week	293	21.5
	Once in 2-3 days	185	13.6
	Almost everyday	134	9.8
	Everyday	36	2.6
	Total	**1363**	**100.0**
	Mean=2.57, SD=1.438		

t=-4.467, df=1362, p=0.000; r=0.648, p=0.000

Relationship between News Media Consumption and Perceived Media Credibility with Interpersonal News Discussions

Relationship between News Media Consumption and Perceived Media Credibility

Table 5a presents the relationship between news media consumption and perceived media credibility. The results reveal that media consumption is related to media credibility. It is found that there is a positive weak relationship between TV news consumption with perceived TV credibility (r=0.237, p=0.000), newspapers consumption with perceived newspaper credibility (r=0.120, p=0.000) and Internet news consumption with perceived Internet credibility (r=0.113, p=0.000). This implies that the higher their perceived credibility of the media, the higher the news media consumption.

Table 5a: Correlation between news media consumption and perceived media credibility

Variable	N	r	p
TV consumption – TV credibility	1358	0.237	0.000
Newspaper consumption – Newspaper credibility	1358	0.120	0.000
Internet consumption – Internet credibility	1351	0.113	0.000

Relationship between News Media Consumption and Interpersonal News Discussions

Table 5b shows the relationships between news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. It is indicated that family discussion is moderately related with TV news consumption (r=0.308, p=0.000), with newspapers consumption (r=0.387, p=0.000) and with Internet news consumption (r=0.373, p=0.000). Regarding the interpersonal news discussions with friends, it is found that there is a weak relationship between TV news consumption (r=0.294, p=0.000) and discussions with friends. News discussions with friends is moderately related with newspapers consumption (r=0.438, p=0.000) and with Internet news consumption (r=0.434, p=0.000). This shows that the higher the media consumption, the higher is the interpersonal news discussions.

Table 5b: Correlation between news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions

Interpersonal News Discussions	N	r	p
Family			
TV consumption	1363	0.308	0.000
Newspaper consumption	1363	0.387	0.000
Internet use	1356	0.373	0.000
Friends			
TV consumption	1363	0.294	0.000
Newspaper consumption	1363	0.438	0.000
Internet consumption	1356	0.434	0.000

Testing the Agenda Setting Theory

Data pertaining to interpersonal news discussions (family and friends) were further analyzed using simple multiple regression. Results (Table 5c) show that media consumption (TV, newspapers, and Internet) influences interpersonal news discussions with family and with friends. Family news discussion is not affected by media credibility (TV, newspapers, and Internet) at all. However, newspapers credibility is negatively related with news discussion with friends (t=-2.236, p=0.026) but Internet credibility is positively related with news discussion with friends (t=2.295, p=0.022). This means that the Agenda Setting Theory is being confirmed whereby news media consumption (TV, newspapers, and Internet) influences interpersonal news discussions between youth and their family members and among their friends.

Table 5c: Simple multiple regression showing interpersonal news discussion with media credibility and news consumption

Family	*B*	Beta	t	p
Constant	1.158		6.743	0.000
TV Credibility	-0.001	-0.001	-0.028	0.978
Newspaper Credibility	0.011	0.007	0.211	0.833
Internet Credibility	-0.010	-0007	-0.272	0.785
TV news consumption	**0.044**	**0.158**	**5.841**	**0.000**
Newspaper Consumption	**0.067**	**0.218**	**7.684**	**0.000**
Internet Consumption	**0.063**	**0.243**	**8.945**	**0.000**
F=65.550;df=6,1344; p=0.000; R=0.476, R sq adj=0.223				
Friends	*B*	Beta	t	p
Constant	0.939		5.385	0.000
TV Credibility	0.100	0.059	1.929	0.054
Newspaper Credibility	-0.118	-0.070	-2.236	0.026

Internet Credibility	0.084	0.056	2.295	0.022
TV news consumption	**0.036**	**0.123**	**4.697**	**0.000**
Newspaper Consumption	**0.085**	**0.262**	**9.605**	**0.000**
Internet Consumption	**0.079**	**0.289**	**11.057**	**0.000**
F=88.669;df=6,1344; p=0.000; R=0.533, Adj R sq=0.280				

News Media Consumption by Gender, Age, and Race

The demographic characteristics that are explored in this study are gender (male and female), age (young and old), and race (Malay, Chinese, and Indian).

News Media Consumption by Gender

Table 6a presents the findings of news media consumption in terms of gender and age. Results revealed that male youth tend to watch more news on TV than female youth do (t=4.025, p=0.000). In terms of news in the newspapers, there is no difference between male and female in their news consumption (t=0.676, p=0.000). The same pattern is also found for Internet consumption among male and female youth. There is no difference between males and females in their Internet news consumption (t=-1.378, p=0.168).

News Media Consumption by Age

Regarding age, the results (Table 6a) revealed that the older youth (21 and above) tend to consume more news on all of the media compared to the younger respondents(20 years old and less). Specifically, the older youth watched news on TV more than the younger youth (t=-3.755, p=0.000). The older youth also prefer to read news in the newspapers more than the young ones (t=-6.233, p=0.000). In addition, the older youth tended to utilize the Internet to obtain news more than the younger ones (t=-6.791,

p=0.000). This implies that older youth watch TV news, read newspapers and use

Internet frequently and for a longer period of time compared to the younger youth.

Table 6a: T-test for news media consumption by age and gender

Media Consumption	Selected variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
TV consumption	Gender	Male	669	9.42	4.96	4.025	1361	0.000
		Female	694	8.35	4.85			
	Age (years)	20 years old and less	803	8.46	4.715	-3.755	1129	0.000
		21 and above	560	9.49	5.174			
Newspaper consumption	Gender	Male	669	7.58	4.567	0.676	1361	0.499
		Female	694	7.74	4.293			
	Age (years)	20 years old and less	803	7.04	4.238	-6.233	1361	0.000
		21 and above	560	8.54	4.550			
Internet consumption	Gender	Male	668	5.75	5.18	-1.378	1354	0.168
		Female	688	6.15	5.37			
	Age (years)	20 years old and less	797	5.13	4.67	-6.719	1025	0.000
		21 and above	559	7.13	5.85			

News Media Consumption by Race

Table 6b shows news media consumption in relation to race. Malays are the highest

consumers of news of TV news compared to Chinese and Indian (F=127.881, p=0.000).

Indian youth are the highest consumers of news in newspapers compared to the Malay

and the Chinese (F=9.872, p=0.000). However, there is no difference among races on

Internet news consumption. Malay, Indian, and Chinese are similar in terms of their

Internet news consumption.

This implies that Malays are the heaviest viewers of TV news compared to both the

Chinese and the Indian. The Indian youth, on the other hand, are heavy readers of

newspapers compared to the Malays and the Chinese youth.

Table 6b: F-test for news media consumption by race

Media Consumption	N	Mean	SD	F	df	P	t-comparison
TV Consumption by Race:	**1350**	**8.85**	**4.916**	127.881	2,1347	0.000	M>C, I>C
Malay	762	10.37	4.559				
Chinese	457	6.13	4.092				
Indian	131	9.53	5.503				
Newspaper Consumption by Race:	**1350**	**7.64**	**4.410**	9.872	2,1347	0.000	I>C, M>C
Malay	762	7.97	4.453				
Chinese	457	6.90	4.011				
Indian	131	8.24	5.139				
Internet Consumption by Race:	**1343**	**5.94**	**5.276**	1.533	(2,1340)	0.216	Not significant
Malay	5.99	5.219	755				
Chinese	5.68	5.271	457				
Indian	6.57	5.592	131				

Interpersonal News Discussions by Gender, Age, and Race

Interpersonal news discussions are looked at from the perspective of family and friends while demographic characteristics of the respondents are viewed from three variables, namely, gender (male and female), age (young and old), and race (Malay, Chinese, and Indian).

Interpersonal News Discussions by Gender

Table 7a presents the findings on the interpersonal news discussions of respondents in terms of age and race. Results revealed that there is no difference between males and females in terms of their interpersonal news discussions either with family or with friends.

Interpersonal News Discussions by Age

The older youth tend to discuss news more with family (t=-3.225, p=0.001) rather than

with friends (t=-5.331, p=0.000) in comparison to the younger youth (20 years old and

less).

Table 7a: T-test for interpersonal news discussions by age and gender

Interpersonal News Discussions	Selected variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Family	**Gender**	Male	669	2.46	1.398	0.966	1350	0.334
		Female	694	2.39	1.326			
	Age	20 years old and less	803	2.33	1.328	-3.225	1361	0.001
		21 and above	560	2.57	1.399			
Friends	**Gender**	Male	669	2.60	1.434	0.870	1361	0.385
		Female	694	2.53	1.441			
	Age	20 years old and less	803	2.39	1.396	-5.331	1361	0.000
		21 and above	560	2.81	1.462			

Interpersonal News Discussions by Race

Table 7b presents the findings on the interpersonal news discussions by race. Results

show that Chinese youth have less news discussions with family members (F=21.934,

p=0.000) and with friends (F=21.914, p=0.000) compared to Indian and the Malay

youth.

Table 7b: F-test for interpersonal news discussions by race

Interpersonal News Discussions	N	Mean	SD	F	df	p	t-comparison
Family Discussion by Race:	**1350**	**2.42**	**1.359**	**21.934**	**2,1347**	**0.000**	**I>C, M>C**
Malay	762	2.58	1.395				
Chinese	457	2.08	1.222				
Indian	131	2.65	1.386				
Friend Discussions by Race:	**1350**	**2.56**	**1.439**	**21.914**	**2,1347**	**0.000**	**I>C, M>C**
Malay	762	2.69	1.465				
Chinese	457	2.23	1.277				
Indian	131	2.98	1.588				

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are made. TV is perceived as the most credible mass media, followed by the newspapers and the Internet. This is because of current news on national and public affairs that are disseminated by both media are reliable. Internet credibility according to Malaysian youth perception is still low.

There are youth who do watch TV, read newspapers, and surf the Internet. Those who are exposed to the media spent about half of an hour on TV and news per day while Internet per week. They also paid some attention to the media concerned. Their consumption varied and was high for TV, moderate for newspapers, and low for the Internet.

A substantial proportion of the youth did not discuss current national news from the media with their family members or with their friends. Those who did would discuss current national news twice a week with both family members and with their friends.

There is a small yet positive relationship between perceived TV media credibility and TV news consumption. TV consumption, in turn, is weakly positively related to family news discussion and to news discussions with friends. Likewise a positive relationship exists between newspaper credibility and newspaper consumption. Newspaper consumption, in turn, is weakly related to family news discussion but moderately related to news discussions with friends. Perceived Internet credibility is also slightly related to

Internet consumption. In turn, Internet consumption is moderately related with family news discussion.

News media consumption and interpersonal news discussions were further looked at in terms of gender, age, and race. Male youth tend to be more exposed and focused on TV news than the female youth. TV, newspapers, and Internet are mainly used by the older youth (more than 21 years old) than the younger youth. In terms of race, Malays are heavy users of TV when compared to Indian and Chinese youth.

Newspapers are also widely used by Indian and Malay youth, more than the Chinese youth for current national news. The current national news was discussed widely by the older youth with their family members and their friends. This occurrence was much lower for the younger youth. Again, Indian youth superseded Malay youth and the Chinese youth in terms of current national news discussions with family members and friends.

Therefore, the Agenda Setting Theory holds true among Malaysian youth. The study was able to show that media consumption for TV, newspapers, and the Internet is strongly influencing interpersonal news discussions among youth with their family and with their friends. It is especially true among older male youth who are Indian and Malays because they discuss current national news widely with their family members and friends after watching TV and reading newspaper.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Saodah Wok obtained her Bachelor Degree in Bac. Agric Sc (Hons) from University of Malaya (UM) in 1976, majoring in Plant Physiology and Extension Education/Communication; Master's Degree (M.S.) in Development Communication from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 1979, majoring in Agricultural Journalism; and Ph.D. in Mass Communication from University of Wisconsin (Madison) in 1996, majoring in Organizational Communication. She also holds Diploma in Islamic Studies (IIUM), Diploma in Translations (DBP), and Diploma in Guidance and Counseling (IIUM). Her research interests are Organizational Feedback, Organizational Diversity, and Media Studies. She has produced books, chapter-of-books, published journal articles, magazine articles, and besides had presented many papers at the International and National seminars ever since she started her career.