

MALAYSIA'S GENERAL ELECTION 1995

PEOPLE, ISSUES AND MEDIA USE

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The Asia Foundation

NASKHAH CENDERAMATA
JABATAN KOMUNIKASI UKM

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PEOPLE, ISSUES AND MEDIA USE

by
**Syed Arabi Idid
&
Mazni Buyong**

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PERPUSTAKAAN NEGARA MALAYSIA
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Preface

The 1995 election held in April was relatively a quiet event. The coalition among the opposition parties that was seen in 1990 lapsed into near oblivion during the 1995 election. Only APU survived to defend its control in Kelantan. The machinery of the Barisan Nasional (successor to Alliance), a party that has been in control of the country since 1957, was too strong for the opposition parties to offer much of a fight.

The present publication and other subsequent publications will present the findings obtained from the various research that were undertaken before, during and after the election. Five of us were involved in the project; three communication scholars (Syed Arabi Idid, Mazni Buyong and Mohd. Hamdan Adnan), one political sociologist (Mohd. Salleh Lamry) and, finally, a political scientist (Ghazali Mayudin).

Our present study involved three approaches and three different methodologies. The approaches were mainly related to the study on media performance. One approach was the study on the coverage provided by the print media in Semenanjung, Sabah and Sarawak, the coverage given by the electronic media, a public opinion research in midst of the election campaign and another research after the election and, finally, a field research of political events in four states.

The methodologies used were content analysis, survey research and a field research that were closely related to the subject matter.

Our report is contained in three books. In book one we present the public opinion research that involved a sample of 979 respondents conducted from April 26 to 30, 1995. The study focuses on the issues that are perceived as important; either personally felt by the respondents or are raised by the media themselves.

In the forthcoming book we will present the coverage provided for by the print and the electronic media. We will be mainly using content analysis in understanding how the issues were reported, the sources used, and the prominence given to the various issues. We will also be comparing how the political coverage was provided by different language newspapers and also by the newspapers in the different regions.

The third book contains findings of field observations conducted in Penang, Kelantan, Terengganu and an analysis of the results in Sabah. These states were selected because of the unusual characteristics. Penang state was chosen because of the initially strong onslaught launched by the DAP to wrest control over the BN-controlled government. The reverse was true in the case of Kelantan where BN tried its best to win over the state from the APU-led government. Terengganu was a state that was strongly challenged by APU. Sabah was chosen to study how Barisan Nasional that had just formed the state government fared itself during the election. Our research team observed the campaigns in Penang, Kelantan and Terengganu and conducted interviews with political leaders in the four states.

We are grateful to agencies and institutions that made our study possible. We thank the Asia Foundation for its financial contribution that enabled us to observe the elections and also to buy the necessary newspapers and tapes to record the news aired over television and had them content analysed.

We thank Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, in particular, the Department of Communication and the Educational Technology Centre, for without their assistance this project would not have sustained itself. The Communication students assisted in the survey project. The Bursar's Office was responsible for managing the grant that was given by Asia Foundation. We thank the Election Commission for its

cooperation in giving us access to witness the nomination at Kubang Pasu, and then to enable us to enter the voting areas for our video team to shoot some scenes during the actual voting day. The police were also useful in helping us during the course of our study.

We would like to express our thanks to Azizah Ishak, Haji Suhaimi, Norazimah Ahmad, Kalsom Kadir, Hartate Ismail, Mot Madon, Maria Muda, Lay Fern, Kamarul Bahrein, Umi Kalthom, Azlina Mohd. Anim and Normah Mustaffa.

On top of all these we must thank political leaders (Ustaz Fadzil Noor, Dr. Ibrahim Saad, Dr. Koh Tsu Koon, Lim Kit Siang, Tuan Guru Nik Aziz, Datuk Salleh Tun Said, Dr. Sanusi Osman) and other politicians who found time to talk to us during the election period.

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Mazni Buyong
Mohd. Hamdan Adnan
Mohd. Salleh Lamry
Ghazali Mayudin

Kajang, 20 September 1995

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Part 1

Election in Malaysia

Introduction

The results of the 9th general election announced on the morning of 26 April were more favorable to Barisan Nasional(BN) than what many political analysts had expected. It was a near earthquake victory for the 14-party coalition Barisan Nasional. The BN achieved the majority of parliamentary seats at 2.15 a.m. when it won its 129th constituency in the 192 seat Dewan Rakyat.

Barisan Nasional made a clean sweep of parliamentary seats in Perlis, Kedah, Perak, Pahang, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, Johor and Sarawak. It controlled all the state assemblies except for the APU-lead Kelantan. All federal ministers except one retained their seats including the Minister of Rural Development, Datuk Annuar Musa, who won in Peringat, Kelantan.

It was an achievement that BN or its predecessor the Alliance Party could be proud of; both in terms of the parliamentary seats won or the majority vote obtained. BN won 162 seats out of a total of 192 or 82 percent of the total seats. Its majority vote for parliamentary constituencies was 64% compared to 53% in 1990. For state seats, the majority vote won by BN was 66.8 percent. The BN's near complete sweep of parliamentary seats meant a dismal performance by opposition parties in 1995.

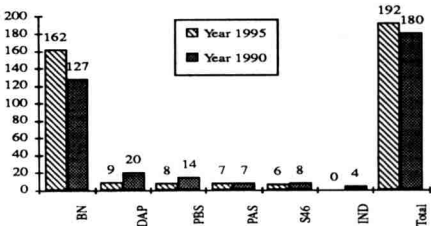
The 9th General Election left the nine opposition parties badly battered not only did they fail to equal the number of seats they obtained in 1990, opposition parties lost by wide margins to BN candidates. In 1990 the opposition parties had 53 seats in parliament, but this was reduced to 30 seats in 1995. PAS was the only party that maintained its seven parliamentary seats. DAP had its seats slashed from 20 to nine, Semangat from eight to six. Sabah-based Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) fielded candidates outside the state for the first time but it failed to win any seat. All the eight parliamentary seats it won were captured in Sabah. Having said that BN realized that the majority of votes won in Kedah was lower than that won in 1990. Dissatisfaction with choice of candidates among UMNO supporters was attributed as the main single factor for this reduced majority.

The majority votes won by PAS was 7.36 percent for parliament and 13.5 percent for state. For Semangat it was 10.18 percent for parliament and 7.48 for state while for DAP it was 12.16 percent for parliament and 11.17 percent for state.

If anything, the 1995 election showed the lack of issues that was in contrast to the 1990 election. The opposition parties appeared weak. BN with its planning strategy, given the benefit of knowledge on the dissolution of parliament, and its strong administrative machinery, was able to win with a bigger number of parliamentary and state seats than it did in 1990.

The results of the 1995 and 1990 Parliamentary elections were as follows:

Figure 1: Seats won by political parties in 1995 and 1990 elections



Ninth General Election

The 1995 general election, the 9th to be held since independence, saw an increase of 12 parliamentary and 43 state seats, making a total of 192 parliamentary seats and 394 state seats (excluding the state seats for Sabah and Sarawak). There were 180 parliamentary and 351 state seats in the 1990 election. There were no elections for the state assemblies of Sabah and Sarawak. Sabah held its election in 1994 and Sarawak in 1991.

Before the 1995 dissolution of parliament, there were 138 seats representing BN, 20 DAP, 7 PAS, 3 PBS, 6 Parti Melayu Semangat 46 and six independents. Although BN leaders claimed that they wanted a two-third majority of seats in the Dewan Rakyat for the 1995 election, they were in fact expecting to better their performance over 1990.

In the new Dewan Rakyat, there were 3 seats for Perlis, 15 for Kedah, 14 Kelantan, 8 Terengganu, 11 Penang, 23 Perak, 11 Pahang, 17 Selangor, 10 Kuala Lumpur, 1 Labuan, 7 Negri Sembilan, 5 Melaka, 20 Johor, 20 Sabah and 27 Sarawak.

For state seats, Perlis had in 1995 15 seats, Kedah 36, Kelantan 43, Terengganu 32, Penang 33, Perak 52, Pahang 38, Selangor 48 Negri Sembilan 32, Melaka 25 and Johor 40.

The opposition parties were DAP, PAS, Parti Melayu Semangat 46, Hamim, PBS, PRM, Berjasa, Bersekutu, Ikatan, PRS, Akim and Setia.

A total of 417 candidates contested the parliamentary seats and another 857 the state seats. On nomination date, BN candidates were returned unopposed in 11 parliamentary and nine state constituencies. Nine of the parliamentary seats were won in Sarawak, one each in Selangor and Perak. In 1990, 410 candidates stood for election and two candidates were returned unopposed.

The number of voters for the 1995 election had increased over the previous elections. In the 1990 election, there were 6.6 million registered voters compared to 9.0 million in the 1995 election (Figure 2).

Figure 3: Position of candidates in the States seats

STATES	Seats Available	BN		DAP		PAS		S46		PRM		PBS		BERJASA		AKIM		IND	
		Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats Won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won
PERLIS	15	15	15	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KEDAH	36	36	34	5	-	30	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
KELANTAN	43	43	7	-	-	27	24	12	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	15	-	2	-
TERENGANU	32	32	25	-	-	18	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
PENANG	33	33	33	26	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PERAK	52	52	51	19	1	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-
PAHANG	38	38	37	8	1	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
SELANGOR	48	48	45	15	3	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
N SEMBILAN	32	32	30	11	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-
MALACCA	25	25	22	9	3	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
JOHOR	40	40	40	10	1	8	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
	394	394	281	103	11	178	33	12	-	-	-	9	-	1	-	15	-	34	-

Figure 4: Position of candidates in the Parliament seats

STATES	Seats Available	BN		DAP		PAS		S46		PRM		PBS		BERJASA		AKIM		IND	
		Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won	Seats contested	Seats won
PERLIS	3	3	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KEDAH	15	15	15	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
KELANTAN	14	13	2	-	-	7	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
TERENGGANU	8	8	7	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PENANG	11	11	8	8	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PERAK	23	23	23	11	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
PAHANG	11	11	11	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
SELANGOR	17	17	17	3	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
FT KLUMPUR	10	10	6	6	4	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
N SEMBILAN	7	7	7	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
MALACCA	5	5	4	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
JOHOR	20	20	20	5	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
FT LABUAN	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SABAH	20	20	12	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	10	-
SARAWAK	27	27	26	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-
TOTAL	192	191	162	50	9	47	7	-	6	3	-	-	8	-	-	2	-	43	-

Figure 2: Number of Voters

State	1990	1995
Perlis	100,809	104,195
Kedah	705,588	724,728
Kelantan	580,398	608,000
Terengganu	353,349	367,676
Penang	608,653	634,726
Perak	1,070,797	1,115,628
Pahang	474,275	498,221
Selangor	1,037,058	1,099,358
Kuala Lumpur	567,387	591,806
Negri Sembilan	368,445	381,888
Malacca	281,147	292,855
Johore	1,051,582	1,108,335
Labuan	19,365	20,243
Sabah	628,959	646,719
Sarawak	804,420	817,460
Total	8,625,252	9,011,868

BN fielded candidates in all the federal and state constituencies. For the first time, Billy Abit Joo, stood as a direct BN candidate. Semangat 46 put up 65 candidates in parliamentary seats and 130 for the state assemblies. This compared to 50 parliamentary and 103 state seats fielded by DAP and 45 and 178 seats by PAS. (See Figure 3 and 4). PBS placed 28 candidates in parliamentary and nine in state seats.

Context of Time

The timing was appropriate when BN went to the polls. The party was united. There was peace and harmony in the country. Inflation was much lower compared to other countries. There were ample educational opportunities that Malaysians of various races could avail to better themselves or their children. The economy was growing and was benefiting the

people. Thus when the election dates were announced, various quarters had predicted a very comfortable margin of victory for BN.

The election held in 1995 was centered on domestic issues at national, state, and district level. International issues that were the hallmark of the 1964 election were visibly absent. In some constituencies the issues were reduced to trivial matters.

Manifesto

A declaration of intention was made by each respective party should it form the government. It is to be noted that each party had a general manifesto for the whole country and specific manifestos for states. For example BN had a special manifesto for Penang and another for Kelantan. PAS had a manifesto for Kedah, Terengganu and also for Kelantan. The special manifesto edition for specific states indicated the focus that the party had geared itself, meaning that Kelantan was special for BN and for both PAS and Semangat 46. Penang was also special for BN and DAP. The parties did not have special edition of their manifestos for the other states.

At the national level, BN's manifesto showed the country moving toward the year 2020, of achieving a caring society and an industrialized nation. The BN's slogan of Vision, Justice and Efficiency was the theme for the nine-point manifesto. Among the salient points of the BN manifesto were:

- * A just and efficient government.
- * Continuity of development
- * Respect for religious freedom
- * A generation that is confident of the future
- * Dynamic foreign policy
- * Preserving and enhancing the environment
- * High-Tech industrialization
- * Prudent financial management
- * Efficient and effective administration.

Actually there was nothing radically different of BN's manifesto for Penang. It highlighted the achievements of the Barisan Nasional in Penang, projected the image of the Chief Minister, Dr. Koh Tsu Koon, and showed future projects to be implemented in Penang should Barisan Nasional be returned to power.

The selling points for BN were the liberalization measures over the years that the government had taken in education, in culture and in the economic sphere. For the states, BN claimed that a BN controlled government would be good for state and federal relationship, meaning that there would be less conflict and friction between the state and federal governments.

Parti Islam SeMalaysia (PAS) continued with its 1990 manifesto of wanting to build a Malaysian nation based on Islamic principles. As a party that was rural based, it called for a fair and equitable distribution of land, and assured voters of their rights over their land. It promised to give land titles to participants involved in the various land schemes (FELDA and FELCRA). The other points contained in the manifesto were to safeguard and uphold morality in society, and to implement laws in consonance with Islam. The 14-point manifesto with the theme "Pembangunan Rakyat Berlandaskan Islam" (Development of the People through Islam) also promised to review the Official Secrets Act, the Internal Security Act and the Universities and University Colleges Act which the party considered as inconsistent with Islam.

The party had supplementary manifestos for Kelantan, Terengganu, Perlis, Kedah and Melaka. Its manifesto for Kedah pledged to upgrade the Maktab Mahmud as an institution of higher learning and to improve the situation of religious schools in the state.

The Parti Rakyat Malaysia called for equitable development, more democratic rights for Malaysians and made clear its distaste for injustice, oppression and poverty.

Besides calling for an increase in the number of universities, and polytechnics, and the building of more low cost houses, PRM also demanded a stop to the eviction of urban squatters and the demolition of their homes, business sites or workshops (PRM Manifesto, 1995). Its 12-point manifesto also called for a review of the Land Acquisition Act.

The manifesto of Parti Melayu Semangat 46 contained 20 points that included the abolition of the Internal Security Act, the Official Secrets Act and the Universities and University Colleges Act. It also called for the abolition of the road tax and a review of the income tax.

Semangat 46's manifesto contained the theme "Keadilan Untuk Semua" (Justice for All) to create a Malaysian society based on the concept of justice and harmony. The manifesto encompassed the political, cultural and economic aspects of life in Malaysia.

At a press conference, its President, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, said the party also paid particular attention to problems related to the acquisition of land by the government. The party called for a review of the Land Acquisition Act (1961) saying that land should only be acquired for development purposes.

The Democratic Action Party launched its manifesto by demanding the people to decide on the issue of full liberalization and to save Malaysia from being a One-Party State. In launching the manifesto, its Secretary-General, Lim Kit Siang, said that the 1995 general election would decide two important questions that would have far reaching consequences for Malaysia as well as for future generations. The DAP claimed that it was the party's struggle that Barisan Nasional had to acknowledge the validity of a Malaysian Malaysia.

The Party wanted full liberalization as the present minor liberalization practiced by the Barisan National government was inadequate. The party said that full liberalization stemmed from four important aspects of the

"Minor Liberalization" namely the support of the people given to the party, the concept (of minor liberalization) was still skin deep as various Acts curtail the rights of the individual, the minor liberalization had not been accompanied by democracy, and, finally, there had been a "further backsliding in the violations of democracy and human rights" in the country (DAP Manifesto, 1995).

State of Political Parties

The Malaysian political system had evolved in its most essential characteristics to be described as "an elite accommodation system". Means (1991) listed four characteristics of an ideal elite bargaining system but said that such a system was not totally applicable with the passage of time and also due to the changes in the character of the political elites. Elite bargaining came into effective play after the elections.

Malaysia's political parties are strongly communal or religious in appeal. The main political party, the United Malays National Organization, appeals to the Malays, The Parti Melayu Semangat 46 also appeals to the same set of voters. Unlike the other two mentioned, the Party Islam SeMalaysia, appeals mainly to the Muslims of the country, especially to the rural Malays. To UMNO, Semangat 46 should not remain to exist as it threatened the popularity of UMNO. It was akin to a thorn in its flesh. Smaller parties such HAMIM and BERJASA appeal to the Malays, but are of no match in strength to the main Malay political parties, such as UMNO, Semangat 46 or PAS.

There are three main Chinese parties. The Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) appeal to the Chinese, more so of the high-income Chinese. Its rival the Democratic Action Party (DAP), appeals to the Chinese, especially the low-income and the Chinese-educated urban Chinese. The Gerakan subscribes to a more broad-based appeal, but its supporters are still Chinese.

The Malaysian Indian Congress, as the name implies, is geared toward the Indians. As the Indian population number less than 1 million, the MIC is not politically as powerful as the MCA or UMNO.

The Parti Bersatu Sabah (The Sabah United Party) appeals to the Kadazandusun in the state of Sabah, but has attempted to portray itself as multi-racial. In the state of Sarawak, the main political parties, except for the DAP, are part of BN.

There are other smaller parties that appeal to the Indians (competitor to the Malaysian Indian Congress), such as the Independent Malaysian Indian Party or KIMMA (Muslim Indian Association of Malaysia). The Indian Progressive Front that allied itself with Gagasan Rakyat in 1990 declared its support for BN.

Barisan Nasional (BN)

The BN, a 14 coalition party, registered on 1 June 1974 first contested the election in that year. It was previously called Alliance of UMNO, MCA and MIC, representing the three main racial groups in Peninsular Malaysia, formed before 1957 to demand independence. With the entry of more political parties in 1970 and with the establishment of Malaysia in 1963, the Alliance found it pragmatic to admit new members. This necessitated the change in name and a different approach to political matters. The BN (Alliance) has been in control of the government since independence. UMNO is the backbone of Barisan Nasional. The Chairman of BN is also the President of UMNO who is also the Prime Minister.

The BN component parties are UMNO, MCA, MIC, Gerakan, People's Progressive Party. In Sabah, parties that are part of BN are Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS), Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRs), Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Akar Bersatu and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). In Sarawak, components of BN are Parti Pesaka Bumiputera

Bersatu (PBB), Sarawak National Party (SNAP), Pesaka, Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP), and Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS).

The Indian Progressive Front (IPF) withdrew from the opposition and declared its support for BN. It wanted to join BN but MIC objected to its membership.

For this year's election, BN fielded candidates in all parliamentary and state constituencies. The lobbying among members to be selected as candidate was strong. A total of 41 candidates during the election were recognized by BN as members who stood as independents and were sacked from the party. Out of this total 40 were from UMNO.

Malaysian Chinese Association rebounded itself in 1995 as it was nearly wiped out in 1990. It captured all the nine seats in Penang. It managed to penetrate traditional DAP areas, including Pengkalan Kota, Berapit, Sungai Puyu and Kampung Kolam. It contested and won all the nine state seats, and two of the three parliamentary seats in Penang.

Malaysian Indian Congress was given 22 candidates to contest for the election; seven for parliament and 15 for state seats. Eight previous candidates, including a Deputy Minister and a Parliamentary Secretary, were dropped. The party re-nominated a former deputy minister, Datuk S. Subramaniam, the deputy president, to stand in Segamat.

The Sarawak BN was in a stronger position than the other BN in the other states. During nomination, nine parliamentary seats were uncontested with the admission of Parti Bangsa Dayak Bersatu, (PBDS), Sarawak BN was in a dominant position as it had only to face the DAP in the state. The other opposition parties were of no match as they were routed during the 1991 state election. Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud was confident that Sarawak BN under his leadership would be able to deliver all the parliamentary seats.

The focus of the election was on events happening in Penang, Kelantan, and Sabah. Different issues were played in each of the three states. In Penang, the issue that Barisan Nasional faced was from the DAP who launched their Tanjung 11 project and saw Lim Kit Siang pitted against Dr Koh Tsu Koon. Although Lim Kit Siang had earlier expressed the fear that DAP would be routed in the 1995 election, many voters thought it was a campaign strategy to win sympathy votes, yet when the results were announced what were predicted by the DAP became a near reality.

An issue that was used by the Gerakan-lead BN government was development. Dr. Koh Tsu Koon promised the people of Penang more development should the present BN be returned to power. Unlike the situation in 1990 when BN had to contend with DAP and Semangat 46, in 1995 BN was only confronted by DAP.

In Kelantan, BN launched its campaign against the APU-lead government. The theme of the campaign was that PAS was fanatic, the state government did not bring development and there was little or no relationship at all between the state and federal governments. It was a battle between UMNO in BN and PAS in APU for the control of the state government. BN was not successful but it did managed to win two parliamentary seats. The BN candidates who crossed from Semangat 46 failed to retain their seats.

In Sabah the issue was not for the control of the state as the state election was already held in 1994. It was an election to send representatives from Sabah to the federal parliament. To BN it was also to test its strength in Sabah as against the PBS. It was the first time that many UMNO members were contesting the election under the flag of BN.

It was also the first time that UMNO fielded the most number of seats to contest the federal election in Sabah. BN had to contend not only with PBS but also with USNO members who regarded UMNO as a Peninsular-based party that was making its way into Sabah politics. BN championed

the issue of cordial state-federal relationship that was needed for the development of the state. The prime minister and his deputy visited Sabah several times to assure people of BN's commitment.

BN used all the support it could obtain. In Melaka the Chinese Straits-born Association of Malaysia (Peranakan) and the Portugese Community pledged their support for BN candidates. It was also reported that the adviser of the Wu Tek Kong temple in Tanjung Tokong, Datuk Tan Lke Suan, said that the present BN government was more open and liberal compared to 20 or even five years ago. The Chinese were then not allowed to visit China but under the preent government, the Chinese were allowed to visit China.

Democratic Action Party (DAP)

The DAP did badly in the 1995 election. The party was noted for its rocket symbol as a party that was Chinese based although it claimed to be fighting for the rights of every Malaysian. Formed as an offshoot of the People's Action Party of Singapore, the DAP contested its first election in 1969 when it won 13 seats.

For the last three elections, DAP made Penang its focus. Through Project Tanjung I (1986), Tanjung II (1990) and the 1995 Tanjung III, DAP was bent to take over the state government of Penang. It saw a strategic value in capturing a state. It could implement policies to show evidence of its policy. A state under its control meant also an administrative and a financial base for party operations.

In 1990 it campaigned together with Semangat 46 in Gagasan Rakyat declaring that it needed to win over another 500 votes in each constituency to enable the two parties to form the state government. The slogan then was "change" meaning asking the voters to vote for a change in government. It failed to win over the state although Lim Kit Siang caused one of the biggest upsets when he defeated the then Chief

Minister of the State, Dr. Lim Chong Eu, for the Padang Kota seat.

In 1995 the DAP changed its slogan to 'Try 5 Years' meaning that the people in Penang should give the DAP a chance to rule the state for 5 years.

The DAP manifesto and its quest for the capture of Penang through its Tanjung 111 project was slightly different from its national struggle. By concentrating on capturing Penang, its battle appeared to be parochial, sacrificing its national struggle for liberalization and democratization. It was a party that was once noted for projecting issues at the national level, but by focusing on Tanjung 111 and the fight waged by Lim Kit Siang against Dr. Koh Tsu Koon over the state seat of Tanjung Bunga the election issue was reduced to a personal battle of one person. When the results were over Lim Kit Siang made explicit that he was leaving Penang politics, an island whose character of politics usually leave many politicians wounded. Never mind that Karpal Singh a member of parliament for the constituency of Jelutong one of the three DAP candidates to win the parliamentary election, said that he was a wounded tiger and a wounded one was more dangerous than an ordinary tiger.

The 1995 general election results showed the DAP's dismal performance throughout the country. The DAP national chairman, Dr. Chen Man Hin, lost the Rasah parliamentary seat. BN's Datuk Wong See Wah polled 30,936 to defeat Dr. Chen by 10,171 votes. Lim Kit Siang lost to Dr. Koh Tsu Koon in the Tanjung Bunga constituency, while DAP Penang Chairman, Karpal Singh, failed in his third bid to win a state seat in Penang. In 1990 Karpal Singh lost the Sungai Pinang state seat to Dr. Kang Chin Seng (Gerakan) and again in 1991 he was defeated by V. Muthusamy (MIC) in the Perai by election.

DAP contested eight parliamentary seats and 26 state seats in Penang but managed to secure only three parliamentary seats and won one of the 33 state seats. It won the Batu

Lanchang state seat when its candidate Chong Eng, scrapped through with a 62 vote majority. In Sarawak its long term serving member in Bandar Kuching lost the seat to a BN member. Overall DAP obtained nine parliamentary seats out of the 50 seats it contested nation wide. What seats DAP lost gained by MCA and Gearakan. MCA won all the parliamentary seats in Kedah (2), Perak (7), Pahang (3), Selangor (5), Negerai Sembilan (2) and Johor (6). Gerakan took seven parliamentary seats and 23 state seats compared to the five parliamentary and 11 state seats it won in 1990.

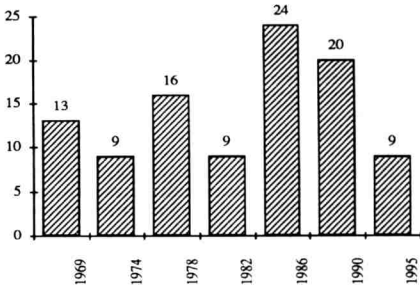
The DAP failed to acknowledge the change in the Malaysian political scenario as a whole and in Penang in particular. Dr. Koh Tsu Koon appeared inexperienced, but he was found to be a person who was prepared to serve the people. Penang Malays found in him a person that they could talk to and the Chinese found a leader that they could lean upon. Lim Kit Siang defeated Dr. Lim Chong Eu in 1990 at Padang Kota but veteran Lim Chong Eu had long served as Chief Minister. Koh Tsu Koon was only in his first year in office.

In Penang, the DAP harped on the issue of a *chief minister with power*. It made clear that the incumbent, Dr. Koh Tsu Koon was a chief minister without power to decide on matters of policy and implementation. DAP might have gambled that a fall of a significant person in Penang would have damaged the credibility of BN. Another strategy was that Penang would not sacrifice Lim Kit Siang, as they did in 1986 (Lim Kit Siang versus Koh Tsu Koon) and in 1990 (Lim Kit Siang versus Dr. Lim Chong Eu).

Its campaign on a chief minister with power went to the extent of Lim Kit Siang associating his picture with RoboCop, the television popular fiction program to mean that if elected Lim Kit Siang would be a powerful chief minister. DAP made other pledges to the people of Penang. It promised to lower parking charges, abolished parking fees for motorcycles and a return to free port status for the island (a promise it made with Semangat 46 in 1990).

Penangites wanted a change in 1990 and DAP (with the support of Semangat 46 then) was in a good position to alter the politics in Penang. Yet it failed in its Tanjung II project. Thus in 1995 while the rules and the actors were the same, the drama and, more so, the spectators (electors) had changed. The voters wanted Dr Koh Tsu Koon to prove himself, and also to allow for a stable and continued state-federal relationship. When the results were out, DAP won only three parliamentary seats, albeit with reduced majorities, and one state seat. It was a score that the party did not foresee at all. Penang's voting profile was also indicative of the pendulum swing that seemed to afflict DAP since it contested the elections in 1969. The election in 1990 stalled the pendulum for one year, but 1995 saw a return of the (delayed) pendulum. DAP's basic strength appeared to be nine parliamentary seats.

The DAP might have sensed the change in mood among the voters. Although Lim Kit Siang attracted a big crowd during rallies, yet he was not able to translate them into votes. He and friends campaigned hard. They shook hands and talked to voters in the market and in the streets from the morning hours into the night. When asked during one of his campaigns of his chances, Lim Kit Siang replied that he was fighting an uphill battle to win the election (Interview, April 12).

Figure 5: DAP's Parliamentary Seats by Election Year

To some analysts, DAP leaders had expected the results. A report by the central executive committee of DAP in 1993 described the government as "more liberal and open in its nation-building policies" (Vattikiotis, 1993) thus making it difficult for the party to fare well in the election because of the situation in the country. The economy was doing well and urban Chinese perceived the Barisan Nasional-lead government as being liberal. For a party that depended on the urban Chinese to gain its way through parliament and power, DAP leaders realized the full political implications of the survey results of the political situation.

The DAP was portrayed by the media as an image of fanaticism. While the DAP leaders said they stood for a liberal society, the party's power base power was still mainly the urban Chinese. Its candidates were placed to contest in Chinese-majority constituencies. Placing Malay candidates to contest in Malay dominated areas was one way of DAP telling the electorates that it was a party that transcended race.

In 1995 it placed Malay candidates to contest in predominantly Malay areas and this caused a controversy among the Malays, especially among UMNO leaders. The DAP placed three Malay candidates to contest in Penang, but DAP's Permatang Pasir candidate, Mior Ariff Mior Hassan, announced his resignation from the party on the eve of polling day. Ahmad Noor and son, Khairul Annuar Ahmad, at 27, the youngest candidate, were DAP candidates in Penang but both lost.

Another case in point was in Segambut. Barisan Nasional had placed a Chinese, Dr. Tan Kee Kwang (son of former Member of Parliament) from the Gerakan to fight a seat in a constituency where Malays constituted a sizable number of voters. DAP placed Abdul Muluk Daud (popularly known as Dharmala) to contest the parliamentary seat, the first time DAP fielded a Malay to contest in a federal territory constituency. There were 49.5% Chinese voters, 31% Malays and 19% Indians and others in the area. Dr Tan Kee Kwang won the Segambut seat.

PAS

PAS is one of the oldest political parties in the country, and a party that survived since it contested in the election of 1955 and won only one seat. Its struggle has always been consistent, namely to introduce Islam in all matters of state.

PAS once controlled the state governments of Kelantan and Terengganu but later lost them to BN. In the 1990 election, PAS and the other component parties of APU captured all the parliamentary and state seats in Kelantan.

PAS parliamentary seats remained the same as in 1990. Its intention of capturing Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis failed to materialize as BN put up a strong defense to maintain itself in these states.

PAS made its intention clear that it would work with the Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (APU) which comprised Parti Melayu Semangat 46, Hamim and Berjasa.

PAS fielded 45 candidates to contest the parliamentary seats, but won seven. The party placed 178 candidates to fight in the states, but managed to secure 33 seats; 24 being in Kelantan, two in Kedah and seven in Terengganu. PAS was the only opposition party to retain an equal number of parliamentary seats compared to the 1990 election but increased its state seats by one.

One of the strengths of PAS in Kelantan was that it was lead by a popular personality in the form of Nik Aziz, the present Menteri Besar of Kelantan. APU under his leadership was found to be united against the fight put up by BN candidates in Kelantan.

In the 1990 election, PAS captured 7.36 percent of the majority votes in the parliamentary constituencies (437,022 votes) and 13.5 percent majority votes for the state constituencies (642,520).

Parti Melayu Semangat 46

Semangat 46 made some headway into the political arena in 1990. When it contested the 1995 election it wanted very much to better its performance. What it wanted was to improve on its performance or to maintain itself in terms of the seats it had won or the majority votes it had acquired. Back of its mind was the history of Parti Negara, a party that was an offshoot of UMNO like Semangat 46, that withered away when it could not win any seat in its second election year in 1964.

Semangat 46 won eight parliamentary seats and 19 state seats in 1990 but by 1995 it had only six seats as two of its candidates defected to Barisan Nasional. Over the years the party had suffered several setbacks. On March 22, 1991

Ibrahim Ali, resigned as the Party's Youth head and from all other posts in the party. On 30 March 1991, UMNO approved the membership of Ibrahim Ali, Nordin Salleh, the Sungai Pinang Assemblyman and Azmi Ali, former Tumpat 's Semangat 46 division Youth Chief.

On 10 April, another Semangat 46 State Assemblyman for Limbongan, Wan Mohamad Najib Mohamad, left the party. With his resignation, UMNO had two seats in the Kelantan State Assembly. Wan Najib was an UMNO assemblyman in the Limbongan seat from 1978 to 1986.

More defections by Semangat 46 members were used by BN leaders to suggest that Semangat 46 was weakening. Former Semangat 46 strong member, Datin Paduka Rahmah Osman, said she was disappointed with the party. Party Semangat 46 leaders claimed that such defections did not mean that the party was weak as it could count on the support of other loyal members.

Semangat 46 contested the most parliamentary seats (65 seats) and 130 state seats among the opposition parties, hoping that it would capture enough seats to form the government. Semangat 46 won only six Parliamentary and 11 state seats, all of them in Kelantan.

In Johor it fielded 11 candidates, the most among the opposition, but lost all including the Parit Bakar seat that was won by its deputy chairman, Abdul Kahar Ahmad, in 1990. In the previous election Abdul Kahar won by a majority of 295 votes, but this time around he lost by 5,063 to BN's candidate, Malek Munip.

Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS)

The Sabah-based party of Parti Bersatu Sabah created history when it fielded 10 candidates to contest outside the state of Sabah. PBS tested its popularity in Penang, Kedah and Johor but it suffered a beating. Its three candidates in Penang lost

their deposits. M. Seevaraju obtained the least number of votes in the state. He polled 96 votes in Datuk Keramat.

During the campaign, to avert suspicion that it was a state-based party, PBS explained that it had submitted its application to change its name from Parti Bersatu Sabah to Parti Bersatu SeMalaysia. PBS took great pains to explain that as much as UMNO could enter Sabah politics, so has PBS the right to enter Peninsular politics. The organization of PBS outside Sabah was lacking as candidates were highly dependent on financial and administrative support from Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin himself. Two days after nomination, candidates were still waiting for posters that had to be flown in from Sabah.

Penang BN leaders were initially worried that PBS candidates would siphon the votes away from BN as the majority of candidates were once BN supporters but the results showed that support for PBS candidates were negligible. Earlier there were statements made by Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan that PBS was willing to support DAP in its Tanjung III campaign to capture Penang (Sun, April 13, 1995:5) but the DAP rejected any support from PBS. PBS coordinator in Penang, Datuk Khor Gaik Kim, said that the party wanted to become an effective watchdog of the state government (NST, April, 9).

Another interpretation can also be made about the entry of PBS into Semenanjung namely to check the influence of DAP in the state of Sabah. In 1990, DAP won the parliamentary seat of Sandakan. In 1995 the DAP again wanted to penetrate into Sabah, an action that was perceived to be at the expense of PBS. To indicate that PBS meant business in Sabah, PBS showed that it could also play the game DAP played by placing candidates in Penang, a state that DAP was trying to win over through its Tanjung III project.

The results showed that PBS did not win any seat in Penang, but it got its message to the DAP because the DAP lost its Sandakan parliamentary seat to BN. DAP was quick to

point out that it had won elections in Sabah years before the birth of PBS and it was not the case that DAP was trying to check the spread of PBS in Sabah.

It was not clear how DAP and PBS would cooperate in the future after the election. Barisan Nasional in 1995 was too great for both the parties, either in Sabah or in Penang. If there were indications that the two parties would cooperate it was during the election of Lim Kit Siang as the opposition leader in parliament. The votes from DAP and PBS combined ensured the victory of Lim Kit Siang over the nomination made by PAS.

Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM)

PRM unsuccessfully contested in three parliamentary constituencies. Its President, Dr. Syed Husin Ali contested in Petaling Jaya Selatan, its Secretary-General in the constituency of Batu in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and its Deputy President, Abdul Razak Ahmad, in Gelang Patah, Johor.

Angkatan Keadilan Insan Malaysia (Akim)

As in previous elections, a new party was likely to emerge in Kelantan just before the elections. This time around it was Angkatan Keadilan Insan Malaysia or Akim.

Formed by former PAS followers, Akim placed two candidates in the parliamentary seats of Tanah Merah and Gua Musang and in 15 state seats. All its candidates lost their deposits except for Nik Ismail Wan Idris who lost to Tengku Razaleigh in the Gua Musang parliamentary seat. As the Barisan Nasional candidate, Datuk Hussein Ahmad, was disqualified to contest the Gua Musang seat, on technical errors, the votes for UMNO might have gone to Nik Ismail. The other Akim candidate in the parliamentary seat, Jondi Abdul Rahim, received only 50 votes in the Kerteh seat. All

the Akim candidates, except Nik Ismail, obtained less than 300 votes.

Indian Action Party

A new party calling itself the Indian Action Party (Parti Tindakan India) announced that it was supporting Gagasan Rakyat. The new party was lead by P. Veerasamy, former editor of the magazine Thoothan. The party intended to contest the election if registration was obtained.

President of Semangat 46, Tengku Razaleigh, welcomed IAP as Gagasan had already lost the support from Indian Progressive Front that had gone to support Barisan Nasional.

Gagasan Rakyat

A loose opposition coalition, the Gagasan Rakyat had the objective of capturing the non-Malay votes during the 1990 election. Formed in 1990, Gagasan did not withstand the pressure of time as it failed to make a declaration of its unity in 1995. DAP withdrew from Gagasan in early January.

Gagasan Rakyat then consisted of DAP, Parti Melayu Semangat 46, Indian Progressive Front (IPF), Parti Rakyat Malaysia, Parti Solidarity Malaysia and KIMMA (Kongress India Muslim) to garner the non-Malay votes but differences in ideology and style among the component parties inhibited the coalition from developing into something meaningful or concrete.

DAP calculated that in 1995 it had all the advantages to go alone rather than be part of a larger coalition. It obtained 20 seats in 1990 through its affiliation with Gagasan compared to 24 seats which it captured alone in 1986. The experience in 1990 showed that the other affiliated parties did not deliver the non-Chinese votes that DAP wanted very much to win over marginal constituencies. It was expecting Semangat 46

to win over the Malay constituencies in Penang in 1990 so that it could have tied up with the party to form the state government, but Malay voters went over to UMNO when they sensed that Penang would fall to DAP rule should they vote for Semangat 46.

The DAP's affiliation with Semangat 46 and the latter's affiliation with PAS, was being used by BN to show the proximity of DAP and PAS. DAP leaders realized that any association with PAS would drive away their supporters mainly the urban Chinese, who would not accept the religious platform of PAS. In fact BN was using the tactic that DAP was working in concert with PAS and Semangat 46 to win the election.

The MCA was using the strategy that DAP was supporting PAS to implement the Hudud law, a law that was not at all favored by the Chinese. Chinese voters were made to realize that only MCA through Barisan Nasional would safeguard their interests. Several incidents that happened in Kelantan made the Chinese more cautious of the APU-lead government, although APU leaders in Kelantan tried their best to convince the Chinese that the state government was fair to all.

Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (APU)

This was a coalition party formed to contest in predominantly Malay areas in direct competition to UMNO votes. APU consisted of PAS, Semangat 46, Hamim and Berjasa. The 1990 election results showed that the coalition made its impact in Kelantan and Terengganu. It managed to win all the state and parliamentary seats in Kelantan during the 1990 election. BN strategy was to contain the spread of APU influence although APU members reasoned that under the domino-theory other states would also fall to APU control as Kelantan was only the beginning.

Women Candidates

The 1995 election saw the most number of women standing as candidates and also the most number to win seats in parliament and state assemblies. A total of 16 candidates from BN and nine from the opposition parties contested the election and 14 from BN and one from the opposition won the parliamentary seats. There were 25 women candidates from BN and 10 from the opposition parties that stood for the state seats. All the BN candidates won. Only one from Semangat 46 and two from DAP won.

Dr. Leela Rama, Deputy Chief of MIC Women's Section, was the first woman from MIC to win a parliamentary seat in Kapar, Selangor.

PAS did not field any woman candidate as it said that this was against the belief of Islam. In an interview Nik Aziz, the Menteri Besar of Kelantan, said that while PAS was not willing to allow women to stand as candidates, the party was prepared to nominate women as senators (Interview, April 24). Semangat 46, however, a partner in APU, fielded women candidates during the election.

Ceramah

Going round the country, we were able to observe, at a first hand, the politics and campaigns launched by the various parties in several states. We were in Kedah, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Terengganu and in Kelantan. Party leaders gave us their precious time for interviews despite their hectic schedule to meet supporters or to plan their next move.

We attended several ceramahs. The first ceramah we attended was in Pendang on the night of 15 April when PAS Kedah introduced its candidates to its supporters. We estimated a total of 15000 people. People thronged in with their motorcycles, bicycles, cars and lorries to listen. We also attended the ceramah given by Lim Kit Siang at Fettes Park,

Penang. The crowd was big. The last ceramah we saw was at Kota Bharu, Kelantan when the Stadium Sultan Muhammad IV was packed to capacity.

The BN ceramahs were never a crowd puller. The biggest crowd we saw was the one in Kampung Bukit Nangka at Jeli in Kelantan when Dr. Mahathir was the main speaker. We estimated a crowd of 15000 who came also to hear the speeches given by Datuk Mustapa Mohamad, the then Deputy Minister of Finance and Datuk Annuar Musa, the Minister of Rural Development. At other occasions BN speakers would be happy if 500 attended their ceramahs.

The results of the 1995 election suggested that crowd size of ceramahs did not always translate into votes. For a crowd to be significant, it should show that it represented the constituency at which the ceramah was organized. If the crowd was not representative, it could be due to the organizers pulling in the crowd from far away places.

Second, the crowd should be convinced that they would go out and vote for the candidate for which the ceramah was organized. Nothing should be taken for granted. Of course a big ceramah would be a psychological boost to the organizers and the speakers but it was nothing beyond that.

In analyzing the size of the crowd, a seasoned UMNO veteran said that in 1990 the crowd in Kelantan for APU organized ceramahs was big, and the result was that they captured the state, but in 1986 the crowd for UMNO was smaller relative to other political parties, yet BN won in Kelantan. In 1995 the crowd in Kelantan attending the ceramahs for both APU and BN was relatively big, the difference since BN was playing the role of the opposition party in Kelantan and APU was put on the defensive as the governing party.

If the size of the crowd was not the factor, issues made some difference, especially among the fence sitters. Voters began to analyze which party offered them the issues that would provide them a better life, a more secure future and continued prosperity. Domestic issues in reality were bread and butter issues.

Losing and Winning

There were several reasons that political parties attribute, either to winning or losing their constituencies.

DAP attributed its losses to the euphoria of the people who were doing well in the country that was developing at eight percent growth. People were not willing to gamble on another party. Hence the call in Penang to give DAP "Just 5 years" did not appeal to the voters as they were not willing to opt for a change in government.

The DAP's call for full liberalization was also not acceptable to the people. The people had been given liberalization in education, business and culture that the Barisan Nasional had provided during the past few years.

Lim Kit Siang's profected arrogance was attributed to be another factor for the loss of DAP seats in Penang. Barisan Nasional strategists suggested two approaches for Dr. Koh Tsu Koon to take; one to appear to be as arrogant as Lim Kit Siang and to take him head long, and the other to show humility and showed a contrast in character. Dr. Koh took the latter approach as "I wanted to be my natural self" (Interview, Aug 5, 1995).

To BN leaders, winning was not by chance but was based on the achievements made by BN over the last five years. The state of the economy, the rapid development of the country and the political stability were said to be the reasons

for the support given by the people. In another sense the liberalisation policies in education and culture were given credit by the Chinese voters.

BN went to the polls with favorable points. It could confidently speak of its record achievements. The Development Plans, the achievements in education, in agriculture, industrial development, in security and defense, and in the trust it enjoyed among business people. In fact in nearly every sphere of the country's economic and social activity Barisan Nasional would point out its achievements for the voters to realize. It could speak of the 8% economic growth the country achieved for the past several years as evidence of the prosperity the government had brought to the country. Planning and implementation were the hallmark of achievement, not luck alone. It took a stable government with a continued program of success to spearhead the country's industrialization.

While speaking of its past achievements, BN leaders were also not at a loss of words for the vision of the future they had for the country. The main architect was Dr. Mahathir with his Vision 2020. It captured the imagination of the old and the young that they had something to look for in the future, that they are to realize the country must move in a certain direction to achieve this noble mission. It was a call for all Malaysians to participate.

If BN showed achievements, the APU lead Kelantan also showed the development that the state had achieved under its rule. When BN leaders said they wanted back Kelantan to make it a model state, the APU leaders said that Kelantan was already a model state by itself. Leaflets were circulated to show that Kelantan had the lowest crime rate in the country, low inflation, and development was taking place.

Emotional issues in the 1960's and 1970's such as education, language, special privileges hardly surfaced in the 1995 election. The general public appeared pleased that ample opportunities were given to education enabling parents

to send their children to private colleges when local government universities were not able to admit them.

There are of course those who find it less consoling that the government had been lenient to the opening up of colleges to the extent that it might harm the growth and development of local universities with Malay as the medium of instruction. By opening up such private colleges and allowing twinning programs, students received their education in English of being well-versed in Malay. Besides the issues generated by political parties, the public were also comparing the popularity of their leaders. Image of parties and leaders were also considered important.

The leaders of the country had varying levels of popularity. In public opinion poll conducted by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in 1994, the popularity of Dr. Mahathir was very high compared to his popularity in 1989. In the 1994 poll when the poll asked 1306 Malaysians whether they were satisfied with the leadership of Dr. Mahathir, 86 percent said they were very satisfied or satisfied. In 1989 when the same question was asked to 2100 Malaysians, only 52% said they were very satisfied or satisfied with his leadership. When Barisan Nasional went to the polls it was led by a very popular leader.

The image of BN as a party was favorable among voters. In Malaysian politics, many electors tended to base their decision on the party rather than on the candidates. Hence what the party stood for, its achievements and the party leaders were some of the constituents of a party image. Image might not be visible, but it was felt and understood when electors made their stand at the ballot boxes.

During the election, BN was portrayed as a party that stood for moderation in contrast to extremes projected of DAP and PAS. BN also stood for a party that catered for national rather than for parochial interests that PAS was made to appear. In between the extremes, voters were positioned to select a party national in outlook and moderate in temper.

The results of the 1995 election might cause the opposition parties to have a hard look at the way they approach problems and articulate issues to the general public. There were already indicators in the 1990 election that communal politics was not holding strength during elections, but it took the 1995 election to demonstrate its effectiveness.

DAP's slogan of the Island's Chief Minister without power was interpreted by many as a challenge that had racial overtones. Initially it was made to appear that UMNO or Dr. Ibrahim Saad was more in control than Dr. Koh Tsu koon on matters of state, but sensing that this line of accusation was alienating the Malay voters, the tactic changed later in the day when actual power was said to be in the hands of state Gerakan chief, Tan Gim Hwa. BN held on and placed DAP on the defensive by allowing the DAP to continue harping on the issue when it monitored that the mood in Penang toward the charge was not getting momentum or support among the Island voters.

There was also a swing among the urban voters for Barisan Nasional. During the initial campaign, the reception among urban voters was that they would give a hard time to BN candidates as voters were inclined to select candidates and not base their decision on party. The BN candidates seized the opportunity by pledging to improve matters faced by urban voters who demanded more attention to local problems. Maintenance issues were the core of the problems addressed by BN candidates in the urban areas.

There was not much of change in the other states where BN was in full control. The one state that PAS and Semangat 46 were eyeing was Terengganu because there were indications that PAS was making headway in the state. Although PAS ceramahs attracted big crowd, yet the party was not able to wrest control from BN. In fact BN performed better mainly at the expense of Semangat 46 candidates.

Part 2

Issues and Media Use During The Election

Introduction

During the election Malaysians found several issues to be important and relevant to them. Some issues were perceived personally as such by the voters, while other issues were perceived as important and relevant due to reports from the mass media. In an attempt to understand the issues during the election campaign a study was made on Malaysians throughout the country where respondents were asked on the varying issues and the sources of these issues. The study identified two sources of information, from media sources and from interpersonal sources.

Media Agenda

An enlightened electorate is one of the basic assumptions made in democratic theory. Hence early election studies focused on the knowledge that voters knew of the issues, or candidates and their party of choice.(Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1944). This tradition of investigating the knowledge of voters is still popular today (Chaffee, Zhao & Leshner, 1994) and has spawned a new area of research within the context of political communication. (Chaffee, 1975; Swanson & Nimmo, 1990).

The press is said to provide the information that is so much required by the people. On the other hand, voters are said to obtain their information about politics from the mass media in order for them to make a voting decision. Hence during election time, politicians would invest a lot of their time and energy to get across their message to the voters through the mass media. An assumption is made that media being powerful agents of dissemination will enable a large cross section of the audience, who are also voters, to obtain this relevant information and therefore be supportive of the candidate and party concerned. The information contained in the media is used also for discussion by the public among friends and family members. This concept of media function is called agenda setting. Under this premise media are capable of making people to think about issues but not to influence their thinking over these issues (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Syed Arabi Idid, 1994).

Given the media scenario, it is difficult to identify the variables of media agenda in Malaysia as they operate in the United States or in United Kingdom. In an overall analysis of media contents during the 1964, 1986, 1990 and 1990 elections, one study found that the media had been consistently favorable in their reportage on BN[Alliance] (Syed Arabi Idid and Mazni Buyong, 1995). The news in the media were found to be favorable of BN or its component parties or to put it in another way, it would not provide an overall adverse news reports against BN members during the various years when elections were held.

The premise of agenda-setting is a *laissez-faire* situation where media gatekeepers are free to decide on the worthiness of news items. Gate keepers would say that they have the freedom of choice, to decide on which news items to include and which to exclude, which to highlight and which story is not significant. Considering the difficulties and the problems of reporting in a multi-racial society, the Malaysian gatekeepers are slightly constrained in their selection of news.

The second assumption of agenda-setting is that there is a link, a close one that is, between the media agenda and the public agenda. Research on election studies have encouraged the notion that media in some ways contribute in bringing about knowledge to the electorate. This is not necessarily true. Others would hold that certain media under certain circumstances would play the role of information provider. Some studies suggest that newspapers contributed to political information (Clarke & Fredin, 1978) and that the public obtain issues from the newspapers during the early part of the campaigns and from television at the later stage. In fact toward the end of the campaign, voters rely heavily on the electronic media to guide them in voting (Peterson & McClure, 1976).

The second assumption rests on a high degree of literacy among the populace and high penetration of mass media in society. It also rests on the high dependency of media, meaning that media issue has high correlation among those who are more exposed or who are oriented to the media. In modern society the populace is said to be more media dependent than in traditional societies. In the case of Malaysia, since there is a high exposure to print and electronic media one can make the assumption that Malaysians are highly dependent on the mass media for their news although Malaysians also obtain their information from interpersonal sources.

This paper presents the findings of a study conducted a week after the election. The main objective of the study is to investigate matters pertaining to the election. Various questions are asked related to the election issues, the media issues and what respondents think are the salient issues during the election campaign. The study initially examines the socio-economic and demographic factors of respondents, the media exposure, the party of choice, and the issues they think are important during the election.

The Role Of Mass Media

The role of media is considered important in modern day political campaigns. Party and political leaders have invested heavily in using the mass media to reach their voters. Findings have been consistent that media's influence during election time (in the United States) has been significant. Nevertheless scholars have difficulties in identifying the direct effects of media on the voters. Early writers have said that media influence was to reinforce existing beliefs among voters rather than to convert them (Klapper, 1960). This reinforcing function of the media has turned around the assumed potent effects of media that earlier researchers had on media. Scholars have found that voters are slowly cultivated to think in terms of the majority opinion, as they are made to think that they hold a minority view. Rather than remain ostracized, people attune their expressed opinion toward the assumed popular opinion or remain silent. (Noelle-Neumann, 1974, 1977).

Another theoretical perspective is that media bring to the voters' issues for them to think about. It is not for media to influence their thinking, but merely to ask readers to think about issues of the day that the media thought were important or were consistent in portraying them (McCombs and Shaw, 1977).

It is generally assumed that media are important in conveying to the general public issues which they assumed are newsworthy. These issues are given to the public to decide on the order of importance. The media therefore are said to be objective and balanced in their report of events. This is an idealistic view as media are never able to be objective and balanced over all issues. Nevertheless the media are expected to bring about a greater understanding of the issues during the elections by providing an extensive coverage of them. It then allows the public as voters to make up their minds when they exercise their right of vote. Under this assumption media are said to bring about information to the readers and it is up to them to decide on a proper course of action. The role of media

ISSUES AND MEDIA USE DURING THE ELECTION

in providing information is far different from the assumption that media influence the thinking of the audience.

When media do not provide the coverage on certain issues than the parties concerned will express their disappointment. If opposition parties assume that these issues are important for the consumption and knowledge of the voters, and if these issues are not brought to the attention of the general public then it is on the basis of this assumption that opposition parties claim that they have been denied a chance for their views to be heard among a wider section of the Malaysian population during the election.

In one instance opposition parties blamed the biased press for their defeat. DAP national Chairman, Dr. Chen Man Hin, claimed to have lost the Rasah parliamentary contest because of the television blackout of his campaign. He said people were not able to obtain the DAP side of the picture.

Others do not mind the lack of coverage but fear biased report. Lim Kit Siang, the DAP leader, said that the press would give publicity for the opposition parties in the beginning of the campaign, but toward the end they would distort the campaigns. Fadzil Noor, President of PAS said that selective reporting hurt the image of the party (Interview, April 15).

While the opposition parties were not happy with the manner and the space given to them by the mass media, leaders of government parties pointed out that the press were free to report what they liked. If they gave less space to the opposition parties, it was the prerogative of the press as the government did not exercise control over them.

The mass media were not favored by the main opposition parties. In one instance, TV3, RTM and the Star were asked to leave a DAP *ceramah* after the party's candidate for Cheras, Tan Kok Wai, accused them of sabotaging their campaign. The Star was accused of publishing propaganda of the MCA and BN.

The press also followed ceramahs attended by Mohamad Sabu. In Kedah, PAS party followers allegedly beat up TV 3 crew after they had warned the crew not to record Mohammad Sabu's speech.

The press had become part of the election action and were not there merely to record the news of events. Thus when the crews of TV3 were beaten up and were said to be serious enough to be admitted into the hospital, the issue was highlighted in the media. Among the guests to visit them at the hospital were the prime minister and friends.

Objectives

The objective of this study is to find out what issues the general public thought were important and relevant to them during the recent election. The study also probed how they understood the issues and from which sources they came to learn of these issues. The study wanted to know the extent to which using the media influenced the public in knowing the issues.

Specifically the study wanted to know the following:

- *What was the extent of media use among the respondents?
- *What were the programs preferred by respondents?
- *What were the issues they thought were important during the election?
- *What were the important issues they thought were reported by the media?
- *What were the qualities they perceived of their leaders? and
- *Overall did different levels in the use of media make any difference to the questions asked above?

Methodology

The method used was quota sampling. A 20 minute questionnaire was administered on the respondents. during the face-to-face interview. A mixture of structured and unstructured questions in the questionnaire were aimed to elicit answers from respondents on specific areas of interest.

Students from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia were trained to administer the questionnaire on the respondents whose profile were given to them. As far as it was possible enumerators were allotted to interview respondents of the same gender and race and to match other factors (income, education) so as to make it easy for interaction. On the whole the study did not encounter major problems.

On completion of the questionnaires, the enumerators sent the questionnaires by mail for data analysis to begin. The data obtained were then coded and then punched into the computer with the Computer Center, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The data were analyzed using the SPSSx program.

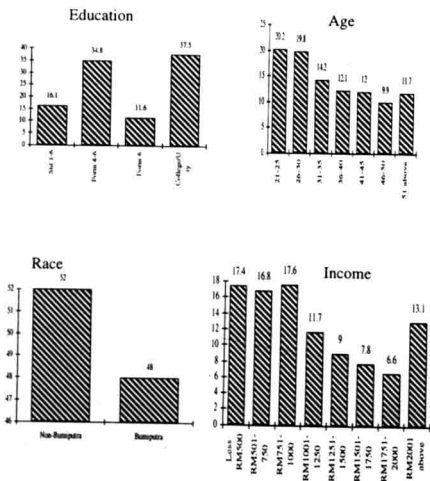
Findings From the Survey Research

The study, conducted throughout the country, selected a total of 979 respondents through quota sampling. Various questions were asked including those related to media use, political knowledge, and socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The public opinion was conducted on the 26 until 30 April 1995 that is one day after the election day. In the face-to face interview respondents took about 20 minutes to complete one questionnaire.

Profile of Respondents

Figures 6 indicated the demographic background of the respondents. Nearly 55 percent of the respondents were below the age of 35 and about 40 percent had 11 years of education (Form Five and below). There was, however, slightly more respondents who were university or college graduates. Slightly less than 50 percent of respondents had a monthly family income of RM1000 and below. Those who earned RM1201 and above were about 15 percent.

Figure 6: Respondents profile



There were two categories of race used in the survey, namely bumiputras and non-bumiputras (that merged Chinese and Indians into one category). The study obtained 48 percent bumiputras and 52 percent non-bumiputras. Bumiputras included Malays and the other indigenous communities (Kadazan, Dayak, Muruts) in Sabah and Sarawak(Fig. 4) .

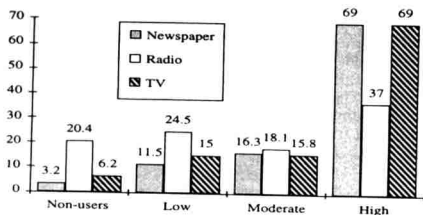
An overall profile of respondents obtained in the study were that they were generally below 40 years in age, possessing a five form level of education and earning RM500 to RM1000.

Use of media

The study began by asking respondents on their use of media. Three types of media use were asked, namely respondents' use of newspaper, television news and radio news. In the close-ended questions, respondents were asked to circle the number of days that they used the three types of media during the past week.

Respondents were asked how many days during the past week they read the newspapers, listened to the news on radio or watched the news on television. In another question they were asked their use of radio, and television. The answers obtained were as in Figure 7. Respondents who used the media from 6 to 7 days the past week were termed as daily or high users, 4 to 5 as moderate readers, and 1 to 3 as low readers and 0 as non-users.

The use of the mass media among respondents were high. This was in line with the findings of other surveys such as that conducted by Survey Research of Malaysia that found a high degree of media penetration in Malaysia. In the current survey (and in other surveys conducted over the past years) similar findings were found.

Figure 7: Use of Newspapers, Radio and Television

Malaysians were high users of television and newspapers but low users of radio. Figure 7 indicated that television (69 percent) and newspaper (69 percent) were widely used for seven days as sources of information while radio use was 37 percent. Generally there were more high users than non-media users among the respondents. What the study found was that the respondents were frequent users of the mass media.

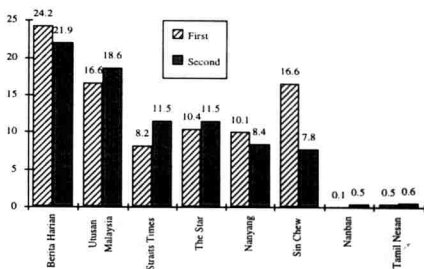
The study also identified the eight most popular daily newspapers. Respondents were asked to indicate two daily newspapers which they frequently read.

This study found out for the first choice the most popular newspapers were the *Berita Harian*, *Utusan Malaysia*, both Bahasa Malaysia dailies, while the third was the English language newspaper, *The New Straits Times*. The remaining newspapers were given similar standing except for the two Indian Newspaper (see Figure 8).

The second regularly read newspaper were still *Berita Harian* and *Utusan Malaysia* but the third newspaper widely read as second choice was *Sin Chew Jit Pao*, a Chinese daily.

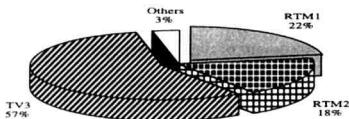
Though the respondents were Bumiputras, Chinese and Indians, the findings indicated that both the national language newspapers (Berita Harian and Utusan Malaysia) were popular among Malaysians.

Figure 8: Popularity of daily newspapers



Respondents were also asked which TV channels they often watched their prime time news. The three TV channels given were RTM1, RTM2 and TV3. It was found that among these three channels, TV3 had the highest percentage of viewers compared to RTM1 and RTM2. Figure 8 indicated that 57 percent of the respondents watched TV3 prime time news while 22 percent watched RTM1 and 18 percent watched RTM2.

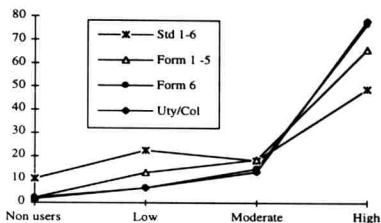
Figure 9: TV viewers among three channels



Media use with demographic variables

Education and newspaper use

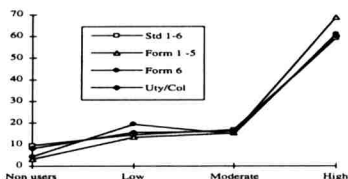
The study investigated the use of newspapers with educational level. Figure 10 indicated that newspaper use was high irrespective of levels of education but it was more evident that the highly educated were higher newspaper readers compared to the other levels of education. Despite the high use of newspapers, it was evident that among these high users the least users were those with the lowest education level (Standard One to Standard Six group).

Figure 10: Education and newspaper use

Education and television use

The pattern for television use and education was similar to newspaper use where high users of the medium were from all levels of education. The heaviest television use was among those who possessed Form 1 to Form level of education (see Figure 11).

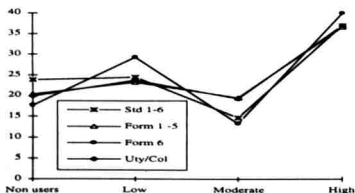
Figure 11: Education and television use



Education and radio use

Basically radio users were low compared with television and newspaper users as the pattern of radio use was totally different from newspaper and television. The non-users of radio for all levels of education were higher than the non-users for television and newspaper, but it increased for the high radio users (see Figure 12). The percentage of high radio use was not as high as the television and newspaper use.

Figure 12: Education and radio use

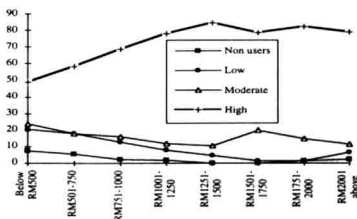


Income and newspaper use

The study investigated the use of media with the family income of respondents. It was generally assumed that respondents who had a higher level of income would be more likely to use the media more compared to respondents whose income were lower.

The study divided newspaper use as non-users, low , moderate and high users. The number of non-users for newspaper were very low compared to the high users. The percentage of high newspaper users were high and this cut across levels of income. The high users of newspaper began from those with RM500 and continued with the increase in income level. The range between the high users and the low and moderate users were very high (see Figure 13).

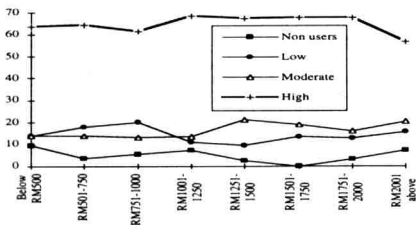
Figure 13: Income and newspaper use



Income and television use

The pattern for television use was similar to the newspaper where the high users were from all income level while the number of low, moderate and non-users was small (see Figure 14).

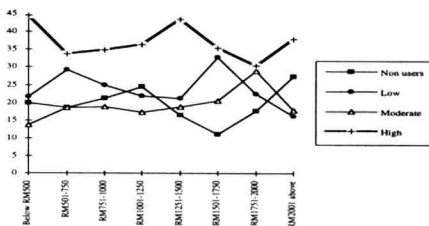
Figure 14: Income and television use



Income and radio use

When radio use was correlated with income, the pattern was slightly different from television and newspaper use. Non-users of radio were mainly from the low income group. Even among the high users of radio the percentage with high income were less than the percentage of high income for television and radio use. An analysis of radio use suggests that radio was not widely used across varying levels of income, and if the medium were used it was not used to the proportion of television and newspaper.

Figure 15: Income and radio use



Programs preference among respondents

The study asked respondents their choice of programs. Three program choices were given: politics and public affairs, sports and entertainment. The study found that the interest in the three programs were high, but interest in politics and public affairs was the highest (78 percent) followed by Entertainment (71.8 percent), finally sports (64 percent) (see Figure 16).

Respondents were also asked their attention toward political news. The question posed was the extent to which they gave attention to news from interpersonal sources or from media sources. Friends and family members were considered as interpersonal sources and media sources were from television and newspapers.

The study found that respondents were more attentive to political news from the media rather than from interpersonal sources. More than 60 percent of respondents were attentive to political news from television and newspapers but this percentage was less from interpersonal sources (see Figure 17).

Figure 16: Programs preference

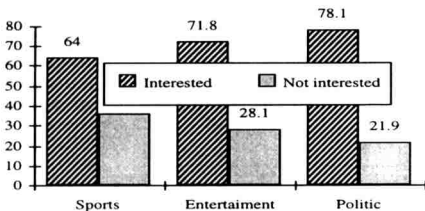
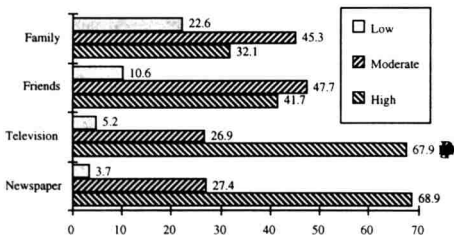


Figure17: Attention towards source of news



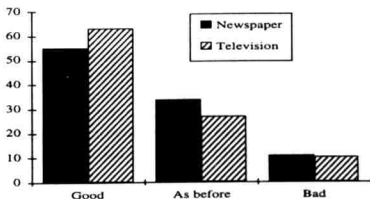
Reporting of Political News

Two questions were asked about political news in print and electronic media. The study wanted to know what respondents thought of political news in the media, namely whether the reporting of news was good, bad or as was before five years ago.

Figure 18 indicated that 55.3 percent thought reporting of political news in the newspaper was good compared to five years ago while 63.2 percent thought so of television. Only a small percentage said reporting of political news in both the media were bad compared to the situation five years ago. Respondents that stated that reporting of political news were bad was 10.8 percent in the newspapers and 10.0 percent in the television.

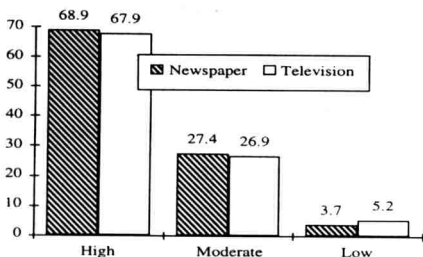
One in three said reporting was comparable to that five years ago. Among those who said that reporting of political news were the same as five years ago, 33.8 percent of the respondents stated this was so for the newspapers while 26.8 percent said it was for television.

Figure 18: Reporting of news in newspaper and television



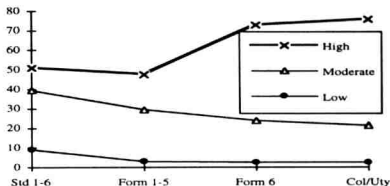
Apart from asking about the reporting of political news, respondents were also asked how much concentration they gave to political news from the newspaper and television. The concentration scores were ranked from high, moderate and low. Figure 19 indicated that the respondents gave high concentration to political news since they rated 68.9 percent for newspaper and 67.9 percent for television.

Figure 19: Political news attention and media use



Education level with attention to political news in Newspaper

The study investigated political interest with use of newspapers and level of education. It was found that interest in politics was high. The correlation with political interest, use of media and educational level was high, meaning that respondents who had high media use and high levels of education were likely to have a high level of political interest (see Figure 20).

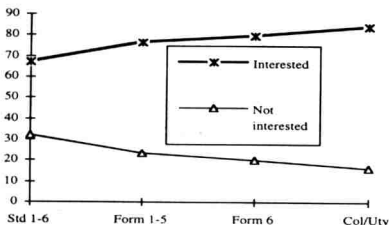
Figure 20: Education with political news in newspapers

Respondents whose political interests were low or moderate had lower use of television and their income were relatively lower.

Education with attention of political news in television,

A similar picture was obtained when political use was correlated with education and use of newspaper. The study found that political interest was highly correlated with educational level and use of television but respondents who had low political interest decreased with educational level and level of television use (see Figure 21).

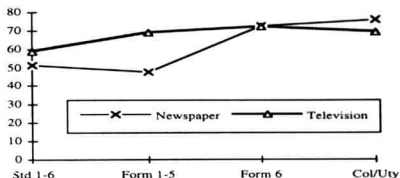
Figure 21: Education with attention of political newsin television



Education with attention towards newspaper and television political news

The study compared the levels of political attention with education in both newspapers and television. It was found that those who had a lower level of education had a higher level of attention to political news in television, but the higher level of political attention among the higher educated came from newspaper users than from television users (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: Education with newspaper and television



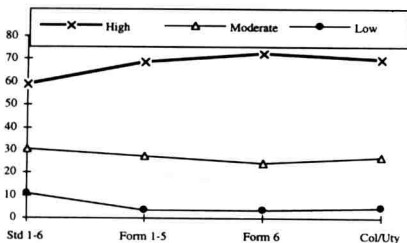
The difference in political attention and media use were more evident among the Form 1-5 group as they had a lower use of newspaper than the use of television. When the educational level increased there was more political interest among the newspaper users than with television users. From the Figure 22 one could infer that with a higher level of education the attention in political interest would be found higher among newspaper users than with television viewers.

Education level with political news interest

The study also investigated education and interest in political news. The question that the respondents were asked were the extent to which they were interested in political news.

Figure 23 suggested that political news was high among respondents, starting with slightly 60 percent among the lowest educated group (Standard 1 - 6) to slightly over 65% among the highest educated group (university graduates).

Figure 23: Education with political news interest



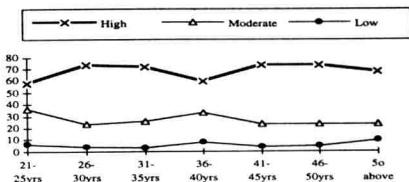
Respondents and interest in political news

Respondents with a low level of interest in political news were very low in percentage. The decline was evident among the college graduates.

Age group with attention towards political news in television

There was high interest in political use and this was constant across varying levels of age (see Figure 24).

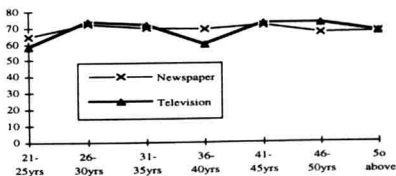
Figure 24: Age with political news in television



Age group with high attention towards newspaper and television political news

When the study compared high political interest with use of television and newspaper, the study did not find much difference. People with high political interests were high media users (see Figure 25).

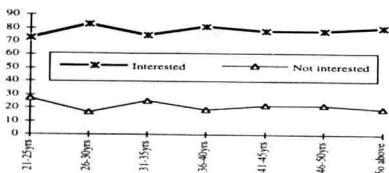
Figure 25: High user of newspaper and television and political news



Age with political news interest

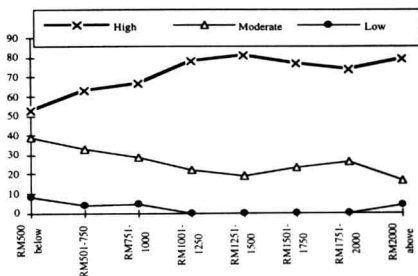
The study also looked at the relationship of age group and their interest towards political news. Figure 26 indicated that there was a similarity of all the age level where interest was concerned. There was a great difference between the interested groups and not interested groups towards political news.

Figure 26: Age with political interest



Income level with attention to political news in newspapers

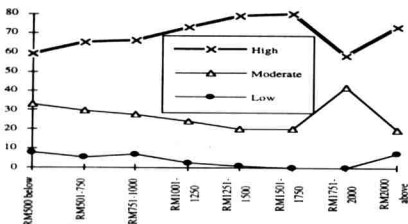
The relationship between income and attention of political news indicated that the higher the income the attention increased. While the moderate users and low users of newspaper indicated a decreased attention with the high income group (see Figure 27).

Figure 27: Income with attention towards political news in newspaper

Income level with attention to political news in television

The situation with television users was compared to newspaper users. The high attention increased significantly from the low income group to the group that received income between RM1501 to RM1750 but the attention decreased significantly with the income group that received RM1751 to RM2000. The attention increased again with income group above RM2000. Though the moderate users were low with their attention towards political news, the income group receiving RM1751 to RM2000 increased their attention (see Figure 28).

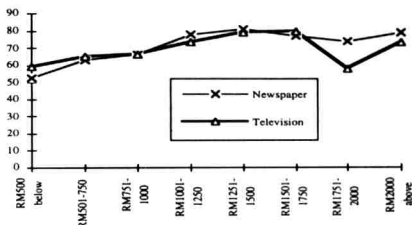
Figure 28: Income with attention to political news in television



Income with high attention to newspaper and television political news

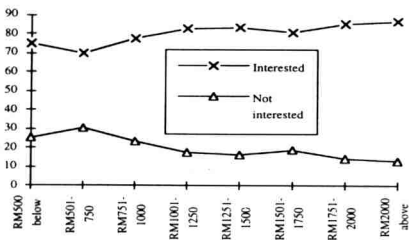
In comparing the high attention towards political news with the income group in television and newspaper, the significant difference occurred with the income group that received RM1751 to RM2000 where attention towards television decreased (see Figure 29).

Figure 29: Income with high attention to newspapers and television political news



Income level with political news interest

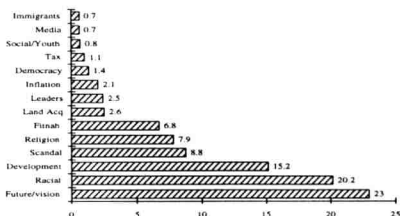
Figure 30 indicate the income level with interest towards political news. Generally, the interested group were high for all the income level as compared to those who were not interested towards political news. As income the interest towards political news increased.

Figure 30: Income level with political news interest

Political issues

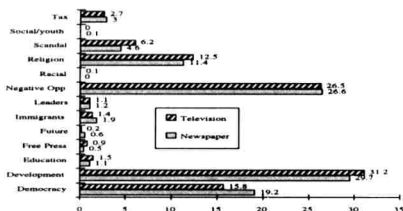
The study was interested to find out what respondents thought were issues that were raised during the election. Respondents were asked to mention one important issue that was raised during the election. The issues were ranked by the frequency of issues mentioned. This was an open ended question where respondents were free to indicate what they felt were political issues. The study received more than 30 different types of issues given by the respondents, but we grouped them into 14 categories. Figure 31 indicated that the country's future development (Vision 2020) and racial problems and issues were the most frequently raised during the election. Development issues were ranked third. Issues related to development, moral issues and religion were also popular issues. Other issues mentioned such as issues on illegal immigrants, media freedom, and inflation were numerically small in percentage.

Figure 31: Issues raised during election -stated by the respondents



Issues raised by the mass media

Respondents were also asked to think what issues were raised by the media during the election (see Figure 32). Numerous answers were given by the respondents as to the issues that were raised and reported by the Malaysian mass media during the election. The study collapsed the answers given into 14 categories. The highest issue reported by the respondents were related to development, followed by issues related to the opposition parties, religion and democracy in the country.

Figure 32: Issues raised in the mass media

There were some differences in how television and the newspapers reported the issues as perceived by the respondents. A total of 31 percent of the respondents said development issues were raised by television, while about 30 percent thought so of the newspapers. While the percentage of respondents were the same on the reporting on issues related to the opposition, respondents said that democracy was raised more by newspapers (19.2 percent) than by television (15.8 percent).

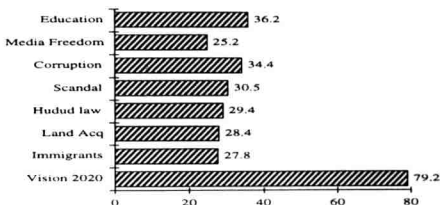
Political issues in the media

In studying the media content of political news, the researchers identified eight common issues that were frequently highlighted in the media. We asked the respondents to indicate which issue they thought were the most important/popular political issues that were raised by the media (see Figure 33). This was a close-ended questions and respondents were asked to indicate for each statement given on a scale of one to four which statement was important to them. The score of one was to indicate the most important, 2 important, 3 not important and 4 least important.

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A high of 79.2 percent of the respondents stated that issues pertaining to Malaysia's future development (Vision 2020) were raised by the media. Issues like education (36.2 percent), corruption (34.4 percent), morality issues (30.5 percent) and Hudud Law (29.4 percent) was low compared to issues on Vision 2020.

Figure 33: Issues indicated by the media



Comparing political issues identified as issues exposed by the media and issues suggested by the respondent themselves, this study showed that there was a significant difference between the two. Figure 32 indicated that Vision 2020 was the highest priority of the respondent that was similar to Figure 33. But issue on race, bad-mouthing, democracy and tax became part of the issues perceived as important by the respondents.

Relationship between issues and media

The study correlated the two sets of issues, one general issue being ranked according to frequency of mention and the other was by salience of the issue as suggested by their importance.

The issues were correlated with the issues reported by the media. For the newspapers we ranked issues by the frequency of issues reported. We also ranked issues by the salience given by the newspapers in terms of the score they achieved. We therefore had two sets of rankings, one given by frequency of mention and the other by the salience of the issues as initially given by the readers and that provided by the newspapers.

Relationship of issues and media use

We attempted to correlate some of the issues identified by respondents and their use of media. Although some of the issues presented were not regarded as important (see Figure 32 and Figure 33) they were presented to indicate their relationship with media use.

Religion

Religion was a clear issue in Kelantan and in Terengganu (and in Kedah and Perlis). The question related to Hudud and the issue of which party better championed the cause of Islam was keenly debated during the nine day campaign.

Religion and media use

Three types of media use were correlated with the religious issue. In Figure 34a, the issue on religion stated by the respondents had a low relationship with all the three media. Religion was not regarded an issue by the frequent users of television, radio or newspapers. For non-users of media, especially the non-users of newspapers, the relationship

between the respondents and religious issue was comparatively high. Figure 34b showed a different relationship of religion with the media. As indicated in figure 34b, the higher media exposure the relationship became lower.

Figure 34a: Religion and media use

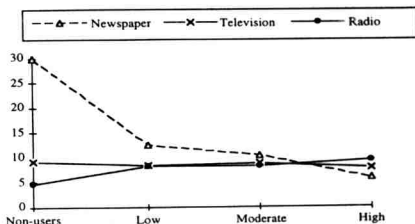
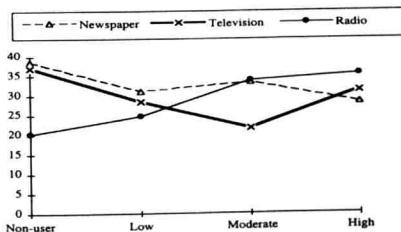


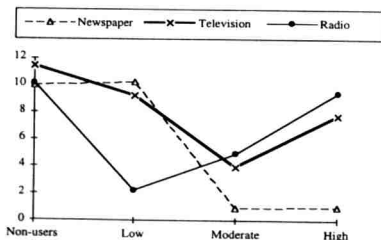
Figure 34b: Religion (reported) and media use



Mudslinging and media use

Another issue by the respondents (although not a big issue) was bad mouthing or mudslinging among politicians. Our observation was that bad-mouthing among politicians came not only through the media but also through 'ceramah'. There was a mixed relationship between this issue and media users. Again, the non-users of the media had a significant relationship with this issue. The issue in the newspaper was high for the low users and the relationship became low with moderate users of the newspaper but it gradually decreased with the high users. This observation clearly identified that the more the issue was being read, the relationship became less significant. But, for both the electronic media (TV and radio) the situation was different. The relationship of the non-users was high and it was low with the less frequent users. The relationship became higher with the moderate users and it increased with the frequent users of both media (see Figure 35).

Figure 35: Mudslinging and media use

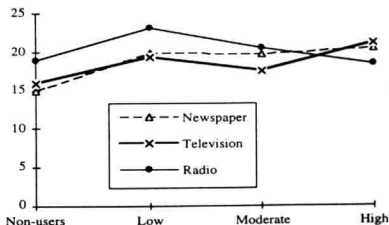


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Racial issues and media use

Racial issue was sensitive to Malaysians. Therefore the relationship between media use and the issue was assumed to be high. This study found that the non-media users identified the racial problems more than the frequent users of media. Among the frequent media users, the newspaper users identified racial issue as the least compared to the radio and television users. Figure 36 suggested that media users did not regard race as a major issue during the election campaign

Figure 36: Racial Issues and media



Corruption and media use

During the election campaign, opposition parties used a lot of corruption issues against BN leaders. Before the election campaign several BN leaders were reported by the media of their involvement in corruption. The most recent was Melaka's Chief Minister, Rahim Tamby Chik, who was charged for being corrupt.

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This study showed a different perspective of relationship between media and corruption issues. Figure 37a indicated that non-users of the media had a very low relationship with this issue. For the low users the relationship increased and the relationship continued to increase for the moderate users; but the relationship decreased as media use increased.

In another situation when corruption issue as indicated in the media was correlated with media use the relationship showed a different perspective.

Figure 37b indicated that the non-users for newspapers had a high relationship with the issue; but the relationship decreased when they were low users and began to increase with moderate users and frequent users of newspapers. The condition was similar with television users. The radio users differed whereby the relationship of non-users and the issue was low and it increased from the low to moderate users ; but it decreased for the frequent radio users.

Figure 37a and 37b indicated a reversed situation of media use and issue. Figure 37a indicated that the corruption issue stated by the users had a significant relationship among the moderate media users (4 to 5 days); but the issue declined among the frequent media users. Corruption was not a big issue among the non-media users.

The situation differed for issue that was indicated by the media itself. Figure 37b indicated that newspaper and television did have a relationship between media use and the issue whereby the relationship increased as the use increased. Radio use , however, suggested a reversed situation.

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Figure 37a: Corruption and media use

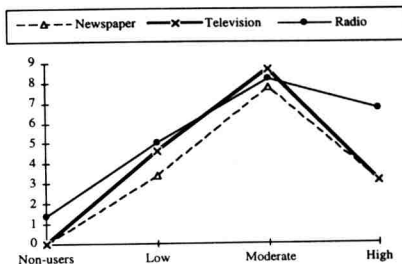
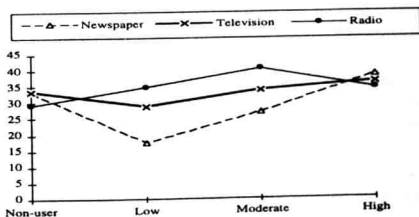


Figure 37b: Corruption (reported) and media use



Moral issues

UMNO and PAS faced two issues related to morality. The then Chief Minister of Melaka, Datuk Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik, who was also UMNO Youth leader, was alleged to be involved sexually with a minor. The story dragged in the press from late 1994 until his resignation as Chief Minister and also as Head of UMNO Youth. The moral issue relating to Datuk Rahim was not highlighted during the election campaign in the mass media because the resignation was made months before nomination. Datuk Abdul Rahim was not nominated to stand as a candidate. He now faces trial on several counts of corruption.

Mohamad Sabu, PAS Deputy Youth leader, was found in a room with a married woman, but was acquitted by the Syariah Court in Kota Bahru. Both were caught in a hotel room on 31 January 1995. The court case itself brought negative publicity to the party that thrived on moral issues. Party officials alleged Mohamad Sabu was framed.

When the issue was related to the media use, the study found little difference between this issue and media use. The correlation indicated that the higher the media use the higher was the relationship with the issue. The non-users had a high relationship with the issue but the low users were low. The relationship became higher with the moderate users of the media and it increased with the frequent users of the media. This condition occurred with all the three media (see Figure 38a and Figure 38b).

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Figure 38a: Moral issues and media use

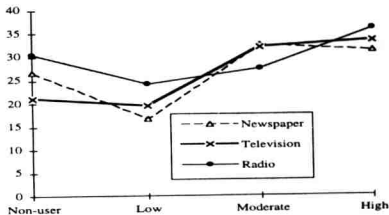
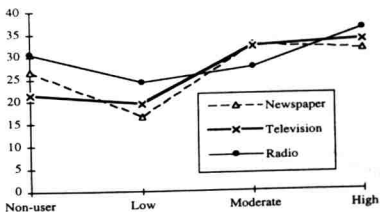


Figure 38b: Moral or scandal issues (reported) and media use



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Vision 2020 and media use

Malaysia has set an objective for the year 2020 entitled 'Vision 2020' during which time the nation would achieve a developed status. The Prime Minister introduced this idea of Vision 2020 for Malaysia's future development. In our study we found that the correlation was only significant for the moderate radio users but for other media the relationship began to decline as the usage increased. This relationship was illustrated in Figure 39a where there was a low relationship as the usage of television and newspapers increased. In Figure 39b where the issue was reported by the media, the relationship was significantly different with issue that was given by the respondents as in Figure 39a. The relationship of the non-users for all the media was high in the beginning but it tapered to 80 percent horizontally for all media users (see Figure 39b).

Figure 39a: Vision 2020 and media use

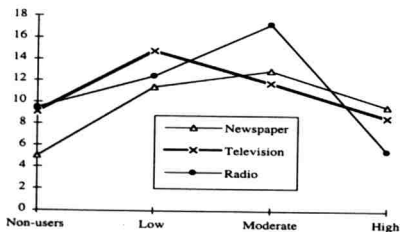
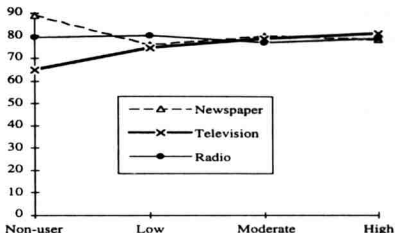


Figure 39b: Vision 2020 (reported) and media use



Land acquisition

Under the Land Acquisition Act 1961, state governments were empowered to acquire land for the purpose of development. They could acquire the land for the state or acquired it on behalf of another party. Using the Act, state governments had acquired land for various projects, but two projects in Kedah and Melaka sparked a series of controversies that aroused much media attention.

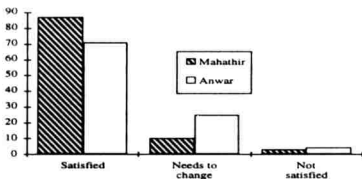
In Kedah, the state government acquired land in Kerpan and in Melaka was the Tanah Merah, Pantai Kundor.

Land acquisitions by the state governments were also taken strongly by Semangat 46 and PAS leaders, but the Prime Minister's earlier statement that the government would take another look on the matter seemed to have diminished its political importance.

Political leaders in the media

Respondents were also asked about political leaders as highlighted in the media. The two most popular leaders that respondents identified were the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. A question asked whether they were satisfied with the leadership of Dr. Mahathir Mohamed and Anwar Ibrahim. There were four categories of answers given, namely respondents were very satisfied, satisfied, that the leadership could be improved or they were not satisfied. Figure 40 indicated that the respondents were satisfied (combining very satisfied and satisfied) over their leadership especially for Dr. Mahathir (87.1 percent) and Anwar Ibrahim 70.9 percent.

Figure 40: Leadership of Mahathir and Anwar



Mahathir and Anwar with newspapers

The study correlated the popularity of both the leaders with media use among respondents. When correlated with the newspapers, Dr. Mahathir was given a satisfactory response. The correlation was high for non-users (70.0 percent) and it

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increased with the low users and continued to increase for the moderate users then the graph slightly declined for the high users. Respondents that stated that Dr. Mahathir's leadership could be improved or that they were not satisfied with Mahathir's leadership were very low for all the users (see Figure 41).

The research found a different situation for Anwar Ibrahim where (See Figure 42) the satisfied respondents were low among the non-users but this increased for the low users then slightly decreased for the moderate users. It again increased with the high users. Respondents that indicated that Anwar's leadership could be improved were high for the non-users while it increased for the low users and the situation became static with the moderate and high users. Those who were not satisfied with Anwar were low for all the users.

Figure 41: Mahathir with newspapers

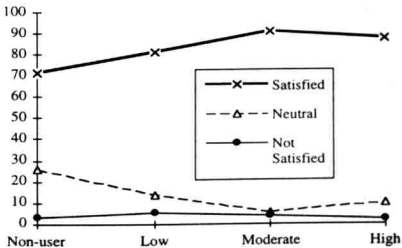
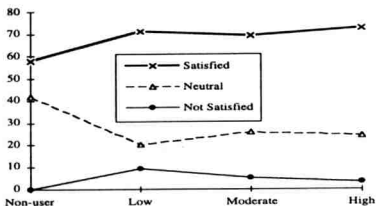


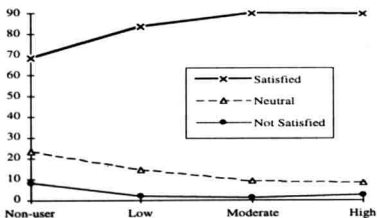
Figure 42: Anwar with newspapers



Mahathir and Anwar with television use

There was a high response of satisfaction among television users for Dr.Mahathir's leadership. All the non-users and the users of television stated a high relationship with Dr.Mahathir's leadership (see Figure 43).

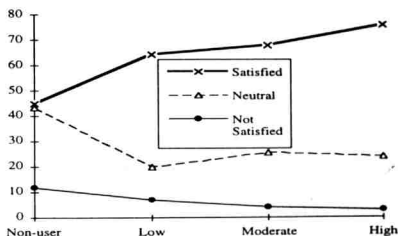
Figure 43: Mahathir among television users



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Figure 44 indicated the pattern for television viewers towards Anwar Ibrahim's leadership. The satisfied respondents were the frequent users of television and the least satisfied were the non-users. The pattern for those who expressed that Anwar's leadership could be improved and who were not satisfied with his leadership were somewhat mixed.

Figure 44: Anwar among television users

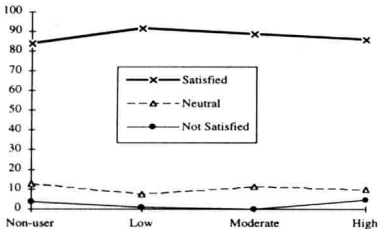


Frequent television users were generally favorable toward Anwar's leadership. Even among the non-television users, more than 40 percent of them expressed satisfaction with his leadership.

Mahathir and Anwar with radio

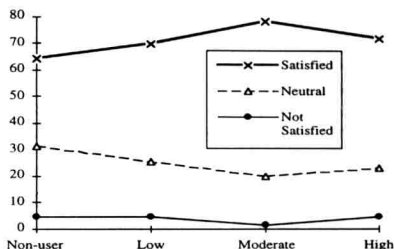
Even though use of radio was low among Malaysians, the study found that the respondents as radio users were satisfied with Dr.Mahathir's leadership. The range between the total respondents who expressed that there were grounds for improvement and those not satisfied respondents as against those who were satisfied were very wide (see Figure 45).

Figure 45: Mahathir with radio Users



The pattern differed somewhat for Anwar Ibrahim. The range of respondents who were satisfied and those who were not satisfied with his leadership were higher compared to the answers given in the case of Dr. Mahathir (see Figure 46).

Figure 46: Anwar with radio users



The correlation for all the three media with these two popular leaders indicated that the users of the media were satisfied with their leadership even though there were respondents who expressed an improvement in leadership and those who were not satisfied. The pattern for all the various media users of the media was somewhat similar. Low users of media were generally ill disposed toward the leadership of Dr. Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim but among the media users, especially among the moderate users, there was more appreciation for their leadership.

Political leaders with their values

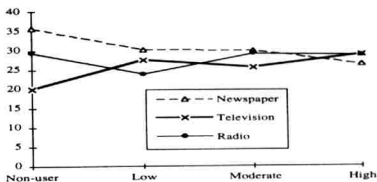
The respondents were given an open ended question to evaluate political leaders of their values as leaders in Malaysia. These values were quoted by the respondents themselves. The research had selected the most popular indicators of the values and correlated them with Dr. Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim and media use. Therefore, the relationship was between these two leaders in each media (newspapers, television and radio) with the values indicated.

There were several values indicated by the respondents but these were the most common values listed by the respondents. The values were religion, bravery, responsible, fair, vision, calibre, friendly, negotiable, educated, good personality, known internationally, good image and popular.

Mahathir with bravery and media use

Bravery was one of the value for political leaders. The correlation for Dr. Mahathir was high for the non users of the newspapers but it decreased with the low users and became lower with the low users and decreased with the moderate users and continue to decrease with the high users. The relationship for Dr. Mahathir and bravery with television uses was low for the non-users but it increased with the low users and a slight decreased with the moderate users and increased again for the high users. The use for radio was high for the non-users and increased again for the moderate users (see Figure 47).

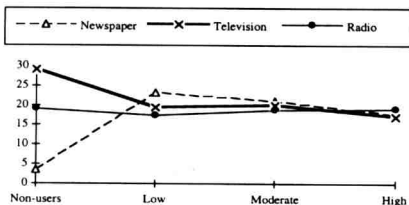
Figure 47: Mahathir with bravery in media use



Mahathir 's calibre and media use

Another leadership value indicated by the respondent was calibre. When this value was correlated, newspaper use had a low relationship with the non-users but it increase with the low users and continued to decrease with the moderate and high media use. The situation differed with the television users where the non-users were high but low with the low users and a slight increased with the moderate users. The high users were lower than the moderate users. Radio users were different from television and newspapers. The non-users were high and a slight decreased with the low users but increased with the moderate users. The high users were higher than the moderate users (see Figure 48).

Figure 48: Mahathir's calibre and media use



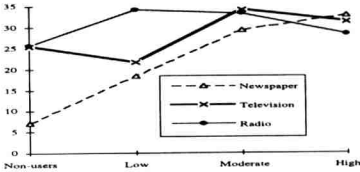
Mahathir with vision and media use

The country's Vision 2020 was highly associated with Dr. Mahathir. The relationship of newspaper usage with vision for Dr. Mahathir was low for the non-users but it increased with the low users and continued with the moderate and high users. Therefore, the higher the newspaper users, the higher the relationship.

The condition with the television users were a bit different. The non-users were high but the relationship decreased with the low users. The relationship increased with the moderate users and slightly decreased with the high users.

The non-users for radio were similar with non-users of television but this increased with the low users and slightly decreased with the moderate and high users (see Figure 49).

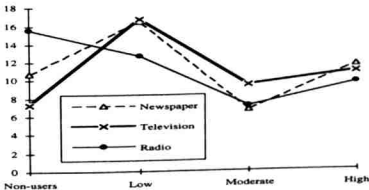
Figure 49: Mahathir with vision and media use



Mahathir being friendly and media use

Figure 50 indicated the relationship of Dr. Mahathir and the leadership value of friendly. Dr. Mahathir was low for the non-users of newspapers and television but the relationship went up for the low users when media was correlated with this value. The pattern changed for the moderate users because the relationship went down but increased for the high users of television and newspaper. The non-users for radio had a high relationship but it decreased from low to the moderate users. The pattern changed for the high users of radio where the relationship increased again.

Figure 50: Mahathir being friendly and media use



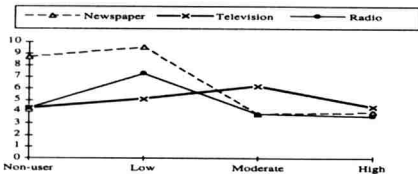
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The value of 'friendliness' appears among the low users of newspapers and television compared to the other users.

Anwar being religious and media use

Religious value for leaders in Malaysia is strongly related to the people of Malaysia. The relationship was high in all the three media for Anwar Ibrahim. The newspaper had the most usage compared to the other two media but the relationship became lower for the high users. This pattern was similar for all the media for Anwar where the relationship became lower as the usage increased (see Figure 51).

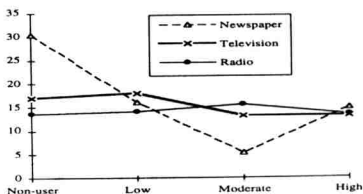
Figure 51: Anwar being religious and media use



Anwar being friendly and media use

The pattern for Anwar was different for each media as a person who was regarded as friendly. The newspaper was high for the non-users and it went down from low to moderate users but the relationship increased with the high users. Television and radio did not have much difference except the non-users were high and the relationship was almost monotonous for the low, moderate and high users (see Figure 52).

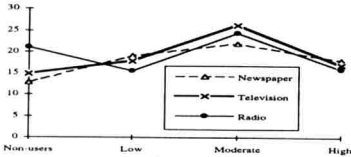
Figure 52: Anwar being friendly and media use



Anwar with good personality and media use

The relationship for all the three media were similar in accepting Anwar Ibrahim as being friendly. The moderate users had the highest relationship compared to the non-users, moderate and high users in looking at Anwar as a friendly personality. The non-users of the newspaper were low and it increases with the low users and continued to increase with the moderate users, but the relationship decreased with the high users. The television users were similar with the newspaper users. The relationship for the radio users were a bit different. The non-users of the radio were high but it went down with the low users and increased with the moderate users. The high users of radio were low (see Figure 53).

Figure 53: Anwar with good personality in media use

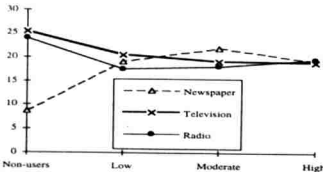


Anwar's calibre and media use

The relationship for television and radio users were similar when calibre correlated with Anwar Ibrahim. The non-users for these two media were high in their relationship but decreased with the low users and continued to decrease with the moderate users in the acceptance of Anwar's calibre. The relationship for the high users of television and radio were slightly increased.

The non-users of newspaper were low but increased with the low users and continued to increased with the moderate users. There was a slight decrease with the high users of newspaper.

Figure 54: Anwar's calibre and media use



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There were a mixture of relationship between media use and leadership values with Dr. Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim. As indicated earlier, there were several leadership values stated by the respondents. These values were selected and correlated with these two leaders, based from the percentage given by the respondents for all levels of users were considered high. The percentage given for other indicators of the values were low.

Importance and frequency of political news by media users

The study also asked respondents what were the important and frequent news that often appeared in television and newspapers during the election campaign. Figure 55 indicated the breakdown of the news according to the most popular and frequent news in television. The most important and frequent were news on mudslinging (26.2 percent and 28.5 percent); second, were news on peace (17.4 percent and 14.6 percent); and third, were on development (13.1 percent and 14.5 percent).

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Figure 55: Importance and frequency of news in television

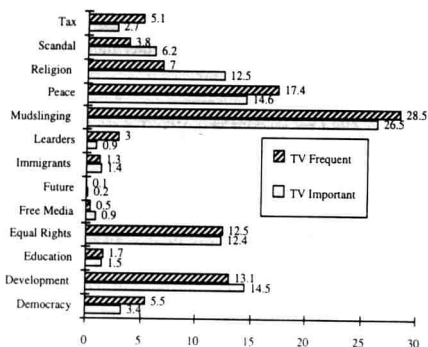
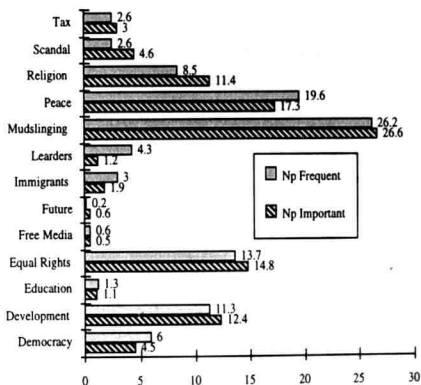


Figure 56 indicated the importance and frequency of news in newspapers during the election campaign. Similar to television news, the most and frequent news that appeared on newspaper were mudslinging (26.6 percent and 26.2 percent); second, were news on peace (17.3 percent and 19.6 percent); and third, news on equal rights (14.8 percent and 13.7 percent).

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Figure 56: Importance and frequency of news in newspaper



There were not much difference between television and newspaper where important news were concerned during the election campaign. Figure 56 indicate that television had a little bit more news as compared to newspapers on news related to political issues.

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Figure 57: Importance of news in television and newspaper

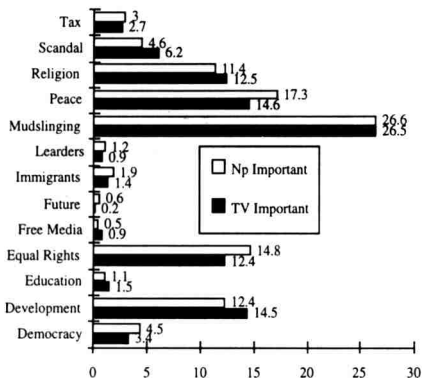
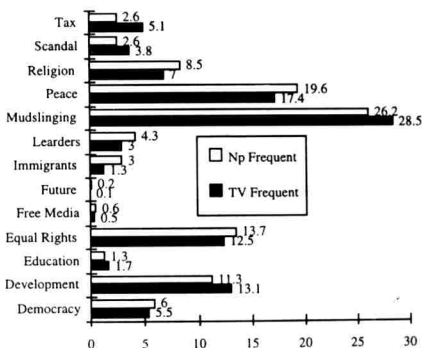


Figure 58 indicated a reverse of important news where newspapers cover the issues frequently as compared to television except for mudslinging, development, scandal and sex.

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Figure 58: Frequency of news in television and newspaper



Television and newspaper use with news

The study also looked at the relationship of the usage of television and newspaper and the important and frequent issues stated by them. The correlation would indicate the significant relationship of television and newspaper usage.

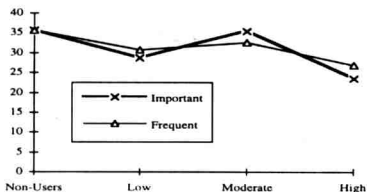
Television use with mudslinging

Mudslinging was the most important and frequent news that appeared on television. The pattern for important and frequent news among television viewers were similar. The

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non-users were high and the relationship decreased for the low users but increased for the moderate users. The relationship decreased again with the high users (see figure 59).

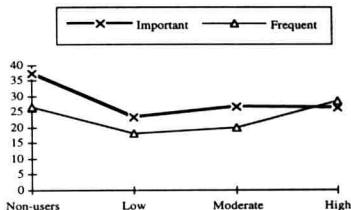
Figure 59: Television use with mudslinging



Newspaper use and mudslinging

Mudslinging was also the important and most frequent news that appeared in newspaper. The pattern for newspaper usage and this news differed from television. The news was considered important rather than frequent by all the users. The non-users stated that it was important but decreased for the low users and slightly increased for the moderate and high users. The frequency of the news was high for both the non-users and high users (see Figure 60).

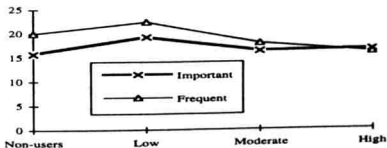
Figure 60: Newspaper use and mudslinging



Television use with peace

News about peace was more frequent than regarded as important by the users of television. The non-users of newspaper were high and the relationship increased with the low users but the relationship decreased with the moderate and high users. The pattern was similar with respondents that stated that peace was important (see Figure 61).

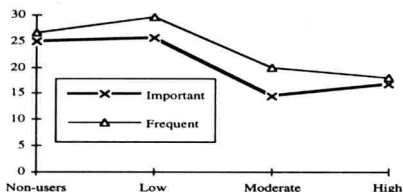
Figure 61: Television use and peace



Newspaper use and peace

The newspaper users had a reversed pattern towards peace. Though, the pattern for the newspaper users and the relationship were similar, the news on peace was more frequent and important. As Figure 62 indicated, for both, important and frequent, the non-users were high and the relationship increased with the low users and it continued to decrease with the moderate and high users.

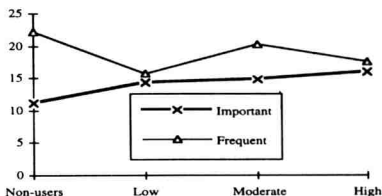
Figure 62: Newspaper use and peace



Television use and equal rights

Respondents regarded news on equal rights were more frequent than important of the news. The non-users of newspaper had a high relationship but decreased with the low users of newspaper. The relationship increased with the moderate users but decreased with the high users. The news that were stated as important, had a different pattern. The non-users were low but the relationship continue to increase as the usage increased (see Figure 63).

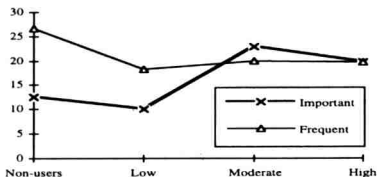
Figure 63: Television use and equal rights



Newspaper use and equal rights

Newspaper users had a different pattern with regard to equal rights as an issue. Though, the news on equal rights were stated as more frequent but the importance of the news became higher with the moderate and high users. The importance of the news were low with the non-users and low users while it was stated as more frequent with the non-users and low users (see Figure 64).

Figure 64: Newspaper use and equal rights



Television use and development

Development news was one of the news stated as important and frequently appeared on both media. The pattern for both media were similar where the non-users were high and the relationship decreased with the low and moderate users. The high users both media were were high (see Figure 65 and Figure 66).

Figure 65: Television use and development

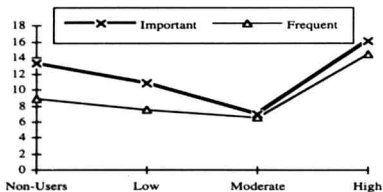
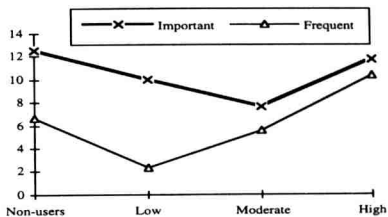


Figure 66: Newspaper use and development



Part 3

Concluding Remarks

The study began by positing several questions related to the recent Malaysian election. The study was interested to know the issues raised by the media during the election, the issues that were considered important by respondents, and how these issues were related to media use among Malaysians. A survey was made on 979 respondents throughout Malaysia to obtain the answers to the questions that were raised.

The 1995 election gave another mandate of BN governance; to continue with its performance, to provide continuity and stability to the country, to cater for the needs of everyone for a place in the Malaysian sun. It was an election that saw the electorates transcending racial lines to vote for the party. It was an election that saw the highest number of women's candidates contesting federal and state seats.

The BN obtained more than two-thirds of the seats in Parliament. The majority votes BN obtained was an achievement that the leaders were proud of. Yet it failed to capture the state of Kelantan although it did manage to obtain two federal seats.

The opposition parties fared worse off than their performance in 1990. There was no unity or understanding among themselves as they did in 1990. The opposition parties would have to take a hard look at their campaign strategies as

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they prepare to do battle in the next election. They would be several actions to be done. DAP said it lacked personnel and funds during the 1995 election. (Sun, April 27, 1995). DAP had always lacked personnel and funds in the previous elections. This is a structural weakness that it had to overcome.

Two DAP party supporters announced their resignations because they disagreed with the party's strategy to have for its slogan full liberalization during campaign. Dr. Kua Kia Soong, Deputy Chairman of Selangor and Lee Ban Che, a Central Executive Committee member, submitted their resignation letters in late June 1995. (NST June 26, 1995). Asking for full liberalization when the government under BN was seen to be more liberal than the past two years did not go down well with the Chinese voters.

Taking on Dr. Koh Tsu Koon was also regarded as a mistake by some party supporters. By taking on Koh Tsu Koon, Lim Kit Siang spent much his time in Penang and could not afford to campaign in other areas. DAP's image as a national party was dented as it was looked upon as a state party.

The practice of DAP to change their members of parliament and state assemblymen and asking them to contest in other areas did not fare well. Voters had to get used to new faces and names although the symbol was still DAP. It also placed much stress on former MPs and state assemblymen as they had to fight in yet another constituency and thus were not able to help their colleagues.

Perak DAP offered the following as reasons for its defeat :

- * Big turnout of younger voters, especially first timers, who tended to be complacent and materialistic;
- * Sense of euphoria among urban dwellers who gave little regard for issues like corruption and abuse of power;
- * The party's lack of manpower, money and other resources;

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- * Poor turnout of voters in the Chinese-majority areas; and
- * Late start for their candidates who knew of their selection only at the last minute.

PAS attributed its loss of two parliamentary seats and seven state seats in Kelantan to "BN's smear campaign against Nik Aziz himself, bribery of voters, lack of accurate media coverage, and the role of postal votes" (Sun, April 27, 1995). It also attributed its loss to the changes made in the constituencies.

The defeated candidates have not given up hope. Those who lost by small margins are of the opinion that their loss could be due to miscounting. Thus National Gerakan Wanita Deputy Chief, Rhina Bhar, filed an election petition in the High Court on June 23, seeking for a recount and scrutiny of all the ballot papers cast in the April election for the parliamentary seat of Jelutong. The Jelutong seat was won by Karpal Singh of the DAP by polling 21,898 votes. Rhina Bhar obtained 21,613. Lim Cheak Kow, a candidate from PBS, polled 425 votes with 914 spoilt votes (NST, June 24, 1995). Rhina Bhar lost her case.

Earlier, the BN candidate, Dr. Lee Chong Meng, the candidate for Bukit Bintang sought a declaration that the DAP candidate Wee Choo Keong, was not properly elected as Wee was fined RM7,000 by the Federal Court on April 14 for contempt of court. He won the case and now stood as an elected representative.

Media had been blamed for the poor support among the opposition parties. DAP described the inability of the DAP to communicate with the populace through the media as being one of the reasons that the party was not able to put across its ideas and explain its policies as a reason for its dismal showing. DAP National Chairman, Dr. Chen Man Hin, claimed to have lost the Rasah parliamentary seat because of the television blackout of his campaign.

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The Parti Rakyat Malaysia party also cautioned voters that the government would misreport statements of the opposition to throw them in bad light (Sanusi, 1995). Lim Kit Sang said that the media would initially provide good coverage to the opposition parties but toward the end of the election, the media would discredit them.

PAS said that both the electronic and the print media were not being fair to the opposition parties. PAS leaders were alleged to have been the subject of adverse reports in the vernacular press. The party also said that editors were given the go-ahead to print negative news about the opposition parties so as to damage them (Harakah, 5 Mei 1995).

The alliance between DAP and Semangat 46 in Gagasan Rakyat and the alliance of Semangat 46 with PAS caused some image difficulties among the strong DAP and PAS supporters. When the Kelantan government wanted to implement the Islamic hudud criminal code in the state this demolished the alliance as DAP made its clear that as a party that stood for secular laws it could not accept the hudud law. On the other hand when it was voted in the Kelantan legislative assembly all the members including representatives from BN and Semangat 46 voted in its favor.

Another issue that caused a split among the Semangat 46 and the DAP was on the royalty issue. In 1993 the Federal government introduced a law in parliament to withdraw the immunity of rulers. The law was supported by DAP but it was opposed by Semangat 46.

If issues distanced DAP and Semangat 46, the concern between DAP and PAS was basically based on principles. Both would not compromise the fundamental belief; PAS stood for the Islamization of the country while DAP opposed it and called for the maintenance of secular laws.

Media Use

Several studies mentioned earlier had found that the electorates obtained information from the mass media for them to make their voting decision. Media dependence for voting choice was possible because of the high penetration of media in those societies. Among the media that the electorates were dependent upon were television and newspapers; with television being more useful than newspapers toward the end of the campaign period.

In the case of Malaysia, the present study found that there was a high penetration of media in society either in the form of television or newspapers and to a limited extent, radio. While newspapers and television were used by a wide section of the population throughout the country, radio was an urban phenomenon among the younger group than the other age groups.

Malaysians used television and newspapers to obtain information. The higher the levels of income and education the higher was the use of television and newspaper. Between television and newspapers, Malaysians, in general, were more inclined to use television than the printed media as a source of information. Among the higher educated group, newspapers were more used than television. The non-users of radio, however, were highest compared to newspapers and television.

When comparison was made among the three channels, the study found that the sum total for people who used TV3 far exceeded the combined use of TV1 and TV2. TV3 was therefore the most popular television channel among Malaysians.

In the case of newspapers, the most popular choices were in Bahasa Malaysia (Berita Harian and Utusan Malaysia) followed by the English and the Chinese dailies.

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Program Choice

This study found that more Malaysians were interested in politics and public affairs compared to the level of interest shown in entertainment and in sports.

Political news in Malaysia became popular during the election period as Malaysians were concerned over the political situation in the country. They became interested to know the issues raised during the campaign either in ceramahs or in the mass media. Our study on the politics for the 1995 election started sometime in October and we were able to understand the issues that were raised before the start of the actual campaign period. But generally Malaysians were already cultivated to become ready for the impending election.

Several weeks after the election, political news took a back seat over other news events. Economic matters, international or social events captured more attention than political matters as the election campaigns became a memory of the past.

Attention to Politics and Sources

During the election period, Malaysians showed keen interest and were attentive to political news. It was found that respondents were attentive in obtaining political information from the media rather than from interpersonal sources. The percentage of respondents who were attentive to political news from the newspaper was slightly higher than those who were more attentive to news from television.

One reason for the heightened interest and attention to political news in the mass media was that for several months prior to the campaign period, there were already speculations in the press and among Malaysians of the coming election. In fact the election was held in Malaysia before the end of the five year period; usually at the end of the fourth year in office.

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It appeared to Malaysians that dissolution of parliament was delayed due to the scandal allegation involving the Chief Minister of Melaka, for without the issue, election would be held in late 1994 or in early 1995.

The interest and attention given to the media were possible because of the short election period. In the United States and in other countries where election campaigns were long and tedious, there was a limit to the attention that audience members could give to political issues. In Malaysia, the rather short campaign duration allowed voters to devote their time to the issues raised. It was for this reason that mass media became used as the main source of information for political news.

The short campaign period and the dependence on media did not allow for extensive debates among the fence sitters if one were to premise the argument that campaigning was the only source of information that enable voters to make their judgment. In the coming study (to be published soon), we have found that voters make up their decisions on candidates and party months ahead of nomination or, at the latest, a day after nomination. We are left to ponder other possible use of the media among the electorates when media are not used as a basis for voting decision.

Issues Raised

The study found that respondents perceived several issues that were raised during the election. One set of issues were perceived as personally relevant and important to them. Another set of issues were those raised by the mass media. To the respondents there was not much difference between frequency or salience of the issues raised in the mass media during the election. Respondents also said that there was no difference in the frequency and salience of the issues raised among different types of media.

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The future development of the country as reflected in Vision 2020 was perceived personally as an issue that was raised during the election. This issue was also felt by respondents as an important issue that was raised by the media. For that matter development of the country and the future direction of the country was the twin issues perceived personally as an important election issue or that raised in the media.

The issues perceived personally as important and the issues raised by the mass media differed after the issue related to development and the future direction of the country. Other issues were considered relevant and important to respondents but these were different from the issues that respondents perceived were raised by the mass media. For example, race as an issue was still considered an important issue raised during the election. This might come about from the ceramahs that they attended or the interpretations they gave to the events during the election. Thus a total of 20 percent of the respondents thought race was an important issue after future development of the country.

The second issue that respondents perceived as important raised by the mass media was matters related to the opposition (parties or personalities). One out of four respondents asked said the issue was raised by television or newspapers.

The third issue that was personally felt as important or relevant to respondents was development but the third issue raised by the mass media were questions related to democracy or the governance of the country. The category "democracy" was wide, but it included matters pertaining to the kind of governance, the threat posed and the development of the country's system of government. This issue was raised more by the newspapers than by the television.

Pattern of media use

The study found a high correlation of several socio-demographic variables with media use. Education and income levels were highly related with high media use. Attention toward political news in the newspapers and television was also highly correlated with education and income levels.

Levels of socio-demography were also correlated with attention and interest toward political news in both television and newspapers. Nearly two out of every three respondents gave high attention to political news in the media. Respondents still had confidence on political reporting by the media, especially by television, but only one-third felt that reporting of news was comparable to that five years ago.

Media use and issues

When media use was related to the various issues, two trends emerged. one trend was that the issues were less regarded by respondents whose media use was most frequent. This implied that these issues became to be of less concern to the frequent media users but they were regarded by a high percentage of the non-media users. The more frequent the media use the less was the issue of concern to them. we posited an explanation that these issues were so often being reported in the media that over a period of time their novelty wore off among the frequent media users. Satiation sets in. Furthermore, these issues were those that were regarded as concrete issues, namely issues that were personally felt by respondents. Examples of concrete issues were matters related to employment, economics, race problems. Even the Vision 2020 objective as a novelty wore off among the frequent media users.

The Vision 2020 objective and Development matters were two issues that caught the imagination of Malaysians during the election. Given the political stability and the

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economic being of the country, Malaysians were attracted to the vision and the situation of society in the the future. It was something that Malaysians aspired to look and hoped for. Media articulated the political views of the country's future. Ordinary Malaysians, much like the media, welcomed the future of Malaysia as a developed nation status by the year 2020.

On the other hand when the issues of political leadership were asked, respondents were likely to know the quality of leadership through the media. Two leaders asked were Dr. Mahathir Mohamed and Anwar Ibrahim. Both leaders were highly regarded by respondents, irrespective of race or gender. The higher the use of media, the more likely did the respondents provided attributes of the qualities of these two leaders.

When scholars assume the role of media as a provider of knowledge, many assume that the higher the use of media the higher would be the level of knowledge. The premise would be extended to political knowledge and ability to discern election issues. The present study found that knowledge of concrete issues tapered off with the greater use of media. A plausible explanation for this occurrence was that respondents simply got tired of hearing, reading and listening to the same issues over and over again in the media. Admittedly respondents knew of these issues, but they did not classify them as important issues during the election.

Another finding was that media issues and issues personally perceived by respondents were not similar, except for the issue on development and the vision for the country to be an industrialized society by the year 2020 (Vision 2020). Other issues were different. This raised another question as to whether media were setting the agenda for the respondents to the agenda set by the media and the other was the agenda set by the respondents. In the case of the media agenda, not all the issues were sources for the public to think about.

Discussion

Media were instrumental in bringing about certain issues to the attention of the public thus enabling them to make voting decisions. Any research on the effects of media on voting decision should take a longer period of time as studies had indicated that people make up their minds many months before the actual election date. Studying media performance during the campaign period was to understand how some of these election issues became intensified while other issues were nullified. Political issues developed months prior the election campaign.

As issues developed over a long period of time, the media cultivated the low and moderate users of audience members rather than the frequent media users who, according to this study, became satiated with the continued drumming of concrete issues. Certain issues became more known among non-media users than the media users. Nevertheless these issues were subordinated to two other main issues. The situation was different over Vision 2020 and Development matters as respondents really attuned themselves to these two issues. In fact media's role in projecting the country's future through the concept and good values of Vision 2020 and the development of the country coincided with the articulated opinion of Malaysian voters of what they wanted of their nation to be in the future. These two issues could perhaps be a key factor to account for the good performance of Barisan Nasional during the 1995 election given the prevailing mood of the people then.

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