



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***MEDIATING ROLE OF CIVIC TALK ON RELATIONSHIP OF NEWS  
CONSUMPTION AND SENSE OF CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY AMONG  
YOUTH***

**TILAGAVATI A/P SUBRAMANIAM**

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By

**TILAGAVATI A/P SUBRAMANIAM**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**December 2020**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**TILAGAVATI A/P SUBRAMANIAM**

**December 2020**

**Chairman : Associate Professor Jusong Bolong, PhD**  
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Sense of civic responsibility is fostered and developed through frequent involvement in sharing civic knowledge and solving social problems, individually and collectively. In other words, a citizen who has attained a sense of civic responsibility would be more responsive and supportive of developmental efforts at all levels (i.e., social and political). Hence, this sense of civic responsibility is widely recognised as an important stepping-stone towards becoming a productive citizen in the future. Past studies have shown that various factors impact the youth's willingness to inculcate a sense of civic responsibility. This research attempts to clarify the influence of news consumption from a variety of media and civic talk on the sense of civic responsibility.

Using self-administered questionnaire, 300 final year undergraduates' students from three Research Universities (RUs) participated in a cross-sectional survey. Sampling method used for the population of this study was stratified systematic sampling. All variables were tested for validity and reliability in a pilot test prior to the field data collection. Descriptive analysis and the Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares were employed for data analysis.

The result show that news consumption had no significant positive correlation with sense of civic responsibility, but civic talk had a strongly significant and positive effect on news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Civic talk fully mediates this relationship. The variance value explains an adequate sense of civic responsibility and civic talk in this study. The predictive power ( $Q^2$ ) of the hypothesised relationship was strong, as it was above the cut-off point (zero) for sense of civic responsibility and civic talk. Therefore, the current study has predictive relevance values for its endogenous constructs. From a predictive viewpoint, the model in this study could be considered beneficial for the youth to develop a better sense of civic responsibility.

One significant contribution of the study findings is that it has clarified the role of civic talk in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. A respondent with a low level of news consumption seemed to benefit from civic talk involvement and this influenced the development of his sense of civic responsibility. This result is a pertinent input that could be used to ensure a good educational outcome for students, particularly to develop a sense of civic responsibility in them.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERANAN KOMUNIKASI SIVIK SEBAGAI MEDIATOR DALAM  
HUBUNGAN ANTARA PENGGUNAAN BERITA DAN RASA  
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Rasa tanggungjawab sivik dipupuk dan dikembangkan melalui penglibatan yang kerap dalam berkongsi pengetahuan sivik dan menyelesaikan masalah sosial, secara individu dan berkumpul. Dengan kata lain, seorang warganegara yang telah mencapai rasa tanggungjawab sivik akan lebih responsif dan menyokong usaha pembangunan di semua peringkat (iaitu sosial dan politik). Oleh itu, rasa tanggungjawab sivik ini dilakukan secara meluas sebagai batu loncatan penting untuk menjadi warganegara yang produktif pada masa akan datang. Kajian lepas menunjukkan bahawa pelbagai faktor mempengaruhi kesediaan remaja untuk menanamkan rasa tanggungjawab sivik. Penyelidikan ini cuba menjelaskan pengaruh penggunaan berita dari pelbagai media dan komunikasi sivik terhadap rasa tanggungjawab sivik.

Borang soal selidik digunakan ke atas 300 mahasiswa tahun akhir dari tiga buah universiti awam. Kaedah persampelan yang digunakan untuk populasi kajian ini adalah persampelan sistematik berstrata. Semua pembolehubah diuji kesahihan dan kebolehpercayaan dalam ujian rintis sebelum pengumpulan data lapangan. Analisis deskriptif dan Pemodelan Persamaan Berstruktur berdasarkan varians digunakan untuk menganalisis data.

Hasil kajian menunjukkan penggunaan berita tidak mempunyai hubungan positif yang signifikan dengan rasa tanggungjawab sivik, tetapi komunikasi sivik mempunyai pengaruh yang sangat signifikan dan positif terhadap penggunaan berita dan rasa tanggungjawab sivik. Komunikasi sivik berperanan sepenuhnya sebagai mediator dalam hubungan ini. Nilai varians dalam kajian ini menjelaskan rasa tanggungjawab sivik dan komunikasi sivik memadai. Perkaitan ramalan ( $Q^2$ ) hubungan yang dihipotesiskan adalah kuat, kerana berada di atas titik pemotongan (sifar) untuk rasa tanggungjawab sivik dan komunikasi sivik. Oleh itu, kajian ini mempunyai nilai perkaitan peramalan

yang sesuai untuk membina pemboleh ubah endogen. Dari sudut pandangan ramalan, model dalam kajian ini dapat dianggap bermanfaat bagi para remaja untuk mengembangkan rasa tanggungjawab sivik yang lebih baik.

Satu sumbangan penting dari hasil kajian menjelaskan peranan komunikasi sivik dalam hubungan antara penggunaan berita dan rasa tanggungjawab sivik. Seseorang responden dengan tahap penggunaan berita yang rendah nampaknya mendapat manfaat daripada penglibatan komunikasi sivik dan ini mempengaruhi perkembangan rasa tanggungjawab siviknya. Hasil kajian ini merupakan input yang relevan yang dapat digunakan untuk memastikan hasil pendidikan yang baik bagi siswa, terutama untuk mengembangkan rasa tanggungjawab sivik pada mereka.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MSD	Media System Dependency Theory
CIT	Communication Infrastructure Theory
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
TV	Television
NYDP	Malaysia National Youth Development Policy
MYP	Malaysia Youth Policy
MM	Mainstream media
NMM	Non-mainstream media
CT	Civic Talk
NC	News Consumption
SCR	Sense of Civic Responsibility
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
UM	Universiti Malaya
Ru	Research universities
KTDI	Kolej Tun Dr Ismail
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
CB-SEM	Co-variance-based approach
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling
ML	Maximum likelihood
LV	Latent variable
CA	Cronbach's alpha



CR	Composite reliability
AVE	Average variance extracted
ASTRO	ALL-Asian Satellite Television and Radio Operator
BERNAMA	Berita Nasional Malaysia
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CNN	Cable News Network
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
AUCCU	University and University Colleges Acts



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Students that graduate from a university should have gained important experiences, including a sense of civic responsibility. Civic responsibility is a vital social element that ensures a properly functioning democracy and a healthy pluralistic society. According to Gurin, Dey, Gurin, and Hurtado (2002), there are two dimensions to educational outcomes: learning and democracy. Learning outcomes focus mainly on academic-related outcomes such as active thinking skills whereas democratic outcomes focus on the characteristics that students should have as members of a pluralistic world. This study investigates student development, especially the relationship between news consumption in inculcating a sense of civic responsibility while considering the possible mediating role of civic talk in this relationship. This chapter covers the background of the study, the problem statement, objectives of the research, and the significance of the study.

### **Background of Study**

Scholars have argued that a sense of civic responsibility contributes to improving life quality (Nurhadi & Muchtarom, 2020; Halberstadt, Timm, Kraus, & Gundolf, 2019; Huda, Teh, Muhamad, & Nasir, 2018). They also consider this value as one of the essential elements of a democratic society. It is widely assumed that a sense of civic responsibility is fostered and developed through frequent involvement in sharing civic knowledge and solving social problems, individually and collectively. The term “civic” refers to public life in general. If a person actively takes action to address community issues and problems, such as attending a community meeting, volunteering, or raising money for charity, he or she is considered to be a good citizen. Sense of civic responsibility could also be perceived as a personal investment in the wellbeing of others and society as a whole. In other words, a citizen who has attained a sense of civic responsibility would be more responsive and supportive of developmental efforts at all levels (i.e., social and political). Hence, this sense of civic responsibility is widely recognised as an important stepping-stone towards becoming a productive citizen in the future.

A productive citizen is a person who has successfully embraced his sense of civic responsibility and feels that he belongs in his community. It is, therefore, crucial to promoting a sense of civic responsibility among the youth, to ensure true values of civic responsibility can be instilled in them from a very young age. The youth is the nation’s greatest asset. They are expected to continue to lead the country to future success. They are also the driving force that ensures that the country progressively develops.

Various factors impact the youth's willingness to inculcate a sense of civic responsibility. Previous studies have found that curricular and co-curricular activity (Tamam & Waheed, 2019; Cole & Zhou, 2014; Gainous & Martens, 2012; Denson & Zhang, 2010), the institutional environment (Packard, 2013; Park, Denson, & Bowman, 2012; Bowman, 2011), and peers (Colvin, Volet, & Fozdar, 2014; Brennan, Osborne, & Osborne, 2008) were the main determinants of sense of civic responsibility in youth. It is supposed that exposing the youth to news from various media could increase their involvement in society.

The consumption of news from the mass media could result in the mobilisation of information (Bakker & Vreese, 2011), besides providing resources for political discussion (Dauda, Mohamad, & Muda, 2016), the possibilities to be exposed to conflicting viewpoints (Boulianne, 2016), and increased opportunities for audiences to reflect on political and civic activities (Pancer, Pratt, Hunsberger, & Alisat, 2007). News media are significant sources of learning and socialising, which, in turn, influence attitude and behaviour (Tamam, 2016).

Since Malaysia's independence five decades ago, the mainstream news media has been functioning as an agent and partner in nation-building (Tamam, Raj, & Govindasamy, 2012). Malaysians have a strong interest in reading, listening to, watching, and discussing news (Ming, Azhar, Hazri, & Mulakala, 2012). From live breaking news to daily news summaries, Malaysians want to be well informed of the goings-on of their town, city, country, and the world. However, innovations in communications technology have rapidly changed news consumption practices, with people obtaining incidental news from social communication technologies.

Reuters Institute Digital News Report (2018) published that social media and aggregators are the main sources of news nowadays, followed by TV and print. Malaysia is no exception: a plethora of studies have indicated the changes in the news consumption pattern of young adults — from traditional media towards digital media — largely from social networking sites and Internet websites (Freeman, 2013; Amirfarhangi, Sidin, & Ahmad, 2015; Hashim, Noordin, Husain, & Rahman, 2016). These social communication technology platforms provide Malaysian youth with the opportunity to participate in socialisation and democratisation.

Media news consumption will directly or indirectly contribute to the youth's social expectations, cultural norms, inter-ethnic tolerance, attachments to national ethos, and national pride (Sparks, Wang, Lü, & Wang, 2016; Metzger, Syvertsen, Oosterhoff, Babskie, & Wray-lake, 2016; Oosterhoff, Metzger, & Babskie, 2015; Chan-Olmsted, Rim, & Amy Zerba, 2012, Tamam, 2011). Citizens obtain information regarding issues and problems plaguing the community alongside exploring new opportunities and ways to take part in social, political, and economic issues. Drawing on updated information about society from the news, these individuals will then provide their friends with information and influence them to engage in the community. The basic cornerstone of

any democracy is its active citizens, and mass media serves as a critical driver of civic engagement (Zhang, Zheng, & Peng, 2017).

Additionally, it is undeniable that news consumption through a variety of media promotes better social interaction among youth. Nowadays, the youth are used to sharing current issues obtained from the news media with families and friends. At the same time, they tend to have a shared opinion about society. Interactions between family and friends could open up a space for the youth to share and trade information, deliberate on issues plaguing the community, and explore how they can be active participants in the community. This social discussion will bring about a deeper sense of attachment to the community (Klofstad, 2009; Ksiazek, Malthouse, & Webster, 2010; Rojas, Shah, Cho, & Schmierbach, 2005). In this study, the quality interaction between family and friends regarding civic engagement is termed 'civic talk'. Thus, involvement in civic talk is assumed to help youth understand news content and to keep them interested in and aware of the current social, political, and economic climate in society (Kligler-Vilenchik, 2021; Pinetta, Blanco Martinez, Cross & Rivas-Drake, 2020). To delve more into the impact that news consumption poses on instilling a sense of civic responsibility, the present study hypothesised civic talk as a mediator of this relationship.

This research attempts to clarify the influence of news consumption from a variety of media and civic talk on the sense of civic responsibility. Review from ProQuest journals, Scopus, Sciencedirect, Taylor & Francis online, and SAGE Journals from 2015 to 2020 shows that very limited empirical studies have attempted to integrate civic talk as an intermediary in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among graduating university students. These databases were chosen because they are considered highly relevant for researchers in social sciences.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the importance of inculcating a sense of civic responsibility as a possible educational outcome in the now-globalised world, empirical evidence on the link between frequent news consumption and sense of civic responsibility is scant, particularly within the Malaysian context. The news in the media is regarded as a salient source of information (Reese & Shoemaker, 2016). News is also a socialising agent and a resource for development, with a major influence on attitude and behaviour. Furthermore, the key roles of news media are to impart the right knowledge, attitude, and behaviour, in line with the notion of responsible citizenship, civility, and harmonious multi-ethnic society. A few local studies have focused on news consumption, but most focused on studying social outcomes such as political participation (Alivi, Ghazali & Tamam, 2018; Willnat, Wong, Tamam & Aw, 2013), civic engagement (Amirfarhangi et al., 2015), national pride (Tamam, 2011), ethnic tolerance (Tamam, Tien, Idris, & Hamzah, 2006), and volunteerism (Rabun, Hussin, & Ridzuan, 2017; Raja-yusof, Norman, & Abdul-rahman, 2016). Nevertheless, Western countries have begun to conceptualise the effect of youth engagement with news media on political and civic engagement (Zhang et al., 2017; Beam, Hutchens, & Hmielowski, 2016; Ha et al., 2016),

with findings showing a significant positive association between news consumption with civic and political engagement.

The contribution that news consumption has on the quality of university graduates i.e. their sense of civic responsibility has not been studied extensively (ProQuest journals, Scopus, Sciencedirect, Taylor & Francis online, and SAGE Journals 2015 – 2020). Indeed, a few studies in western countries (Molyneux, 2019; Ku, Kong, Song, Deng, Kang, & Hu, 2019; Moore & Hatcher, 2019) have stated news consumption equips a person to participate in civic life. In general, previous local studies placed more focus on media use (Alshuaibi, Alshuaibi, Shamsudin, & Arshad, 2018; Ting, Ahmad, & Sophia, 2018). However, these studies were conducted in mutual exclusion and did not attempt to narrow down on the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility, particularly in the context of a multicultural and multi-religious society such as in Malaysia. Hence, to help fill this gap in literature, this research is aimed at investigating these two variables and their subsequent inter-relationship. By doing this, this study will help current literature by shedding light on the nature of the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among university graduates.

Higher education institutions are the best places to raise awareness and educate the youth on their role in society and community development (Lu, Laux, & Antony, 2017). Higher education institutions are entrusted to facilitate the development of a sense of civic responsibility among students. The higher education sector's main goals are not limited to grooming students for successful careers but to help shape and fit them into a citizenry with public good in mind as well. Malaysia's Minister of Higher Education has continuously demanded universities and colleges to produce highly qualified graduates that can serve the society; therefore, prompting institutions of higher learning to reconsider fostering a deeper sense of civic consciousness among university graduates. Developing civic responsibility among students allows higher education institutions to fulfill their basic mission, which is to prepare the students to become good citizens upon graduation.

Nevertheless, the National Indicators of Malaysia indicate that community engagement among the youth has declined. Many studies (Galiberti, 2019; Alias & Balakrishnan, 2016) have demonstrated that plenty of youth are less engaged in social issues and have become passive spectators. Maher (2016) showed that 60 percent of the youth in Malaysia are not interested in joining any civic activities and would declare that they had participated in these activities for assignment or credit requirement purposes only. Lack of awareness and consent about society is reason youth are not engaged in community activities (Yahya, 2020). Generally, the participation of university students in community engagement is still low although they have been exposed to theoretical and practical community courses. According to Rozumah, Sheereen, Najiha and Syuhaida (2015), Tamam (2016), and Tamam and Waheed (2019), little is known about the extent to which civic responsibility is instilled within the youth.

The fact that the education system has succeeded in producing youth who are knowledgeable and are experts in technology, but less involved in the community, is quite telling (Huda, Jasmi, Alas, Oodriah, Dacholfany, & Jamsari, 2018). The reduced community engagement could foster youth that is violent and less humane, becoming the root cause for their engagement in negative attitudes such as participating in crime, vandalism, and bullying, all of which are very worrying. According to Shaari, Sarip, Rajab, and Wan Zakaria (2018), lack of involvement in the quality of life in the community foster university students to become less empathetic and immoral. Hence, this sense of civic responsibility is yet to gain traction in higher education students, the pioneers of society's future, thus creating a gap in the literature. Thus, this study aspires to help fill this void by identifying the level of civic responsibility among students in higher education.

To deepen our understanding of the relationship between news consumption and civic responsibility, an assumed mediating variable, civic talk, was integrated into this relationship. Tamam (2016) found that university students preferred getting news from interpersonal sources. Past studies in Western countries have indicated that the effect that news consumption has yielded on several democratic outcomes is not as straightforward as assuming that it can potentially be mediated by civic talk, yet not many studies have looked into the role of civic talk to mediate this relationship. Findings from past studies have also indicated the potential role of civic talk as a mediator in civic engagement; however, it has not particularly been tested for the above relationship. Ibrahim (2017) argued that civic talk helped individuals deepen their attachment to the community, which then extended to more active civic participation. However, past studies have yet to integrate news consumption and civic talk in one cohesive analysis that aims to predict civic responsibility among the youth, inclusive of the ones in tertiary education, so this case is another remarkable gap that requires to be addressed. Thus, the current research is aimed to empirically test civic talk as a mediating variable in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

University students are of particular relevance to this study because university life is an important time to foster student connections with civic life in the communities surrounding them (Shaari et al., 2018). Besides, the news media is full of opportunities for university students to explore and develop their connection to society. Moreover, tertiary education students are the best representation of young people's accessibility to news media and the effects that news consumption has on their voluntary sense of civic responsibility.

Therefore, this present study shed a better light on news consumption, sense of civic responsibility, and civic talk among graduate students. Understanding the potential influences of the above factors on the youth's sense of civic responsibility could be useful for educators, the community, and policymakers. As argued, it is important to instill a sense of civic responsibility in the youth to ensure they become good citizens. Also, emerging adults need to become involved in community activities, so they can nurture positive social skills while still in university.

## **Research Questions**

Drawing on the aforementioned discussion of the research problem, the following questions hold:

1. What is the level of news consumption among youth in Malaysian public universities?
2. What is the level of sense of civic responsibility among youth in Malaysian public universities?
3. What is the level of civic talk among youth in Malaysian public universities?
4. What is the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among youth in Malaysian public universities?
5. What is the relationship between news consumption and civic talk among youth in Malaysian public universities?
6. What is the relationship between civic talk with sense of civic responsibility among youth in Malaysian public universities?
7. Does civic talk mediate the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility?

## **Research Objectives**

### **General objective**

This research is aimed at examining the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among youth in three public universities in Malaysia, as well as exploring the role of civic talk, an assumed mediating variable, in the aforementioned relationship.

### **Specific objectives**

1. To identify the level of news consumption among youth.
2. To identify level of sense of civic responsibility among youth.
3. To identify the level of civic talk among youth.
4. To determine the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among youth.
5. To examine the relationship between news consumption and civic talk among youth.
6. To determine the relationship of civic talk with sense of civic responsibility among youth.
7. To examine whether civic talk partially or fully mediates the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.



## Significance of Study

This study is instrumental because no study has yet investigated the role of news consumption and civic talk in instilling and cultivating civic responsibility among students, especially within a Malaysian context. This study was conducted among final year undergraduate students. Three higher educations with distinct student compositions were chosen as the location of the study. Therefore, the contributions of this study will provide insight into the sense of civic responsibility among university students who are about to graduate, against the backdrop of a multicultural society. Therefore, the settings of this study will improve the generalisability of the findings.

Several Western studies have been conducted on news consumption and civic talk separately within different democratic outcomes; however, the current research investigates three variables (news consumption, civic talk, and civic responsibility) in a single study, and provides two novel contributions to the literature presented as an overview of student engagement and campus diversity. First, it examines news consumption and sense of civic responsibility, an under-explored area in campus diversity research, particularly in Malaysia. Second, this study attempts to shed a light on the role of civic talk as an intervening variable in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Besides, this research also focuses on sense of civic responsibility, which is an important element that the youth should have gained throughout their campus life.

The result of this study can theoretically confirm the applicability of the Communication Infrastructure Theory albeit in a different context. The Communication Infrastructure Theory is originally a socio-ecological theory that was later embedded with the Media System Dependency (MSD) theory to investigate the relationship between mass media and individuals based on the reciprocal relationship, of individuals, communities and communication environments. The Communication Infrastructure Theory was integrated into this study to analyse the development of sense of civic responsibility thus demonstrating the heuristic value of this theory.

Using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), this research methodologically helps overcome limitations found in other analysis methods more frequently used in Social Science research. This analysis focused on the predictive ability of the model. PLS-SEM is able to consider the effect of measurement errors by directly including measurement error variables. Therefore, conclusions about the relationships between constructs will not be biased because of the measurement error. Furthermore, the use of other analytical methods may lead to hazier conclusions, needing few more levels of analyses.

Furthermore, higher education institutions primarily aim to ensure that their graduates are prepared to serve the community. Students are national assets, so higher education institutions hold a pivotal role in preparing educated students to become efficient and

capable of serving the society. The outcomes of this study allow the higher education sector to evaluate its basic mission, which is to produce graduates who will be good citizens.

The research finding is useful as input for higher education practitioners and policymakers, especially in providing a larger angle of looking at the effect of news consumed from a variety of media — whether it strengthens or weakens the sense of civic responsibility among the youth. Hence, the findings of this research clarify the significant role of news consumption, sense of civic responsibility, and civic talk as pillars of student development in Malaysia. This study may stand to contribute to national stability in the long run by underscoring how nurturing students would result in more responsible citizens.

### **Scope of Study**

This dissertation is aimed at investigating the sense of civic responsibility among university students in Malaysia. Thus, the research scope has been narrowed down to local undergraduate students enrolled in public universities. Public universities were selected rather than private institutions because the author wanted to access different student ethnicities for the study. Since the enrolment of students in the research universities is centralised and controlled by the Ministry of Higher Education, the population of the students in these institutions represent all ethnicities in Malaysia (Sherif & Abdullah, 2017).

Only final year undergraduate students were recruited as the respondents in this study. This group is preferred in this study, as they have extensive experiences with the university curriculum and co-curriculum and because they are about to graduate, so they should be prepared to serve the community (Majid, Hassan, & Hassan, 2019). This group of the students are well equipped by university to face challenges and take responsibility in the society. Ergo, their well-educated youth who will take over the country leadership in the future.

Since the data for this study was gathered from graduating students wholly from three public universities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Malaya (UM), any generalisation from the findings should be made with caution, as the targeted respondent group of university students may not be the best representatives of the entire Malaysian youth population. Moreover, youth who are uneducated or who have abstained from pursuing education as well as students from private institutions may have dissimilar levels in their sense of civic responsibility and news consumption level.

## Definitions of Keywords

**News consumption** — This independent variable refers to the exposure and attention to news content for either social or personal purposes through perusing diverse media platforms such as television, newspaper, the Internet, and radio. News media have a part to play in the learning and development resources of educational activities, to educate young people about interethnic relations issues and to strengthen the unity and harmony among different ethnicities (Tamam, 2016).

**Sense of civic responsibility** — This dependent variable is defined as an individual's personal beliefs and feelings regarding their responsibility and duty to society. This sense of civic responsibility develops from the student's positive experience and socialisation in the classroom and outside the classroom in diverse learning settings.

**Civic Talk** — This mediating variable refers to informal discussions regarding current events and community issues with friends, colleagues, family members, and other individuals. Civic talk can be considered as a form participation that involves conversations regarding news perused from a variety of media that also has the potential for shaping opinions.

**Undergraduate students** — This refers to local (Malaysian) students undertaking a Bachelor's Degree programme, regardless of their field and year of study, at the three study locations.

## Summary

This chapter provided some background of the gaps in research and knowledge contributions that have fuelled the researcher's motivation in conducting this study. The research problem discusses the importance of exploring the impact of news consumption and civic talk on developing an individual's degree of civic responsibility. Inculcating a sense of civic responsibility is a salient educational outcome, but the development of this outcome has been scant within the Malaysian higher education context. Given the gap found in local literature that discusses civic responsibility development, this research conducted an empirical test to study the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility, mediated by civic talk. The scope of this research is limited to final year undergraduate students currently enrolled in three Malaysian public universities. Next, Chapter 2 delves into the relevant literature that has informed the research framework.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The current chapter provides the synthesis of the literature which has guided this study. It starts with a critical review of the key variables. The review of the literature then forms the conceptual framework of the study, leading to the formulation of the research problem, the research questions, the research objectives, and finally the hypotheses.

The changes in socioeconomic and technological patterns of society have caused a shift in the younger citizen's mentality to feel less inclined towards an obligation of civil participation in conventional ways while gravitating towards issues connected to lifestyle values, ranging from moral issues to environmental quality (Ahrari, Othman, Hassan, Samah, & D'Silva, 2014). As discussed, there is no shortage of research pointing out that the youth are now less involved in community life more than ever before (Carpini, 2004; Putnam, 2000; & Wilkins, 2000). Therefore, it is imperative to understand the factors that could increase civic engagement among citizens. A few scholars have suggested using the mass media to disseminate news to promote public involvement among the youth (Gil de Zuniga & Valenzuela, 2012; Halpern, 2013; Ponnann & Ali, 2015). Mass media and civic scholars have recommended that news consumption using a variety of media is an important area that needs to be researched to build community involvement (Chan-Olmsted et al., 2012; Sparks et al., 2016).

There are some studies that have explored the effect that interpersonal communication has on the association between news consumption and civic engagement ( Ekström & Östman, 2013; Gil de Zuniga, Bachmann, Hsu, & Brundidge, 2013; Levinsen & Yndigegn, 2015; Beam et al., 2016). Interaction among peers and family also play a vital role in developing community engagement (Klofstad, 2010).

The volume of empirical research done to study the relationship between news consumption and a sense of civic responsibility is currently limited (Boyd, Zaff, Phelps, Weiner, & Lerner, 2011; Salzman, Ph, & Salzman, 2014). Furthermore, the role of civic talk in the context of this relationship has not been fully explored (Klofstad, 2010; Ekström & Östman, 2013).

Therefore, this study explores the influential nature of civic talk in mediating the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. This chapter defines the literature on sense of civic responsibility with a focus on community involvement. Then, the discussion shifts towards establishing the role of news consumption and civic talk in fostering civic responsibility.

## **Malaysia Policies and Initiative concerning nation development and civic responsibility**

Malaysia is an independent and a sovereign country. Malaysia is recognised as a multi ethnic and multi-cultural democratic country. Malaysia's population in 2020 is estimated at 32.7 million. The Malaysia population comprised 69.6% bumiputra, Chinese 22.6%, Indian 6.9% and others 1% (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). Malaysia achieved independence in 1957 and formed Malaysia including Sabah and Sarawak in 1963. Since 1950 with the end of the colonial administration, the Malaysian government had embarked on numerous development programmes (Andaya & Andaya, 2016). These programmes were framed to solve the various social and economic problems and accelerate the development of the country.

In this regard, Lee and Chew- Ging (2017) asserted that the development planning in Malaysia can be divided into three phases. The first phase is the pre-independence phase when the then Malaya was under British colonial administration until 1957. The second phase is the post-independence until 1970 when the First Malaysia Plan ended. The third phase is the consolidation phase which began after 1970 with the introduction of the New Economic Policy. The development planning has been divided into these three phases because each phase contains different forms of development and orientation. During the colonial era, the development plans were articulated by the British colonial administrators. After independence, development planning was framed by the local leaders with foreign advisers.

The riot in May 1969 is an important incident called governments to pay attention social development (Shamsuddin, Liaw, & Ridzuan, 2015; Ravallion, 2019). Consequent to the incident, The National Ideology (Rukun Negara) was introduced (Adil, 2019). Formulated in 1969, it incorporated the national ideology and philosophy as a basis for national unity. This ideology forms the basis for the development of a socio-economic foundation which could provide viable and equitable participation of the Malaysian society in the socially responsible development process (Mansor, 2020).

The policy believed will bring the social harmony and well-being to the multi-ethnic society (Ali, 2020). Unity and responsible citizen are the foundation for the progress and development of a nation. It is the cornerstone in the of any form of success. The government has introduced the National Ideology (Rukun Negara) to create productive citizen among all ethnicity in Malaysia in order to build a peaceful and progressive nation (Kee & Nie, 2017).

Further, Malaysia government and leaders have introduced plethora of policies, visions, ideologies, concepts and activities to united different ethnic groups and to shape a responsible citizen. Some important policies, visions, ideologies, concepts and activities are like vision 2020, introduced by Malaysia's fourth Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. The vision 2020, specified nine requirements that Malaysia needed to

achieve: to be ethnically united, psychologically liberated and secure, democratically mature, moral and ethical, tolerant, scientifically advanced, have a family-based welfare structure, equitable growth and a prosperous economy (Saadatian, Haw, Mat, & Sopian, 2012).

To further strengthen the moral value in the society, improve well-being of the community and to encourage spirit of responsible members of society, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (5<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Malaysia) launched National Integrity Plan in 2004. Additionally, 1Malaysia concepts for unity and solidarity have been propagated by Malaysia's sixth Prime Minister for the purpose of nation building. 1Malaysia is an idea to promote multi-ethnic society as one functioning nation without assimilate or eliminating their background of diverse cultures and traditions (Wan & Sirat, 2018).

Not only that, Malaysia government have outline social development policies to contribute towards nation's social stability and to create socially sense citizen. Social development policies are like, National education policy to enhance quality of society through education (Jelas & Mohd Ali, 2014). Education policy in Malaysia is always being changed from time to time in order to meet the current and future demands. Some other policies under the social development policy are National culture policy, National family policy, National women policy and National youth policy. These policies are introduced to create healthy life, awareness of the country, nationhood and nationalism.

The Malaysian government's recognition of the importance of youth to the country was initially expresses as their role future leaders (Krauss, Collura, Zeldin, Ortega, Abdullah, & Sulaiman, 2014). While several programs implemented for youth to develop responsible citizen, political awareness and leadership development. The flagship programs to create awareness of the country, nationhood and nationalism among the youth includes Rakan Muda program, National Youth Service (PLKN) and Bina Negara program. Later in 2018, National Youth Service (PLKN) and Bina Negara program demolished by the administrative party. In Malaysia, program like Rakan Muda have been mould today's youth to achieve excellence in order to support and contribute to the community and the country (Manaf, Mohamed, Sabtu, 2019; Hamzah & Suandi, 2015).

Basically, government have initiative various policy to create and enhance civic responsibility among the public especially youth (Yacob, Assim, & Jusoh, 2020; Hassan & Abdullah, 2018). The civically responsible citizen is important to political stability, economic development and social harmonious (Chan & Mak, 2020; Chee, 2020; Lee, Eric Krauss, Suandi, & Hamzah, 2016). Therefore, the idea of promoting civic responsibility is uncertain from young age among the Malaysian (Evans, Evans, & Vemic, 2019; Ismail, Othman, Hassan, Abdullah, Abdullah, & Zan, 2019). These facts lead to understand and investigate youth's role in changing further developing better community in the future. Hence, knowing the policies in Malaysia is required to ascertain the true role and value of the youth in the society.

## Youth in Malaysia

The youth are termed as any nation's future leaders as their role in being the next generation with opinions and decisions that will be pivotal in developing the nation. According to The United Nations definition, youths are individuals falling with between the ages of 15–24 years old. On the other hand, the Commonwealth definition regards youth as anyone in the 15–29 age bracket. The current Malaysia National Youth Development Policy (NYDP) defines youths as individuals aged 15-40 years old. Hon. Mr Khairy Jamaluddin, the former Minister of Youths and Sports (Malaysia), implemented the new Malaysia Youth Policy (MYP) in 2018 with modifications made to the definition by referring to youth as anyone between the ages of 15 and 30 years. This was done as part of the improvements geared at aligning with the requirements of the current youth population (The Borneo Post, 2015).

This age range is bigger than most other countries and international bodies, such as the United Nations, who define the youth as between 15 to 24 years and the Commonwealth Youth Program, which uses 15 to 29 years as its official youth age range (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2019). According to the Department of Statistic Malaysia (2019), youth comprise more than 45% of the total population of Malaysia. Based on this figure, Malaysian youth are a highly important group in steering and shaping Malaysia's future. The Malaysian government's aware that youth are important players in the well-being of the country in their current capacity, not only in their future adult roles.

The first nine 5-year national development plans prioritised the Malaysia's youth as an important target population. This resulted in steady growth in funding and youth development program. Programs were developed within three contexts: formal learning, informal learning, and non-formal learning. Formal learning is conducted through the formal school system comprising primary and secondary schools, tertiary institutions, vocational institutions, and by professional bodies where students acquire accredited professional qualifications in knowledge, competency and skills training (Idris, Hassan, Ya'acob, Gill & Awal, 2012).

Informal learning is carried through activities that are unscheduled and unstructured in their approach and is delivered through the Malaysian government's flagship and other leisure-based programs, as well as those by various voluntary organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in field volunteerism, welfare and social development (Krauss, Ortega, Abdullah, Hamzah, Turiman, Ismail & Ahmad, 2013). Likewise, non-formal learning, which is delivered outside of the formal education system but remain but retains a fixed structure, is also delivered by governmental, private sectors, religious leader and NGOs, but in the form of short course and seminars that are extension-based in nature (Yasunaga, 2014).

Nonetheless, Malaysia tertiary education play part to contribute to shaping youth social skills development (Ong, Shang, Chandra, Hamidi & Wahab, 2020). Obviously, education has a very important role in transmitting and fostering values that determine, in turn, behaviours, attitudes, reactions specific of responsible citizens. Tapsir (2019), stated that almost 1.3 million Malaysian youths are pursuing education in tertiary education in Malaysia. Since, more youth population are in the tertiary education. Therefore, higher education in Malaysia not only produce youth who are knowledgeable and competent, in same time have to seeds the youth who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large (Salihu, 2020).

Youth community engagement and civic responsibility currently become a great interest to the global youth sector. More countries continue to embrace the youth sense of civic responsibility. Malaysia is no exception. Hence, understanding the youth sense of civic responsibility is important especially the youth from higher education able to measure our student's preparation to enter a more complex, interdependent world and their readiness to serve society.

### **Sense of Civic Responsibility**

Theoretically, sense of civic responsibility can be broadly conceptualised as an attitudinal measure of obligation towards serving or creating change in one's community (McCrillis, 2013). A sense of civic responsibility looks at an individual's feelings of obligation toward the community which he is a part of, and the idea that each community member plays a pivotal role of contribution to the well-being of the local community and the wider society as a whole (Lenzi, Vieno, Santinello, Nation, & Voight, 2013). This study defines sense of civic responsibility as an individual's personal belief and feeling about his responsibility and duty to society.

Accordingly, a sense of civic responsibility involves the individual actively participating in the community with a dedicated and informed manner, constructed towards focusing on a shared goal. It also refers to how a citizen generally participates in the life of his community to foster better living conditions and shape the community's future. Sense of civic responsibility is an individual's feelings of responsibility in upholding his obligations as part of a community.

Civic engagement is a component of civic responsibility that it is the actual active participation on behalf on the individual (Hylton, 2018). As mentioned by Ajaps and Obiagu (2020) civic engagement is conceptualised as participation and contribution to the activities and institutions of the community and broader civic society. Civic engagement fosters the opportunity for youth to become civically aware, as well as develop a sense of civic responsibility to make changes within the community and to become engaged in implanting a plan of action to make changes within the community.



Sense of civic responsibility consists of civic activities such as time committed towards community voluntary efforts, actions taken to foster a sense of diversity, serving in an organisation, sense of control, and voicing out one's right. According to Zukauskien (2012), activities that require volunteering is a subgroup of the umbrella concept of being civically engaged. Civic engagement typically takes place in non-governmental organisations, like voluntary efforts in community organisations, being a member of associations, actively attending meetings, contacting local officials, fundraising and donating money, and taking part in protests and engaging in civil disobedience. Generally, volunteering may be described as unremunerated activities done for the benefit of others or geared towards public interest.

Being a volunteer for organisations and groups in the community is a conventional way for members of the society to partake in helping with issues that concern them. A study approximated that as much as half of the population in the US would volunteer as a means of giving time to the community. However, current volunteering habits are rather sporadic in nature, with individuals more likely to do "an evening a week on an activity for a few months as time permits, rather than having to make a long-term commitment to an organisation" (Shuler, 2010).

In the Malaysian context, there is scant youth involvement in community activities (Ibrahim, 2017). Students of higher education institutions usually join such activities to gain extra points for co-curricular activity. Malaysian higher education institutions have taken some actions to improve students' social attitudes and encourage their participation in civic activities. For example, Malaysian authorities have taken serious action by introducing a community service course for the tertiary education sector in Malaysia. This course is compulsory and every student — whether from private or public higher education institutions — is required to pass the course. The students are required to do community work to create and develop social responsibility. However, students only join this course so they can qualify for graduation. Hence, it is insufficient for the government to just offer community service courses to enhance the sense of civic responsibility and aptitude for good citizenship among the youth.

Being a good citizen does not only encompass taking part in formal political processes i.e. voting during elections but also engaging themselves as organization volunteers that contribute to increasing community civic betterment. Citizen involvement in public life is a pivotal element of social equality. A successful democratic society needs its citizens to engage in developing the community and taking part in community problem-solving to foster a better sense of civic responsibility in its citizens (Hal & Nishishiba, 2015). Furthermore, being involved in civic activities such as working to solve problems in the community, not only influences the youth's way of thinking to bring changes to society and increases awareness towards community members but also influences others to contribute to the community. Therefore, a person who actively takes action to address community issues and problems in formal and informal settings will be able to enhance his aptitude for good citizenship, besides honing the ability to take on multiple perspectives, enhance social attitude, and encourage participation in civic activities, as well as have an increased appreciation of upholding social justice.

Sense of civic responsibility can be regarded as a salient educational outcome in youth development in their environment. This sense of civic responsibility refers to the weight that youth place on public interest as a personal goal in their lives. In other words, a sense of civic responsibility demonstrates the importance of youth participation in solving public issues and their role in moulding society. Thus, the youth's sense of civic responsibility should display a positive relationship with civic activities, such as volunteering. Various contextual influences were noted as drivers that spur civic engagement activities including volunteering, from microsystems such as family or peers to macro systemic factors, such as the media (Lenzi et al., 2013). As argued earlier, sense of civic responsibility is one of the pertinent soft skills in the context of the globalised twenty- first century macro systemic factor like media.

### **Media in Malaysia**

The role of the media is very important in shaping the lives of people in urban and rural areas. The vast potential of information and communication innovation such as satellite and telecommunications system and the computer-based communication network support the development of media. Furthermore, the media is an incredible resource for public in that it can provide much useful information efficiently and accurately. Developing country like Malaysia, always has been very responsive to the latest development in the media and government has implement various technology advancement plans to bared with current changes in environment social and economic. Malaysia attentive to the rapidly changing world of information and communication technology but also aware of the impact of the information gap among the citizens.

The media is often seen as the key to educating and entertaining for the societies. Now a day, the role of media has become prominent not only in disseminating the information to the public but also in increasing the degree of literacy and enhance civic responsibility (Omar & Ahrari, 2020). The role of the media helps public to understand the transition of economic and social in the country because it is a powerful tool to shape public opinions. This mechanism of level of public considerate towards media is largely dependent on the magnitude of media infrastructure acquitted by the particular country.

Furthermore, the media (print media, broadcasting media and digital media) in Malaysia have undergone tremendous growth and become the central for sources of information. Undeniably, using these media helps Malaysia society to be kept informed by watching foreign and local education and entertainment new (Samani, Maliki, Rahim, Rahman & Mustaffa, 2015). Like many other countries, the Malaysian media can be divided into three parts: print, broadcast and digital. All this media plays significant roles in shaping public interest as well as national development in Malaysia.

The print media has the longest history, beginning with earliest newspaper, the Penang Gazette in 1938 (Othman, 2018). Today there are about 50 newspaper dailies and weeklies in the various language of the main ethnic groups in Malaysian – Malay,

English, Mandarin and Tamil (Sani, 2014). News Strait Times Group, the Utusan Melayu Group, Star Publications and the Karangkraft Group are the major publisher of print newspapers and magazines in Malaysia (Othman, 2018).

The most significant media development in Malaysia is in the broadcasting, especially radio and television. In the 1950s the introduction of solid-state technology resulted in the proliferation of cheap portable radio receiving sets and in 1963 the introduction of the first black and white television in Malaysia (George, 2007). There is a total of 24 private and 44 government radio station. There are six major television stations operating in the country: TV1, TV2, TV3, NTV7, 8TV and TV9. Of these, TV1 and TV2 are directly controlled by the government, further TV3, NTV7, 8TV and TV9 are the private and commercial television station. In 1996, Malaysian able to joined the satellite broadcasting with the introduction of the pay TV channel (ASTRO) (Kim, 2001). This development able Malaysian to receive, exchange and enjoy one another's messages, news, entertainment and cultural instantly from their homes.

The growing awareness of the importance of new communication, multimedia technologies and internet penetration Malaysia transit towards the era of digitalisation (Ding, Koh, Surin, Dragomir, Thompson, & Watts, 2013). Telekom Malaysia is responsible for providing Internet infrastructure to enable users to get connected to the digital world such as Tmnet, Bluehyppo, Tmnet Streamyx and many more. Currently, Malaysia has more internet provider like MAXIS, DIGI, CELCOM and many. Not only that Malaysian able to watch online TV and radio such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and others. Social media platform like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube and others make people's lives more interactive, exciting and convenient.

Different media provide people with various information, idea and entertainment. Most important media create opportunities for people to engage in the political, socioeconomic and cultural context of the society through news consumption (Baharin, Waheed & Hellmueller, 2017). Media not only entertain public, however update people with the daily news. News consumption from variety of media make people create an awareness about environment and social issues (Soon, 2020).

### **News Consumption**

During the early 1980s, the news was consumed through the mainstream media relevant at that time i.e. radio, print, and television. However, a dramatic shift occurred in the mid-1990s with the emergence and rapid popularisation of online news consumption. News is a tool for mass communication that can positively influence society and the government.

The various definitions of the news posted by different scholars point to the fact that there is no standard definition for the term. People could define news based on what they see or view as a news item. News consumption can keep people informed and completely aware of everything going on around them. Once people become aware of a major news event, they also can learn more about it.

According to Burton (2010), the news is regarded as a specific kind of media material. Ruggenberg (2007) defined news as “information about political, historical, social or cultural events that recently happened in the world, considered interesting enough to be distributed to the public via different news media”. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines news as “a report of recent events that appear in newspapers or on television or radio” or “a person, thing, or event that is considered to be interesting enough to be reported as news” (p. 993).

There are two channels to get news — mainstream media and non-mainstream media. Mainstream news media is government-regulated media that governments significantly invest in and have poured many resources into. Moreover, this type of media is heavily influenced and controlled by the government. The mainstream media consists of traditional newspapers, radio, and television while non-mainstream media is associated with the Internet such as online news portals and socio-political blogs. The Internet helps to pave the way for new connections by offering an individual with alternatives to get updated news (Edgerly, Thorson, Vraga, & Bode, 2018).

News consumption can be operationalised by looking at audience exposure and the attention that the news media – regardless of the Internet, television, or the newspaper – receives. Audience exposure to each medium is formulated differently for television, newspapers, and the Internet. For the first two, it is the time spent (in minutes) per day. To calculate audience exposure for the Internet, it is the time spent (in minutes) per week. Attention paid to the news media is viewed differently as the resulting focus that is paid while one is watching the television, surfing the Internet or reading the newspaper. Consequently, media consumption i.e. television consumption, internet consumption, and newspaper consumption is derived from audience exposure to each medium whilst paying attention to a particular medium. Consuming the news plays a significant role in participation in social, cultural, and political life.

### **Platforms for Consuming News in Malaysia**

News consumption in now a day’s media environment is quite easy because of existing multiple platforms to get news such as newspaper, radio, television, webs, social media and communication apps. Each individual has their own preference of platforms to get news. The preferences basically towards traditional news platforms or digital news platforms. Thus, traditional news platform are physical newspapers, radio and television. Further, digital news media are webs-based news, social media and communication apps news.

However, in Malaysia, traditional news platform is pioneer and most influence medium since before independent. The traditional news platform still existing and provide update news to the public (Makaruddin, 2018). Most importantly traditional news plays a crucial role in this pandemic (COVID-19) to provide reliable news to the public. Undoubtedly, newspaper is the traditional news platform still serve public and affordable medium to get news (Azlan, Rahim, Basri & Hasim, 2012). Basically, there are daily, weekly and weekend physical newspaper in Malaysia to provide updated news to public. The prominent newspaper are The Stars, News Strait Times, the Sun, Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia, Sin Chew Daily and Nanban.

Following with newspaper, radio and television also provide the update news to the public. Radio channels will cast quick news every one hour and television channel such as TV1 and TV2 will features news in Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil news every day for cater the news to multi ethnicity people. Especially TV1 telecast news with sign language translator, which enables special needs people gets and understand the current news. ASTRO – pay TV run Astro Awani and BERNAMA news channels, this channel not only telecast local and international news and also have discussion programs regarding current affairs, lifestyle and documentaries. Besides, there are international news channel like CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, Sky news and many more. These channels featuring nonstop breaking news.

Correspondingly, digital news platforms deliver the breaking news immediately to the public compared to traditional news platform. Malaysiakini and Free Malaysia Today are the web-based news site, the content of news most discuss about local issues. There are existing of more than 50 international news sites discussing news around the world (Makaruddin, 2018). Social media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram become popular digital platform to share and get the news. Along with that, communication apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, Line, Snapchat and others available on mobile device and computer desktop provide versatile news to the users. In addition, prominent physical newspaper transits the news delivery towards online news (Salman, Ibrahim, Abdullah, Mustaffa & Mahbob, 2011). The Star news was the first newspaper offers online news and follows by other news aggregator (Ruolan, 2019).

On top of that, advancement in technology have enable ordinary people to report any incident immediately, this is term as citizen journalism. Citizen journalism become powerful weapon to publish current news (Wall, 2015). Moreover, there are many platforms for the people to get the updates news. Traditional news platform always become reliable news aggregators compared to the digital news platforms. Fake news moves faster in the digital news platforms like social media and communication apps. Age factor play a vital role in the news consumption and selection of platforms for consuming media. The pattern of youth consuming news is most important to observe because they are the future leader and they must obtain right news for advance positive thinking style.

## Youth and News Consumption

The current environment for developing youth includes attention and exposure to news in the media (Boyd, 2010), as news consumption is regarded as a salient source of information, a socialising agent, and a resource for development. The relationship between youth and news consumption is one that has been studied for many years (Livingstone & Markham, 2008). Observations show that younger people look less to mainstream forms of news and are less inclined than older people to engage with traditional news sources (Elareshi & Gunter, 2012; Freeman, 2013; Ghazali, Omar, Bolong, Osman, & Mansor, 2012; Livingstone & Markham, 2008). In general, youth have been observed to be reliant on the TV as their main source of news (Boulianne, 2015; Cho, Keum, & Shah, 2014; Freeman, 2013).

This assertion also supports the findings of the Pew Research Centre (2016), which revealed that the television (TV) continues to cast the widest net as a news platform among US adults. The TV reigns highest, followed by the Web, with radio and print at the bottom. However, TV consumption demographics illustrate the fragility of TV-based news consumption. To wit, while a heavy proportion of those aged 50+ often obtain news on the TV, it commands a much smaller share among younger adults. The study findings also revealed that more than seven-in-ten U.S. adults followed national and local news.

In current times, the youth uses the Internet more than TV and newspaper as a source of news information (Edgerl et al., 2018; Molyneux, 2017). It seems that the youth feel reluctant to access and share traditional news but are quick to turn to online news through newer models of information delivery. Supporting the findings of other researchers on the youth's preferred use of the Internet, Sparks et al. (2016) pointed to the fact that the Internet has been very successful in attracting young people to consume news.

Since the rise of online television and digital newspapers, the youth are now relying on multiple forms of media to obtain information. Young people are heavily dependent on the Internet for an increasing number of purposes, including gathering news and information. Freeman (2013) posited that young adults are not a passive audience but instead make active choices on media particularly when it concerns the type of news and media they prefer to access. The innovativeness that comes with the use of the Internet has led to a lot of university students adopting the Internet and using it for all manner of activities including news consumption.

According to Grijalva Verdugo and Izaguirre Fierro (2014) in their study, they discover that communication sciences, law and social sciences, public administration and marketing students in the university are interested to watch newscast to stories about political, cultural and social environment. Tertiary education student influence by the online media. This group of people get the breaking news from social media and communication apps, further that will lead them to get additional news from traditional

news media (Elsass, Schlidkraut & Stafford, 2014; Tandoc & Johnson, 2016; Antunovic, Parsons & Cooke, 2018). The students believe that traditional news media more credible compared to social media or communication app news.

Indubitably, news holds a heavy role in public life and is pivotal in keeping people up-to-date with current happenings. While the news is a powerful tool, today, people have access to almost all news around the world, using it as a tool to be informed. Furthermore, in this era of globalisation, the citizens of every nation must keep abreast of happenings in and around the world.

### **Youth News Consumption Pattern in Malaysia**

The news media in Malaysia has been functioning as an agent and a partner in nation-building since the country gained independence (Tamam, Raj & Govindasamy, 2012). Past studies found that news media plays a key role in national development and positively impacts society. Despite much evidence highlighting the young people's lack of apparent interest in news, this group is now displaying a growing awareness of news issues and an increased inclination to consume news as they shift to adulthood.

Wok et al. (2011) found that the youth in Malaysia would most likely get their news from the TV. The research also revealed that 40.8% of Malaysian youth did not rely on the Internet for news and 27.4% were reported to not obtain news from the Internet. Interest in the news was observed to increase in line with the student advancement in university year (Ghazali et al., 2012). Amirfarhangi et al. (2015) found the university student viewers watched satellite and local TV channels at different times for separate purposes of gratification. Comparing to Americans, Malaysian Higher education student are keen on entertainment news, followed by sport news, crime news and news of events taking place in their community (Freeman, 2013; Hui & Li, 2018).

Most engaged citizens comprise young people (aged 15 to 25) who are active monitors of the news, disregarding the medium, be it the newspaper, television, radio, magazine, and the Internet (Boyd et al., 2011). To drive this point, they had a higher inclination towards being members of a group (e.g., society development) and would be more open to working on a problem within the community relative to those who do not keep up with the news.

Civically active young people hold higher awareness of their fellow citizens and would willingly contribute to its well-being out of concern for society. This faction of youth deeply understands the concept of 'self-in-society' and would take a more proactive and responsible role in being members of civil society. Informational news media consumption can bring about civic-oriented behaviours by spearheading reasoning and civic discussion, thus promoting an individual's sense of civic responsibility.

## News Consumption and Sense of Civic Responsibility

Numerous studies (Drok, 2017; Hashim et al., 2016; Mushtaq, Baig, & Muhammad Bin Suleman, 2018; Salman, Samsudin, & Yusuf, 2017; Sparks et al., 2016) have investigated news consumption as part of their framework. News consumption from a variety of media is often associated with a sense of civic responsibility. However, research and theories concerning the relationship, lend their support to one of two diametrically opposed views (Groshek & Krongard, 2016; Peer et al. 2003).

The first postulates a negative relationship where media consumption is related inversely to sense of civic responsibility. This negative relationship can be driven by time, among other factors (Putnam, 1995, 2000; Wilkins, 2000). The second zooms into news media and posits a positive relationship; one that is reciprocal in nature, which involves people attending to the news while the news, in turn, spurs participation (e.g., Eveland & Hively, 2000; Moeller & Vreese, 2015). Unfortunately, empirical tests of these competing hypotheses have produced incongruous findings that are often fragmented into specific media.

According to Shoemaker (1996), as cited in Park (2014), human beings want to learn from the news to keep updated on the environment surrounding them. Broadly, people with strong inclinations for surveillance tend to look for news to fulfill their information needs (Jimah, 2015). News consumption can cause people to view themselves as being knowledgeable of civic affairs (Homero & et al, 2012). The relationship between media use and sense of civic responsibility has long been the focus of many scholars, although the extent of the relationship between sense of civic responsibility and mass media use has not been concluded. Several studies have given evidence that paying attention to the news has a cascading effect on better community integration and increased interest, knowledge and participation in public affairs (Pasek, More & Romer, 2009; Thorson, Chen & Lacy, 2019). Media forms that need higher levels of cognitive engagement (News programs on the television, newspapers, and the Internet for example) are of special interest when analysing media pathways to civic engagement (Putnam, 2000).

It has been argued that different types of media that are functionally different also have different influences on civic activities (Boulianne, 2015). The positive impact that reading the newspaper has on civic participation was found in an array of studies (Kunihiko Nakona et al., 2014, Condeza, Bachmann, & Mujica, 2014; and The Pew Research Center, 2016) and were marked as significant across all generations, including the youth (Chu, 2020). Yamamoto (2011) analysed survey data collected from the North-Western region of the United States and found that community newspaper-reading promoted social cohesion and community engagement. Lowrey, Brozana, and Mackay (2008) suggested that community news media, including daily community newspapers, spurred meaning-making in the community and helped its readers have a better understanding of the community structure. This understanding led to increased community participation, as demonstrated by Paek, Yoon, and Shah (2005), who found



that regular daily newspaper readers were more likely to be actively engaged with their communities than non-newspaper readers.

However, news through the television tends to inform and mobilise; exposure to general television has a weak association with indicators of civic engagement. For example, Putnam (2000;1995) argued that exposure to newspapers may increase social capital and the civic activities of the citizen, in contrast with the negative consequences of watching television programs meant to entertain. According to Putnam (1995), the downturn of civic activism in North America is partially caused by the increase in the number of hours that individuals watch television, as this reduces their time spent interacting with others. Shah, McLeod, and Yoon (2001) found that while some entertainment content may cause a decline in civic involvement, the usage of news media has brought opposite impacts. Selecting television programs is also important in cultivating a sense of civic responsibility. Different programs foster different public spheres and create different levels of involvement. Nevertheless, recent research drives the assertion that television news positively affects the levels of civic engagement. For instance, Curran et al. (2014) found that being exposed to the news on television promoted civic engagement among citizens.

The Internet provides an even larger set of choices than newspaper, radio, or broadcast. With the genesis of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools like the computer, tablets, the iPad, mobile phones, and Internet connectivity, the youth now have the option to source news online instead of relying on traditional media. ICT has also provided better avenues for regular people to discuss, express themselves, and participate directly in civic activities, perhaps spurring greater levels of participation.

The finding of research on news consumption and sense of civic responsibility paints a more complex picture. There is little consensus on the general direction and inner workings of how news consumption impacts civic participation. Various studies have investigated the impact of news consumption on civic engagement across different age groups such as youths and adolescents. These studies have looked at both the positive and negative outcomes of news consumption and civic engagement. For example, Hao et al. (2014) found strong corroboration for the effect that news consumption has on civic engagement among university students in Singapore. Hao et al. (2014) claimed that young Singaporeans' capacity for news consumption and their active role in political and civic participation was increased by the Internet and various Internet-based social media. Similar to TV and print, positive civic outcomes would also come into fruition if the Internet is utilised for news and gathering information, but would produce an adverse effect when it is used for the purpose of entertainment (Amirfarhangi et al., 2015; Atkins, 2016; Boulianne, 2015). Informational media use, be it via traditional or online sources, has been repeatedly highlighted as a contributor to civic outcomes (e.g., personal values and civic responsibility).

Livingstone and Markham (2008) also found that media use influenced civic participation (e.g., general interest in political affairs, voting, and actions taken to respond to a public issue) to a moderate degree. While this influence plays differently for different media and participation, increasing evidence shows that media usage enhances rather than impairs participation. Media use is viewed as important in maintaining political interest, whether the consumers perceive it to be irrelevant or even negative for taking action. Leod (2000) held the belief that individuals aged 15 to 25 who kept abreast of the news disregarding the channel (radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and the Internet), tended to be more active citizens in their society. This group displayed a higher likelihood of joining groups (e.g., political groups), vote in elections, and lend their hand in community problem-solving.

Supporting the findings of other researchers on media use and civic participation, Hall (2014) put forth that media consumption and social capital affected civic participation. Despite several studies exploring the issue of media effects on social capital, predominantly in the area of political participation, lesser studies have looked at the impact of the media on civic participation. In Hall's (2014) study, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was used to analyse data from the 2008 American National Election Survey to examine past civic participation and future civic participation separately. The results clearly demonstrated that individuals who were more community-oriented and engaged in civic activities were more inclined to take part in future civic activities as they have already done so in the past. Furthermore, after controlling for the effects of demographics, the media types, and how they impacted civic participation were much better understood. However, this knowledge would be helpful in determining and addressing issues relating to media consumption, social capital, and civic participation. Drawing on past literature, this study posits the following hypothesis:

H1: Students with a higher level of news consumption are more likely to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility.

### **Civic Talk**

According to Klofstad (2011), civic talk can be defined as the quality and quantity of discussion regarding politics and current events with friends, colleagues, and relatives. This discussion can turn thought into action such as from voting to volunteering in a civic organisation. Civic talk is a discussion about civic-oriented information that may bring about a positive impact on the growth of civic participation for an extended time. This expectation has been confirmed empirically by a multitude of studies (Klofstad, 2008, 2009, 2010; Gil, 2011; Ksiazek et al., 2010). Civic talk may allow citizens to trade news and information, discuss the problems faced by the community, and explore relevant opportunities to be civically active. It can also be said that participation in such civic activities also improves existing citizen communication networks, more so such participation allows people to meet and physically interact with those holding the same interests (Ekström & Östman, 2013; Homero Gil de Zuniga et al., 2013; Rojas et al., 2005).

Civic talk is a form of communication with family and friends. It requires an emphasis on policies, government, and social issues, which will help people craft more sophisticated opinions, which would then improve participation in civic activities. Civic talk includes discussing the current news over a family dinner, exchanging ideas on the economy during a coffee or tea break at work, chatter among patrons at a bar about the current election, and other such informal discussions. With this, individuals are able to develop and find validation for their thoughts and opinions on an array of issues (Wok et al., 2011).

Today, there is a lot of civic discussion taking place on social media. Engagement that is primarily social comes about through people communicating with the news and with each other. News sites have found success by engaging their viewers, listeners and readers through social media as user interaction and discussion is pivotal for these engagements to take place. By utilizing social media, the public is able to take in news and discuss public issues, often through blogs, online forums, and comment sections on news websites, as well as on social networking platforms such as Facebook.

The conversation ignited by media content is connected to engagement in many facets of civic life. In daily conversations, there is an exchange of information, cultivation of identities, and the mobilisation of opportunities. Discussions among citizens are beneficial in creating active, engaged, and knowledgeable citizens and this has proven healthy for any civil society. More accurately, it is found that civic talk contributes to civic knowledge, cognitive complexity, and community engagement.

Proponents of citizen deliberation theories argue holding discussions is helpful for citizens looking to confirm their view and gain more confidence in expressing their ideas, thus improving their self-efficacy in understanding political issues. As a result, their confidence and capability in handling civic affairs would be better. From a normative perspective, the democratic theory posits that with discussions, members of society can gain clarity on their views, digest the opinions of others, improve their ideas, and cultivate civic engagement.

Civic talk not only exposes people to new information but also compels them to digest and elaborate on it, thus reinforcing its place in memory. Civic talk among friends and family members are important for exposing individuals to intersecting opinions, thereby improving deliberation in theory. Those with a broader exposure to civic talk tend to be more civically active, but people are scattered across a wide set of social arrangements, with some shielded from diverse opinions. Civic talk is another approach that surpasses individual traits and examines the role of social ties and contexts in shaping civic responsibility. Hence, civic talk is defined as a discussion among friends, family members, and other acquaintances regarding societal issues and the welfare of people. People are more likely to engage civically when they are exposed to discussions of public affairs in their existing environment.

## News Consumption and Civic Talk

From a normative democratic perspective, news use is viewed as beneficial as it spurs an informed and active citizenry capable of governing themselves sensibly (Brites, Ponte, & Menezes, 2016). Similarly, news consumption may fuel a heavy amount of content for a person's daily interactions, with one of its functions being to facilitate interpersonal communication. Thus, individuals who participate in greater discussions of political issues are more inclined to having access to a greater variety of news media channels (Homero Gil de Zuñiga, Nakwon Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012).

A study by Edgerly et al. (2018) revealed that parents, peers, education institutions, and digital devices offered chances to obtain new information about current affairs and discuss news content. For example, a husband and wife might sit down to dinner together and end up discussing the issues that were covered in the news that day, or a group of friends socialising at a party might end up talking about the root cause of poverty and poor education, or co-workers might end up discussing some creative ways for helping to uplift the lives of those who are disadvantaged socioeconomically. Nevertheless, what the person sees and reads on the news media influences the content and extent of their interpersonal discussions (Ksiazek et al., 2010).

To explain why news media exposure might lead to civic talk, communication scholars say that the audience's sense of understanding of the subject matter increases with the information gained from their news media exposure. As a result, they would feel more competent in talking about a certain topic (Ekström & Östman, 2013). People would garner information from the news in anticipation of future communication with others. The news gives the individual a sense of awareness about a topic that he or she presumes to mention in a future conversation. Eveland and Hively (2009) explained that if an individual expected to participate in political discussion, they would invest more heavily in processing information during their first exposure so that they are able to prepare themselves for a later discussion. This action would bring about more thorough information processing and reinforce the effects of traditional media use (Scheufele, 2002). As a result, this type of use will spark audiences to be more careful of their media consumption, besides increasing chances to extract meaningful information (Hardy & Scheufele, 2005).

Patterns of interpersonal discussion are differently affected by different news media. Using and depending on different media may lead to differences in knowledge about, and subsequent attitudes toward social issues and civic engagement. News consumption and civic talk can create opportunities to explore ideas, process information, and ponder on public affairs. Additionally, media content may aid in shaping the landscape of discussion and provide a wider pool of information.

For instance, youth who are civically engaged could more likely seek out news content compared to their less civically motivated peers. Similarly, exposure to some news-related content could also spur civic action. Plus, there may be mutually reinforcing relationships among the forms of media use and civic engagement. Hence, based on previous research, the following hypothesis regarding news consumption and civic talk is posited:

H2: Students with a higher level of news consumption are more likely to engage in frequent civic talk.

### **Civic Talk and Sense of Civic Responsibility**

Civic talk is as important as mass communication when it comes to discussing community ties. Notably, media use provides topics for subsequent discussions and arguments that lead to more enduring factors such as sense of community. Civic talk is highly imperative for people to understand the larger world's values. It also enhances the sense of community and the inclination to act. Besides, civic talk enables information sharing and opinion formation about community involvement, which subsequently shapes a sense of civic responsibility. Therefore, civic talk supports a better understanding of the community and may provide the basis for civic engagement.

However, studies on civic talk and sense of civic responsibility contend that talking about community issues and political discussion with those in one's immediate social circle would in turn spur one to partake in civic activities. There are also studies that have found a strong positive relationship between political and current event discussions with social development and civic participation (Mascheroni & Murru, 2017; Hayat, Juliana, Umer, 2015; Kligler-vilenchik, 2015; Hsieh & Li, 2013; Ahmed, 2010; Klofstad, 2010).

According to Klofstad (2010), the volume of discussion that happens in a person's circle of friends is associated with his participation in society. Reinforcing this point, Hsieh and Li (2013) contended that there exists a substantial causal relationship between civic talk and participation in civic issues and that an individual would be more open and able to participate after being exposed to civic talk. Research has been done to aptly determine the mechanisms that would initiate individuals into transforming the discussions into action (Ahmed, 2010).

This study suggests that civic talk provides people with the motivation and resources that are required for one to engage in societal welfare, thereby causing civic participation. Young people who know each other and participate in civic talk may voice their opinion and consent in public settings as well. Thus, civic talk is positively associated with sense of civic responsibility. Based on the above studies, the following hypothesis is posed:

H3: Students that engage in frequent civic talk are more likely to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility.

### **Mediating Role of Civic Talk**

In another study, Boyd, Zaff, Phelps, Weiner, and Lerner (2011) sought to further explore the connection between media usage (particularly, news media use) and civic engagement among adolescents by taking into account the influential role of parental communication with the youngsters. The findings suggested that these two components have an implicit association that is bridged through interpersonal communication. With exposure to news-related information and engaging in political and current event discussions with others, civic efficacy and civic participation can be predicted. This is due to the fact that these two components involve the development and usage of one's essential skills and are also behavioural in nature. On this point, the pattern of news consumption for parents could also have an impact on that of their children. Similarly, parents and guardians that develop and bolster transparent communication could potentially build a setting where the adolescent senses a connection to the family unit. These children would be raised to be individuals who would be more open to hearing multiple viewpoints, and who could potentially be better at engaging and connecting with others. Along that line of thought, such parenting may be strengthening specific civic values like an obligation to actively advance society as a whole

Klofstad (2009) supported this position by arguing that individuals who engaged in civic talk tend to actively participate in civic activities. The study conducted a quasi-experimental panel survey and a series of qualitative focus groups and found that when people discussed current events (including politics) with friends, they tended to participate in civic activities. This association between civic talk and civic participation exists because of resources, engagement, recruitment, and norms. Conversations about politics and current events inform people about how they themselves can be participants in civic activities, enhancing their psychological engagement with civil society, coaxes them to take part in civic activities, and leads them to a greater acceptance of civic-minded attitudes. Further analysis shows that of these four factors, engagement and recruitment carried the most weight in explaining the causal link between civic talk and civic participation.

In a later study, Valenzuela et al. (2016) pointed out the effect of family communication on the link between motivations and behaviours of adolescents and news consumption. They found that family communication influenced news consumption indirectly. Family communication helps to develop personality traits related to information-processing (namely, the need for cognition and the need to evaluate), thus affecting the motivations and behaviours of adolescents concerning news consumption. As a result, adolescents with a more socio-oriented upbringing may themselves become avid news consumers in adulthood (Valenzuela et al., 2016).

Parents and peers are two parties that hold the biggest weight on young people's civic and political life (Oosterhoff et al., 2015). When parents are willing to discuss civic and political issues with their adolescent children, they are helping to develop the latter's civic skills, thereby making it more likely for them to partake in civil and political activities (Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, & Jenkins, 2002). In an observation made by Diemer and Li (2011) on the inter-relationship between the regularity of socio-political discussions with parents and peers, social action, and youth voting patterns in marginalised groups (defined by ethnicity and socioeconomic status), it was found that frequent discussions between adolescents with their parents and friends led to more participation in activities purposed with social change (e.g. demonstrations, petitions, money donations). Consequently, this increased their likelihood to vote.

The adolescent perceptions of his or her parents' positive support of civic participation, along with an active parental role in particular social causes, could stand to spur and continue his or her civic involvement (Metzger et al., 2016). For example, Bekkers (2007) identified the direct intergenerational effect of volunteering. That is, adolescent behaviour tends to replicate that of their parents through their engagement in civic or political activities, not unlike their parents' (Cicognani, Zani, Fournier, Gavray, & Born, 2012). In the same way, people are more inclined to getting involved when they are part of social circles that normalize civic or political participation (Pancer et al., 2007).

Klofstad (2010) also pointed to the fact that the lasting effects of civic talk is brought about by the uptick of civic participation at the start. Klofstad's (2010) findings highlight that there is indeed a meaningful cause-and-effect relationship between civic talk and taking part in a civil society. To illustrate this, Klofstad found that after involving themselves in civic talk with their roommates, the study subjects saw a 38 percent increase in civic participation. Furthermore, it was found that those who participated in civic talk in their freshman year went on to increase their volunteering activities in civic organisations in the final year of studies. Additionally, the effect of civic talk substantively carried more meaning due to its long-lasting nature. There is evidence showing that the subjects would likely join voluntary civic organisations in three years of taking part in discussions of current events, including politics.

In supporting the earlier submissions of other researchers, Gil (2011) claimed that the relationship between the interpersonal communication network and civic engagement shows that individuals with a wider grid of people to discuss community and public affairs, they would be more likely to participate in civic activities. Similarly, La, Lake, and Huckfeldt (1998) posited that people with wider networks involved themselves more due to their closer proximity with individuals who have higher education levels. Highly educated individuals would then enable others to engage more in ways that they might otherwise not by providing a platform for knowledge and expertise. Beyond that, having more contacts could also increase the frequency of which someone engages in discussions about public affairs, something that has seen to have a direct effect on civic engagement (Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005). Current research shows a more refined view of the relationship between civic talk and civic responsibility.

Empirical findings of the past suggest that discussing news media content within one's immediate social circle helps develop one's ability and zeal for attending to news media (Livingstone & Markham, 2008). There are findings that assert the existence of a sense of social pressure from interpersonal discussions – one that compels the individual to keep up-to-date with the news, thus being a motivator for adolescents to stay in their social circles by being interested in contemporary news and public affairs (Livingstone & Markham, 2008).

Research has shown that citizen communication intervenes in the effect that news consumption has on civic engagement, to a high degree. Boyd et al. (2011) drew focus on interpersonal communication and asserted that conversations regarding community involvement with families and friends played a major role in cascading the effects of communication on civic engagement. The effects of media use on participation were mostly found to be indirect, occurring through their effects on the discussion about society.

Previous studies suggest that even if news media has an overall positive effect on civic participation, this main effect presents itself differently for people who talk to others about politics frequently and those who do not (Scheufele, 2002). Scheufele (2002) asserted the effect that media messages have on an individual's participation behaviour is at its peak if the person is both exposed to mass media information and discusses it with people. In this way, he can learn about different perspectives and develop a better understanding of problem-solving. Therefore, as the effects of news consumption on sense civic responsibility seem to be mediated by civic talk with others, it is thereby imperative to deepen our understanding of the interactive relationship that exists for news consumption and civic talk and their impact on sense civic responsibility.

From the arguments above, this study hypothesises that:

H4: Civic talk significantly mediates the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

### **Theory of the Study**

The present is aimed at examining the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility by integrating civic talk as a mediator variable. The theoretical foundation used to frame the study stems is the Communication Infrastructure Theory (CIT). Scholars have traditionally kept their focus on deliberative theories, claiming that discussion enables citizens to feel more confident in expressing their ideas, increasing their efficacy, and reassuring their capacity for dealing with civic affairs (Kim & Ball-rokeach, 2006). The Communication Infrastructure Theory (CIT) provides a more expansive framework to study how media and communication cultivates a feeling of



collective efficacy that might lead to a sustainable form of community and sense of civic responsibility.

The CIT is originally a socio-ecological theory that was later embedded with the Media System Dependency (MSD) theory (Ball-Rokeach, 1998), to narrow its focus on interpersonal and mediated neighbourhood interactions and their civic outcomes (Ball-Rokeach, Kim, & Matei, 2001). CIT is an ecological framework that looks at the weight that resources in communication have on bolstering local interaction. Continuously exchanging stories regarding the neighbourhood enables the formulation of a discourse community identity. Ideally, micro-level agents (residents) and meso-level agents (organisations and news media) would create a larger network built to carry ever-flowing communication about the community.

Several studies have showcased the importance of the varied forms of news consumption and their link with engagement in local issues, connecting this relationship with the Communication Infrastructure Theory (CIT) (Ball-rokeach, 2001; Broad, Gonzalez, Ball-rokeach, & Murphy, 2016). According to Ognyanova, Chen, and Ball-rokeach (2013), CIT looks at the Internet as one communication resource, which moulds the discussions within a community and relays a common understanding of local challenges and priorities alongside media, interpersonal, and organisational connections. The research suggested that to complement traditional indicators of civic engagement, online platforms and activities should also be integrated into this theory as a mode of participation.

Similarly, Halpern (2013) affirmed that CIT enables connections to local interaction by increasing the sense of belonging among individuals, helping with identifying problems and avenues for participation, thus fostering a perceived collective efficacy and bringing forth a shared sense of agency. The framework shows that when individuals start paying attention to an issue and subsequently discuss it with those in their social circles, they are more confident in mobilising efforts, leading to community problem-solving. Consequently, this increased sense of efficacy would affect the tendency to participate civically.

The sense of civic responsibility is theorised to have a positive correlation with informational media use (Delli Carpini, 2004). Research has also posited that individuals who seek out specific topics of interest on traditional media are more inclined to further their research on the Internet (Ksiazek, Malthouse, & Webster, 2010). Individuals interested in obtaining specific information (e.g., about local events) are more likely to peruse multiple media outlets that may hold the information they want. Since CIT disseminates community involvement, this study used this theory to test the associations between news consumption, civic talk, and sense of civic responsibility within the Malaysian context.

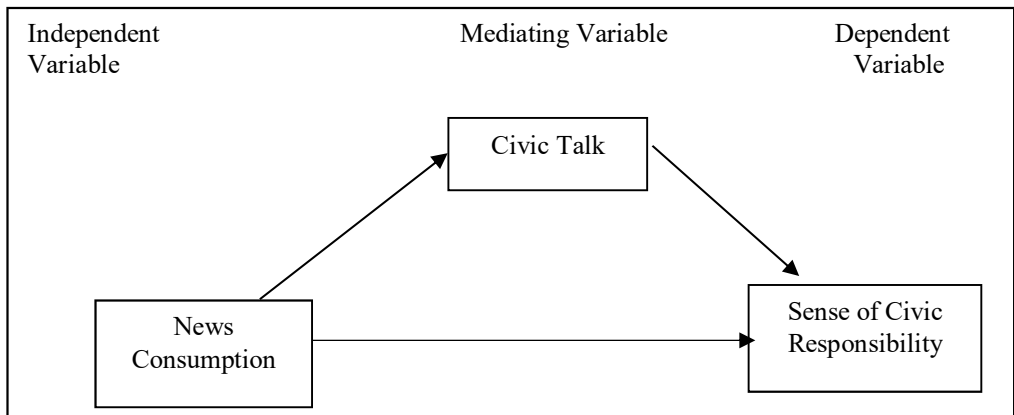
## Research Conceptual Framework

The present conceptual framework as displayed in Figure 1 was devised after reviewing the literature regarding sense of civic responsibility, news consumption and civic talk in Malaysia. Despite the importance the value of sense of civic responsibility in society, there are still significant knowledge gaps relating to civic responsibility in Malaysia setting.

Based on the review of literature, sense of civic responsibility is vital important in Malaysia, especially when it is considered among tertiary education student. Because this group of people will soon meet and serve for the society after graduation. Further, higher education students are in the period of preparing themselves for first time voting. Hence, digesting the correct news from the credible media is important for the student in generating civic talk among the peers. Civic talk is the interaction between peers on campuses or during classes in the university about community events. For the current study, it is vital to understand local concepts of sense of civic responsibility, news consumption and civic talk.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this research. More accurately, it shows the position of the intervening variable (civic talk), the independent variable (news consumption), and the relationship of both with sense of civic responsibility. These variables are positioned in a way that is aligned with the research objectives. These variables were chosen referring to studies done in the past and supported by past empirical findings with the objective of making clear the influence of the two selected variables on the sense of civic responsibility among youth in selected universities.

The hypothesis posits a potential theoretical link between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility through the mediating role of civic talk. In sum, within the growing literature on the youth's sense of civic responsibility, news consumption and civic talk have been pinpointed as a major area of study in the context of youth involvement in the community.



**Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework**

### **Hypotheses**

Based on the aforementioned literature and the conceptual framework discussion, the hypotheses of this study are summarised below:

**H1:** Students with a higher level of news consumption are more likely to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility.

**H2:** Students with a higher level of news consumption are more likely to engage in frequent civic talk.

**H3:** Students engaged in frequent civic talk are more likely to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility.

**H4:** Civic talk significantly mediates the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

## Summary

As the nations' future leaders, the youth are the faces of the future generation whose opinions and decisions play a pivotal role in developing every nation. Thus, sense of civic responsibility is an important element for developing good citizens. Various factors are associated with the youth embracing this sense of civic responsibility, especially in institutions of higher education. This chapter provides pertinent information on the importance and effects that news consumption and civic talk have on the sense of civic responsibility. Additionally, a review of relevant literature and existing information pertaining to the background of the study was done to present and underscore the necessity of this research.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

Methodology encompasses the techniques that were utilised and relevant stages involved in collecting and analysing the data in this study. Within this research, the researcher aims to investigate the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility and the mediating role of civic talk in the context of student development. This chapter details the procedures and methods that the researcher has employed to collect and analyse the selected variables of the study, arranged under these headings: research design, population and sampling, sample size, instrument development, operational definition, validity and reliability of research instrument, pilot study, data collection, and data analysis using PLS-SEM.

#### Research Design

Rowley (2014) showed that a research design helps answer the research questions and explains the achieved results and conclusions of the study. It is a strategy for integrating the topic to be studied among the population via a specific method and for a specific purpose. The objective of the research is key to determining the appropriate research design, out of many.

To identify the interrelationships between the variables mentioned earlier, the researcher employed a cross-sectional survey design. The survey research design is suitable as the objective is to establish relationships among the variables involved. Furthermore, the relationship between the variables in the present study is based on association, aimed at investigating the strength of associations, not the cause and effect among variables. This method is convenient to collecting data even with the involvement of a large group of respondents distributed over different geographical locations (Nolte, Shauver, & Chung, 2014). The questionnaire can be sent through e-mail, fax or can be administered through online survey apps like google form, survey monkey, SoGo survey and many more. The online survey method is most popular way to collect data nowadays (Saleh & Bista, 2017; Evans & Mathur, 2018). It also offers a practical advantage in terms of the time used to gather data.

Furthermore, the data collection methods in a survey design make it possible to generalise the study findings beyond the participating individuals (Schreier, 2018). Generalisability is the scope of applicability of research findings in one population setting to other settings (Neyshabur, Bhojanapalli, McAllester, & Srebro, 2017; Jiang, Neyshabur, Mobahu, Krishnan, & Bengio, 2019). If the research generalises to the wider range of population, the research considered as more useful and valuable to the users. This study's finding can be generalising to other public university settings.

## **Population and Location**

The target population of this research comprised of students enrolled in three public Research Universities (RUs) in Malaysia, namely Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Malaya (UM). The sampled students hail from different faculties, including Business, Engineering, Science, and Humanities. Public university students were chosen for the present study firstly because public universities keep a good balance of students from different ethnic groups. Plus, the universities selected for the present study are the most prestigious in Malaysia and have many local students from different ethnic groups. Besides, research universities receive significant external support to conduct research and serve as role models for other universities to aspire to and emulate (Kuh & Hu, 2001). Second, most of the local undergraduate students in the selected universities live in residential colleges (Tamam, 2012). Students who live in residential colleges have more opportunities to interact and join activities with university mates and friends of different ethnicities on campus grounds.

The accessible population in the study only comprised final year undergraduates because these students have gained diverse formal and informal learning experiences for more than two years on campus. This is a developmental stage known as the psychosocial moratorium where students at this age are free to explore different adult roles to identify the best role that fits them and that would prepare them to serve the community. It is important to explore the diverse experiences in campus engagement, as this factor could contribute to a positive educational outcome among the students. Furthermore, the higher education sector is responsible for developing responsible citizens and for encouraging engagement in the community. By exploring the target population, the present study can identify whether or not the higher education sector has fulfilled its basic mission of preparing a good citizenry upon graduation. Therefore, UPM, UM, and UKM are considered suitable selections and are appropriate for the study, as all represent the higher education sector in Malaysia. Undergraduates from UPM, UM, and UKM also represent the characteristic of students studying in other tertiary education institutions.

The population under study consisted of final-year undergraduate students, who are Malay, Chinese, Indian, and other ethnicities. The sample is from UPM, UKM, and UM. In 2015, the year in which this study was done, Universiti Putra Malaysia had a population of 4451 final-year undergraduate students (Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2016) whereas Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia had 4025 final-year undergraduate students (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2016). Meanwhile, Universiti Malaya had 2836 Malay, Chinese, Indian, and other-ethnicity final-year undergraduate students.

## **Sample Size**

A sampling procedure refers to the process of choosing individuals from a target population (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Hair et al. (2006) mentioned that in a quantitative study, the statistical method used to analyse data will help in determining

the sample size. An adequate sample size is essential as it has to support the research objectives and helps to paint a clearer picture of the relationships that exist between the constructs studied (Goodhue, Lewis, & Thompson, 2012). Thus, the minimum sample size should be large enough to be a good representative of the population being studied (Creswell, 2013), and should meet the requirement of the statistical test used (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009).

Two techniques were used to determine the sample size of the study. First, the sample size was calculated and confirmed according to the suggestion given by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010). Hair et al. (2010) said that research models with seven or less latent constructs (with less than three items for some constructs) would require a minimum sample size of 300. From the conceptual model of this study, the current consists of three constructs and hence, 300 would be the minimum sample size required.

The next step was determining the sample size representatives for each selected university. In determining the sample size for each selected university, the researcher referred to Israel (1992). The Israel (1992) sampling method used in most of the social behaviour and social attitude researches (Israel, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001), that's the reason this study employs this method to determine sample size from the for each selected university. The total population of the final year undergraduate students from each university taken into consideration to calculate the number of samples needed for each university in out of the total 300 respondents.

The total population of the final year undergraduate students in UPM was 4451 thus making the sample size of 98, followed by 98 from UKM and 97 from UM are adequate to represent the population of each university, as shown in Table 1. Taking into account the possibility of dropouts in some samples, a sample size of 100 was taken for each university; therefore, fulfilling the needed number of respondents for the PLS-SEM model used in this study. A sample of 300 for this research, as obtained from the selected universities, will ensure data reliability and an increased degree of confidence. The reason this study utilised two sampling techniques are, first technique is to identify the accurate samples to measure using PLS-SEM from the larger population. Second technique was used to identify sample need from each selected university.

**Table 1 : Population and Sample Size**

Location /HEIs	Population of local bachelor's degree student	Sample size
UPM	4451	98
UM	2836	97
UKM	4025	98

Note: The sample size was determined based on Israel (1992)

Sekaran and Bougie (2010) state that the general guideline for sample size is one that is between 30 and 500, making it suitable for most research. To get the sample size for this research, three things are required: (i) the degree of confidence required to approximate the true value, (ii) the precision of the estimate, and (iii) the amount of true variability present in the data. If there is a trade-off between precision and level of confidence or both, the sample size must be increased. Ringle (2014) stated that a bigger sample size would increase the precision (i.e., consistency) of PLS-SEM estimations. Although PLS-SEM can be used to identify the minimum sample size, a higher confidence level for the estimate will result in a larger sample for the research.

With a larger sample size, the researcher would be more confident in determining an answer that truly reflects the population (Waldman & Lilienfeld, 2016). A large sample size reduces sampling error and allows the researcher to run more sophisticated statistical tests on data. Besides, a larger sample size also affords greater reliability. Therefore, based on these arguments on sample size estimation, the present study took Hair et al.'s (2010) and Israel (1992) approaches to obtain the appropriate sample size. The final sample size was determined as a minimum of 300.

### **The Sampling Procedure**

Stratified systematic sampling was employed to help achieve a study sample that represented the population well. By doing this, the research is able to capitalize on the advantages of both stratified and systematic sampling. In stratified systematic sampling, the researcher has to assign meaningful strata to the units to be analysed, in accordance with the multiple strata within the population to be studied. This is done so that the strata are rightly reflected. This method has an edge on efficiency as every essential segment in the population has adequate representation within the sample. To accomplish this method, every  $n$ th element in the sampling frame was chosen.

The primary method of dividing the population was through the ethnic makeup of the population within UKM, UPM, and UM. The subject's ethnic identity was categorised into Malay, Chinese, Indian, and other groups i.e. four categories of respondents. Then, the total number of respondents for each of the four categories is indicated. Based on the population in UKM, UPM, and UM, the proportion of the four ethnic groups was 5:2:2:1. This study uses a 5:2:2:1 ratio to represent ethnic composition in selected public university's population comprising Malay, Chinese, Indian and others. A comparable ratio was used by (Ting & Lee, 2019; Wan Husin, Halim & Zul Kernain, 2020) for study's regarding Malaysia Higher education.

Thus, the sample size should be 50 percent Malay, 20 percent Chinese, 20 percent Indian, and 10 percent others to portray the different ethnic distribution in the three universities. Accordingly, out of the 300 respondents, 150 students should be Malay, 60 students should be Chinese and Indians, and 30 respondents should be from other ethnicities. Therefore, for the survey, the researcher recruited 50 Malay, 20 Chinese and Indian, and



10 'other ethnicities' final-year undergraduate students each from UPM, UKM, and UM. There should also be 100 respondents to represent each university.

### **Research Instrument**

To gather all data necessary for this study, a self-administered questionnaire was employed. With the self-administered questionnaire, there is a pre-designed set of questions that the respondent would need to fill up without the researcher's intervention in the data collection process (Nanda, Gupta, Kharub, & Singh, 2013). Questionnaires are typically employed to conduct quantitative research with the purpose of profiling the sample through numbers (e.g. the proportion of the sample in different ethnicities or ages) or for counting how frequently are certain attitudes, opinions, processes, predictions or behaviours present in a sample (Rowley, 2014). One advantage of this approach is the convenience of obtaining responses from many respondents at a specific time, making it relatively cost-effective (Lindell & Whitney, 2001).

The questionnaire (Appendix A) designed for the current study consists of four sections: demographic details, news consumption, sense of civic responsibility, and civic talk. The questionnaire provides a consent statement at the start and an explanation of the study objective. Social desirability is a common phenomenon underlining self-report surveys like the questionnaire in this study. A social desirability response refers to a tendency of giving answers with the intent of being perceived as favourable by others. Therefore, social desirability items were incorporated into the survey to detect socially desirable responses.

Specifically, the respondents were asked to indicate how much do they agree with three statements based on a 7-point Likert scale. Lewis and Erdinc (2017) explained that a 7-point Likert scale items is a sensitive, robust in measure and reflect a respondent's true subjective evaluation. Taken this as a consideration, this study used a 7-point Likert scale item to measures social desirability questions. These statements were: (1) I apologise for my mistakes every time, (2) I remain polite even when people are rude to me, and (3) I have never uttered hurtful words to others. These specifically develop items are deemed to be strongly socially desirable.

A mean score that is higher has a positive correlation with the likelihood of responding in a socially desirable manner. According McKibben and Silvia (2017), in their comprehensive review regarding studies on social desirability, pointed that most of the authors excluded respondents with high social desirability scores and this fact supported by Franzen and Mader (2019). Hence, participants who marked agree/strongly agree to the three statements were seen as having a high tendency towards social desirability and were excluded from the analysis afterward.

The original version of the questionnaire was written in English. However, there was a possibility of English being a disadvantage for respondents with a weaker grasp of the language as the meaning of the questions could be misinterpreted. Hence, a Malay translation of the questionnaire was provided by the members of the thesis supervisory committee to verify that the Malay version was similar to the original. The translation process was done, after a few meeting sessions with supervisory committee. Finally, the translated questionnaires were verified by the Malay linguistics expert from Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, UPM. Careful consideration was taken so that the meaning of the questions was properly retained during translation.

### **Operationalization of Variables**

Here, the operational definition for the study variables is given, divided into demographic variables, news consumption (independent variable), sense of civic responsibility (dependent variable), and civic talk (mediating variable).

### **Demographic Variables**

The respondent demographic characteristics that were measured were age, gender, ethnicity, university attended, study programme, and semester of study. A single question that captured the respondent's gender was posed. The questionnaire also asked the respondents to write their year of birth to capture age. The respondents also had to indicate their ethnicity, choosing between Malay, Chinese, Indian, or others. The respondents also had to indicate the university they were currently attending and their current study programme — whether Science and Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences or others. The last question asked the respondents to indicate their semester of study.

### **Dependent Variable**

Sense of civic responsibility refers to the personal beliefs and feelings that an individual has about his or her responsibility and duty to society. To measure this variable, items from Doolittle and Faul's (2013) civic engagement scale were adopted. The respondents had to rate the importance of nine items on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 7 (extremely important). The nine items are (1) social, to get rid of injustices and care about the disadvantaged in society, (2) working together to build a better society, (3) helping other people, (4) make the community a better place to live, (5) make sure people are treated fairly, (6) speak up for equality (everyone should have the same rights and opportunities), (7) contribute to my community and society, (8) make a difference in my community, (9) help reduce hunger and poverty in the society.

To measure the sense of civic responsibility among the respondents, the mean score was computed. First, the score of each item was added to get a total score. Then, this total score was divided by the total count of items. Finally, the mean scores were split into three categories — low, moderate and high to indicate the level of civic responsibility. The categories were created using a class interval formula. The formula for the class interval entailed subtracting the low score from the high score and then dividing the score by the number of categories required; thus  $(7-1)/3 = 2$ . Table 2 shows the interpretation for sense of civic responsibility based on the mean score.

**Table 2 : Respondents’ Sense of Civic Responsibility**

Mean Score	Sense of Civic Responsibility
1 to 3	Low
3.1 to 5	Moderate
5.1 to 7	High

Note: Items are based on a 7-point Likert scale

A higher mean indicates a better sense of civic responsibility. A low mean score reflects the respondent have little sense of civic responsibility to the problem or issues in the community. The moderate mean score indicates the respondent have reasonable level of sense of civic responsibility to the community members.

### **Independent Variable**

News consumption is defined as the average amount of time spent on mainstream media and non-mainstream media to read and listen to the news in a day. The first question assessed the average time the respondents spent reading and listening to the news on mainstream media in a day. The second question asked for the average time spent reading and listening to the news on the non-mainstream per day. The response choices were from 1 = none, 2 = 1–6 minutes, 3 = 6–10 minutes, 4 = 11–15 minutes, 5 = 16–30 minutes, 6 = 31–60 minutes, and 7 = 61–90 minutes to 8 = more than 90 minutes for both questions.

To measure the level of news consumption, the average score for the time the respondents spent reading and listening to the news on mainstream media in a day was added to the average score for time spent reading and listening to the news on non-mainstream per day to create an overall news consumption index. The mean score was then divided into three groups — low, moderate and high — as a reflection of the respondent’s level of news consumption. As shown in Table 3, a score of less than 30 minutes was indicative of petite levels of news consumption; a score of 31 minutes to 60 minutes reflected modest levels of news consumption; and a score of more than 61 minutes indicated high levels of news consumption.

**Table 3 : Level of News Consumption**

Frequency	Level of News Consumption
Less than 30 min	Low
31 min to 60 min	Moderate
More than 61 min	High

**Mediating Variable**

Civic talk is defined as socio-political discussions revolving around current affairs in the country. To measure this variable, the respondents had to pinpoint the frequency of how much they discussed these issues with their peers and other adults they were not related to. The following questions were posed to the participants: “In the past three months, how often do you talk with peers and friends outside your family members on the following: (1) What you have heard on the news about what is happening in the country, (2) What you have heard on the news about what is happening in the world, (3) Political issues, (4) Social issues, (5) Environmental issues, (6) Economic issues, (7) Cultural issues, and (8) Religious issues. The items were adapted from Ekstrom and Ostman’s (2013) civic talk scale. The response was given based on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always.

To measure the level of civic talk, the mean score was calculated by totaling up the scores of each item and then averaging out the total score across the number of items. The mean scores were then split into three classifications — low, moderate and high — to reflect the level of civic talk among the respondents. The categories were created using a class interval formula. The formula for the class interval entailed subtracting the low score from the high score and then dividing the score by the number of categories required; thus  $(5-1)/3 = 1.333$ . Table 4 shows the interpretation of the level of civic talk based on the mean score.

**Table 4 : Level of Civic Talk**

Mean Score	Level of Civic Talk
1 to 2.33	Low
2.34 to 3.67	Moderate
3.68 to 5	High

Note: Items are based on a 5-point Likert scale

Mean composite scores were computed and a higher mean indicates a frequent involvement of civic talk. Moderate mean score indicates respondent engaged in civic talk sometimes with peers and family members. The low level of mean reflected that respondent rarely involve in civic talk.

## **Pilot Study**

The researcher conducted a pilot test to ascertain the respondents' level of comprehension towards the questionnaire and to identify inconsistencies in the questions. The pilot test is the final and most important stage of the questionnaire design procedure. Pilot testing the questionnaire is invaluable as it highlights any problems with question wordings and answer categories that were previously overlooked. According to Czaja (1998), Hardy and Ford (2014), and Thabane et al. (2010), pilot studies have provided invaluable help to many survey studies as they had amended the surveys with the suggestions that were given by the pilot respondents – such as identifying and changing odd, misleading, or offensive questions and techniques.

Furthermore, the researcher would be able to obtain details on the average duration for the respondents to complete the survey. A pilot test will also ensure a smooth flow by reducing obstacles at the actual data collection stage. Overall, the core objective of the pilot test is identifying vulnerabilities in the questionnaire and its instrumentation so that corrections can be made.

The researcher ran the pilot test in late December 2015. Thirty respondents were selected from the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Permission was requested from the respective lecturer to administer the survey towards the end of the lecture. The ethnic distribution of the pilot study was 15 Malays, 9 Chinese, 4 Indians, and others. More female respondents answered the questionnaire (63.3%) compared to male respondents (36.7%), and most were 21 to 25 years old. The respondents were local undergraduate students who shared similar characteristics with the sample required in the study. The respondents took about twenty to twenty-five minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The participants were given a brief introduction prior to being asked to answer the questionnaire. The students could consult the researcher if they faced difficulties in answering any questions. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the researcher asked the respondents whether the layout, content, and other components of the questionnaire were confusing to them. The instructions proved to be clear, as none of the respondents raised any questions or hesitations.

## **Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are major issues for any research. Validity is defined as the extent to which the results really measure what they are designed to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015). On the other hand, reliability is regarded as the degree to which the same results can be obtained when the study is repeated under the same conditions. The supervisory committee in the Communication and Modern Languages faculty in UPM reviewed the face validity and content of the questionnaire, thus determining the instrument validity. The questionnaire was vetted by the experts in the supervisory

committee in the few meeting sessions. Meetings were held five times before the questionnaires were approved for the pilot test.

The first phase of the face validity meeting was held in the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015 with supervisory committee to recheck the adapted and newly constructs questions are feasible to the research question. The adapted questions are altered to ideally suited the current study. The researcher was given time for 2 weeks to amended the comments made by supervisory committee to correct the scaling of the questionnaire.

The second meeting was conducted 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015 with chairperson of the study – Prof Ezhar Tamam to discuss in details about the questionnaire’s readability. This session solely was to analyse the translated questions from English to Malay language are understandable and the meaning are similar. This analyse was assisted by Malay linguistics expert from Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, UPM to check the clarity of used language.

The third and fourth meetings was conducted on 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015 to discuss regarding the consistency of style and formatting of the questionnaire. The final meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015 to reevaluate the questions and scaling in the questionnaire, able to addressing specific and relevant aspects of the study. This meeting also to finalise the questionnaire before the pilot study. The face validity process is to verified the items in the questionnaire are relevant, reasonable and clear.

Using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, the reliability of the determinant was assessed. Cronbach’s alpha indicates the consistency and stability of how an instrument measures a concept and aids in assessing the “goodness” of a measure (McNeish, 2018). It is a ubiquitous form of internal consistency reliability and is calculated by examining the inter-variable correlation. Reliability analysis is conducted to verify the internal validity and consistency of the items used for each variable. Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2014) recommended values from 0.6 to 0.7 as the lower limit of acceptance for Cronbach’s alpha value.

An alpha value higher than 0.7 is an indicator of homogeneity between items and that all the items are measurements of the same construct. For the pilot study result, the reliability of the constructs ranged from 0.877 to 0.903 (refer to Table 5), so all constructs were within the acceptable range described by Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2014). Directly after the reliability test, confirmatory factor analysis would be used to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity. However, testing the validity and reliability of the pilot study was not practical das the sample size obtained was too small. Thus, the researcher evaluated the validity only after the final data collection stage.

**Table 5 : Reliability Analysis of the Pilot Study**

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha value
Sense of civic responsibility	9	0.903
Civic talk	8	0.877

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Primary data for the research was collected from mid-February to June 2016. The distribution of questionnaires was done on weekdays i.e. Monday to Friday, from 8 pm to 10 pm and excluded public holidays and the weekend (Saturdays and Sundays). The time was set from 8 pm to 10 pm because this was the time that most of the students would be at their hostel. This study recruited final-year undergraduates because these students have been studying in the university longer than any other student groups and are in a better position to provide their opinion regarding items under the respective construct of the study.

Since most of the local students stayed in hostels, the researcher requested permission to collect data from the respective heads of the residential colleges in UKM, UPM, and UM before the data acquisition stage. With permission from the respective management of the student's residential college, the researcher then put up a notice one week before the actual data collection to call for final-year students who were interested to be the respondents. The questionnaire was distributed to the respective respondents according to a fixed time and venue.

Based on the final year student's statistics in UPM, Residential College 12, 14, and Kolej Tun Dr Ismail (KTDI) were selected for the data collection. Residential College 12 and 14 permitted the researcher to distribute the questionnaire at the cafeteria, a place that the students would frequent for dinner from 8 pm to 10 pm. Meanwhile, KTDI provided an area in the student lounge to pass out the questionnaire. The notice mentioned the venue of the questionnaire distribution; thus, the students would conveniently be able to come to the venue on time. The questionnaires were given individually to the participants. Every third student who was a final-year undergraduate was selected to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed by the respondents independently, according to the stipulated instructions. The recruitment of the respondents from UPM ended when the quota for each ethnic group's sample size was reached. Assisted by an enumerator, the researcher took about four weeks to distribute and collect the questionnaires in UPM, starting from 29 February to 25 March 2016. The researcher confirmed with the potential respondents that they had not filled the questionnaire earlier. The respondents took about twenty to twenty-five minutes to answer the questionnaire.

At UKM, out of 12 residential colleges, Aminuddin Baki, Dato Onn, and Ungku Omar were selected for data collection. At UM, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Residential Colleges were selected for the data collection process. These residential colleges were selected because they housed the highest proportion of Malay, Chinese, and Indian final year undergraduate students. The residential college management permitted the researcher to distribute the questionnaire at the student lounge, a place where different students would meet each other to discuss assignments and other activities. The student lounge is the best point to access the highest number of respondents from different ethnicities. One week before data collection, a notice was put up to inform the students about the survey. The researcher, assisted by the student representative council of the residential college, distributed the questionnaire. Based on the same sampling, the third local final undergraduate student was given the questionnaire until the required sample size was achieved. The data collection process at UKM took almost four weeks, from 4–29 April 2016. In between the data collection process, the students took a mid-semester break from 11 April to 17 April 2016. Therefore, the data collection process for UKM ended up taking almost four weeks. Meanwhile, the data collection process for UM took three weeks, starting from 16 May to 3 June 2016.

If the researcher failed to find the respondents at a particular time, the next session would start with the permission of the management. Upon completion, the respondents immediately returned the questionnaire and were given a token of appreciation. The study employed the above method to allow the respondents to attend the questionnaires without any pressure so that whatever response provided would reflect their true opinion; therefore, eliminating any response bias stemming from time constraints and the presence of the researcher. A total of 305 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in UPM, UKM, and UM. Respondents who were found to give only socially acceptable answers to portray a positive view of self-image were eliminated from the data. Such cases were promptly determined through social desirability items which were incorporated into the questionnaire. From this criterion, 5 cases were omitted. Upon removing those 5 cases from the full dataset, a final sample size of 300 was kept to proceed to analysis. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

### **Data Analysis**

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) software were utilised in the data analysis stage. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) helps in evaluating the overall fit of a particular model, together with the structural model as well (Hair, Hufit, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). Using SEM, the hypothesised structural linkages among variables are evaluated, as well as the link between a certain variable and its respective measures. SEM is a class of multivariate statistical methods to investigate explicit (direct) and implicit (indirect) relationships between one or more independent latent variables (Gefen & Rigdon, 2011; Vinzi, 2013). SEM may be regarded as a flexible modeling tool helpful in executing an array of multivariate statistical analyses, including but not limited to regression analysis, factor analysis, growth curve modeling, canonical correlation analysis, and path analysis (Gefen, 2000; Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010).



All in all, SEM consists of two major approaches — a component-based approach such as Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) and a covariance-based approach (CB-SEM). They differ in their underlying statistical assumptions and therefore produce different statistical fits (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011; Tenenhaus & Esposito, 2005). CB-SEM employs the maximum likelihood (ML) function to lessen the differences between the sample covariance and those predicted by the theoretical model. The main objective of PLS-SEM, on the other hand, is to maximise the covariance between the predictor latent variable and the dependent latent variable (Hulland, 1999).

According to Hair et al. (2011), to determine if one should select CB-SEM or PLS-SEM, a few factors come into play such as the research objective, the data characteristics, measurement model specification, whether the model is complex or nonrecursive, and the model evaluation. A few guidelines exist for choosing between the two approaches. First, the researcher would have to take into account the research objective. CB-SEM is more suitable if the research aims to test or verify a theory. Meanwhile, PLS-SEM is more appropriate if the research is better suited for predicting and theoretical development.

Secondly, CB-SEM usage is confined only to research models that employ reflective constructs. However, PLS-SEM is more generous as it could be used in analysing a research model that consists of both formative and reflective constructs. Third, with CB-SEM, there are underlying assumptions that must be satisfied before delving into deeper analysis with the CB-SEM software such as the independence of observations, multivariate normality of the data, normal distribution of the data, variable metric uniformity, and minimum sample size. Meanwhile, PLS-SEM provides a more robust approach and can be used to perform analysis on data that is not normally distributed.

This study utilised PLS-SEM to assess the theoretical model of the study according to the above rules of thumb and for the reasons listed below:

1. The focus of this analysis does not require measuring the model invariance. The focus of this study is on prediction of sense civic responsibility and theoretical development using the civic talk.
2. This research aims to test the relationships based on prior theoretical knowledge. This study is not to confirm the theory but to explore the theory.
3. PLS-SEM has an advantage in being able to estimate the correlation between the residuals, thus further assessing the residuals' impact on the model.
4. The research objective is to explain the relationship between exogenous and endogenous construct.
5. This study is exploratory research because the objective of the study to predict new observation.

## **Pre-analysis of Data**

The pre-analysis stage reports the preliminary findings of the study, including the test results for normality, validity, and reliability. PLS-SEM is a nonparametric statistical method where the normality assumption of the data is not required to be fulfilled. However, the data verification process is important, so that the data does not fall into the extreme position range, which could influence the hypothesis significance (Hair et al., 2014). Pre-analysis data screening was done as follows: first, the normality of data was evaluated using two components of normality — Skewness and Kurtosis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). The Skewness value should ideally fall between  $-3$  and  $+3$  and the Kurtosis values should be in the range of  $-10$  and  $+10$ . In the current study, the Skewness value ranged between  $-0.85$  and  $+0.36$ , and the Kurtosis values ranged between  $-0.23$  and  $+0.72$ . Thus, the data was normally distributed.

## **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics are used to provide some elaboration on the characteristics of the respondents. Descriptive statistics such as percentages frequencies, means, and standard deviations were applied to summarise the characteristics of the data with the help of SPSS 22.0 software. Descriptive analysis is helpful in identifying differences among participants, with regards to all the variables being investigated. Univariate analysis is helpful to show the background of the respondents, including age, ethnicity, gender, and year of study.

## **Reflective and Formative Constructs**

According to the existing literature on SEM, the latent variable (LV) can be modeled using either formative or reflective indicators. Reflective constructs are seen as constructs that are impacted by the same underlying construct (Memon, Ting, Ramayah, Chuah, & Cheah, 2017). For a reflective construct, the direction of causality is from the latent variables to the indicators, thus any changes in the underlying constructs are surmised to affect the indicators (Mackenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). Diagrammatically, the direction of the arrow in the reflective construct from the latent variables to the reflective indicators.

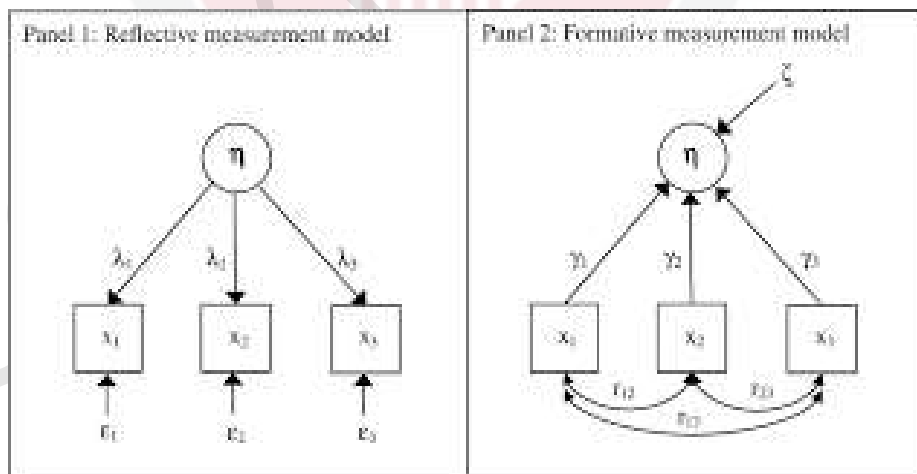
Moreover, indicators for a reflective construct should have internal consistency as all of the measures are presumed to be equally valid indicators of the underlying latent variable (Becker, Klein, & Wetzels, 2012). On the other hand, formative constructs refer to constructs that contain formative indicators. When combined, these indicators induce the meaning of the latent variables (Becker et al., 2012). On the contrary to a reflective construct, formative constructs operate under the assumption that the measures (indicators) affect the underlying construct (Jarvis, Mackenzie, & Podsakoff, 2004). For reflective constructs, the conceptual and empirical meaning of the construct is collectively determined by the set of indicators.

A reflective construct needs to have internal consistency. Therefore, internal reliability measures must be employed to ensure the measure is reliable. Furthermore, a reflective construct is required to be unidimensional and, if a measure is removed, the content validity will not be affected. However, formative indicators do not require correlation nor have high levels of internal consistency. Thus, any changes to the formative measures will only affect the underlying construct. A formative construct represents the different dimensions of the latent construct.

For constructs that use reflective measures, one should examine the loading of the construct, as it is an apt representative of the correlation between the indicators and component scores. If a construct uses formative measures, weights should be examined to interpret the formative indicators, as it shows the significance of each indicator in forming the component. This case is shown diagrammatically in Figure 2.

This study employed reflective measurement model based on the following theoretical guidelines:

1. Reflective indicators are often used in behavioural sciences research construct. This study measures the behaviour and attitudes of the respondent, therefore suitable to use reflective measures.
2. Characteristics of the items – the construct is a trait in explaining the indicators.
3. Items share the common theme. The indicators represent a single meaning. Dropping an indicator does not alter the meaning of the construct.



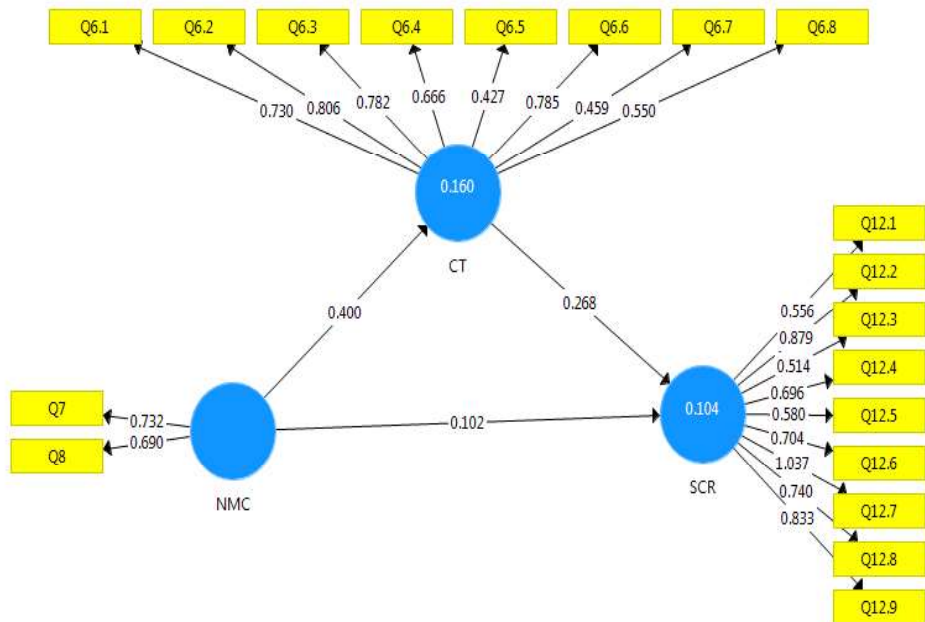
**Figure 2 : Reflective and formative measurement constructs**  
(Adapted from Hair et al., 2014)

Four models describe the integration of reflective and formative constructs, namely Type I (reflective–reflective), Type II (reflective–formative), Type III (formative–formative), and Type IV (formative–reflective). The Type I model is used to study the relationship between first-order and second-order constructs that are reflective and correlated (Becker et al., 2012). For the Type II model, the first-order constructs are reflectively measured constructs with no similar causes but instead creates a general concept that completely mediates the influences of the endogenous variable (Chin, 1998a). Meanwhile, the Type III model measures the first-order and second-order constructs according to a general concept (Hair et al., 2014). Finally, for the Type IV model, the first-order construct is an integration of a few specific formative second-order constructs (Becker et al., 2012).

The selection of reflective or formative constructs was operationalised based on theoretical consideration. Thus, the current study adopted the Type I model.

### **Measurement Model**

Measurement model is a component of the path model containing the indicators together with the relationships they have with the constructs. The measurement model permits the assessment of the relationship between the observed and unobserved variables (Stein, Morris, Hall & Nock, 2017). The measurement model is known as an inner model. Measurement model assesses the relationship between latent variable and the indicators. In this study, the PLS Algorithm procedure in the SmartPLS 3.2.8 software was used to perform measurement model analysis (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015) to assess the validity and reliability of the construct. The measurement model of this study is illustrated as in Figure 3.



**Figure 3 : The Measurement Model for the Mediation of SCR and NMC**

Note : Exogenous construct (NMC = News Consumption), mediator (CT = Civic Talk), and endogenous constructs (SCR = Sense of Civic Responsibility)

The reflective measurement model can be subject to validation by investigating the indicator reliability, internal consistency, discriminant validity, and convergent validity the model. This measurement model can be used for both constructs — reflective and formative (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The suggested threshold for each index is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6 : A summary of validity guidelines to assess reflective measurement model**

Assessment Test	Name of Index	Level of Acceptance	Literature Support
<b>1. Reliability</b>	Internal consistent reliability	Cronbach Alpha > 0.7	Robinson, Shaver & Wrighman (1991)
		Composite Reliability > 0.708	Hair et al 2010, Hair et al 2014
<b>2. Convergent validity</b>	1. Average Variance Explained (AVE)	AVE score > 0.5	Hair et al 2010, Hair et al 2014
	2. Factor Loadings	Loading for indicators > 0.4	Hulland, 1999
<b>3. Discriminant validity</b>	1. Cross-Loadings Assessment	Cross loadings score differ by 0.1	Vinci, Henselar, Chin & Wong (2010)
	2. Fornell & Larcker criterion (1981)	AVE > r <sup>2</sup>	Hair et al 2010, Hair et al 2014
	3. HTMT criterion (2014)	HTMT0.85 HTMT0.90 HTMTinference	Kline (2011) Gold et al (2001) Henseler et al (2014)

## Reliability Indicator for Reflective Measurement Constructs

### Internal Consistency

Previous studies would normally measure the internal consistency of an item using Cronbach's alpha (CA). A construct possessing a high CA value is an indicator that the items in the construct share the same range and meaning (Cronbach, 1951). Through CA, one is able to approximate the reliability of the items by looking at the correlation between indicators. Although Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) is ubiquitously used to measure reliability, composite reliability (CR) is an efficient alternative to evaluate internal consistency and reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Composite reliability (CR) is used to measure internal consistency for PLS (Chin, 1998). While CA and CR both quantify internal consistency, CR considers that indicators do not have the same loadings. CA underestimates internal consistency reliability as it disregards the difference between measures and operates under the assumption that all indicators have equal weights (Bagozzi & Youjae Yi, 1988). Regardless of the reliability coefficient used, a value of at least 0.7 in the initial stage and above 0.8 or 0.9 in later stages of research is a satisfying marker of internal consistency reliability. However, a value lower than 0.6 reveals low reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Composite reliability values of more than 0.7 indicate good reliability (Hair et al., 2014). The news

consumption variable is 0.859; the sense of civic responsibility variable returned a CR of 0.936, and a CR of 0.877 was obtained for the civic talk variable. The composite reliability of variables in this research, therefore, fulfills the reliability criteria ( $> 0.70$ ), as shown in Table 7.

### **Convergent Validity**

The convergent validity for the constructs was evaluated according to the average variance extracted (AVE) and factor loading. Convergent validity is regarded as the extent to which individual items reflect the convergence of a construct relative to items measuring different constructs (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010). Through PLS, the AVE value may be helpful to evaluate convergent validity. Fornell and Larcker (1981) mentioned that when the AVE value of a construct is at least 0.5, sufficient convergent validity is achieved.

Convergent validity can be ascertained by examining factor loading, AVE, and CR (Hair et al., 2014). Factor loadings of 0.4, 0.5, 0.6, and 0.7 can be accepted if they lead to an AVE larger than 0.5 (Byrne, 2016; Hulland, 1999). In the current study, the AVE value was recorded as 0.511 to 0.753, exceeding the suggested threshold value of 0.5, thereby indicating that the study's measurement model has reached a convergent validity that is adequate. In order to achieve an adequate convergent validity, each construct should account for at least 50 percent of the assigned indicator's variance ( $AVE \geq 0.50$ ) (Hair et al., 2017). According to Chin (1998), indicator loadings should be significant at least at the 0.05 level and the loadings should be greater than 0.7. In this study, loading values equal to and higher than 0.4 can be accepted, if the summation of loading results in high loading scores contribute to AVE scores higher than 0.5. The factor loadings ranged from 0.427 to 1.037 (refer to Table 7), therefore the constructs proved to have convergent validity and hence the constructs significantly explain the variables.

Consider the PLS characteristic of consistency, some cautiousness is required when choosing to remove an indicator (Henseler et al., 2015). Removing an indicator would be logical only when the reliability of the indicator is low and if removing it results in a sizable increase in CR. It is concluded that the constructs meet reliability and convergent validity requirement at this stage.

**Table 7 : Reliability and Validity Analysis**

Construct	Loading Factor	CR	(AVE)	Convergent Validity (AVE > 0.5)
<b>News Consumption</b>				
Item		0.859	0.753	YES
1. Read and listen to the news on mainstream media	0.732			
2. Read and listen to the news on non-mainstream media	0.690			
<b>Sense of Civic Responsibility</b>				
Item		0.936	0.621	YES
1. Social, to get rid of injustices and care about the disadvantaged in society	0.556			
2. Working together to build a better place to live in	0.879			
3. Helping other people	0.514			
4. Make the community a better place to live in	0.696			
5. Make sure people are treated fairly	0.580			
6. Speak up for equality	0.704			
7. Contribute to my community and society	1.037			
8. Make a difference in my community	0.740			
9. Help reduce hunger and poverty in society	0.833			



Civic Talk	0.877	0.511	YES
Items			
1. What you have heard on the news about what is happening in the country?	0.730		
2. What you have heard on the news about what is happening in the country?	0.806		
3. Political issues	0.782		
4. Social issues	0.666		
5. Environmental issues	0.427		
6. Economic issues	0.785		
7. Cultural issues	0.459		
8. Religious issues	0.833		

## Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is helpful to distinguish the measures of one construct from the other. In contrast with convergent validity, discriminant validity tests that the items do not inadvertently measure different (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010). In PLS, there are three forms of discriminant validity which are ordinarily used — Fornell-Larcker's criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), cross-loading (Chin, 1998b), and recently the HTMT ratio method proposed by Henseler et al. (2015).

Cross-loading is attained by looking at the correlation of individual latent variable component score with all of the other items (Chin, 1998). If the loading for each indicator is higher for its designated construct relative to any other constructs, it can be surmised that the indicators of the different constructs are not interchangeable. Utilizing Fornell-Larcker's criterion presupposes that the latent variables share more variance with its respective indicators than with any other latent variable. Ergo, the AVE of each latent variable should be higher than the latent variable's highest squared correlation with any other latent variable.

However, recent PLS-SEM studies by Henseler et al. (2015) argued that Fornell and Larcker's (1981) analysis on the discriminant validity did not show a detailed description of the inter-correlation constructs, so it needs further clarification. Henseler et al. (2015) thus proposed a new method called the HTMT ratio of correlation to assess the discriminant validity to demonstrate an in-depth analysis of the discriminant validity between constructs.

Henseler et al. (2015) tested discriminant validity in two steps: i) as a criterion or ii) as a statistical test. In the former, should the HTMT value be higher than 0.85 (Kline, 2011), or be valued at 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001), then, there is an issue of discriminant validity. The second criterion is to evaluate the hypothesis ( $H_0: HTMT \geq 1$ ) against the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1: HTMT < 1$ ) and if the value one falls in the confidence interval, this is an indicator of lacking discriminant validity.

As mentioned above, discriminant validity in this study was presented in two ways: Fornell-Larcker's criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) in Table 8 and the HTMT analysis (Henseler et al., 2015) in Table 8. Fornell-Larcker's criterion indicated no discriminant issues, as the square root of AVE was above the threshold of 0.5 (0.71–0.867), suggesting adequate convergent validity.

**Table 8 : Fornell-Larcker’s analysis**

Construct	Civic Talk	News Consumption	Sense of Civic Responsibility
Civic Talk (CT)	<b>0.715</b>		
News Consumption (NC)	0.307	<b>0.867</b>	
Sense of Civic Responsibility (SCR)	0.280	0.165	<b>0.788</b>

The HTMT analysis shown in Table 9 also indicates no discriminant validity, as the correlation analysis between the tested constructs showed a value below the threshold of 0.85 (Kline, 2011) or 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001). Hence, this study concludes that there was no discriminant validity established by the measuring model.

All in all, all validity and reliability tests on the measurement model yield satisfying results. The validity and reliability have been verified, underscoring the fit of the measurement model to be used in this study as the estimation parameters for the structural model.

**Table 9 : HTMT analysis**

Constructs	Civic Talks	News Consumption
Civic Talk (CT)		
News Consumption (NC)	0.395	
Sense of Civic Responsibility (SCR)	0.292	0.196

### Structural Model

Validation of the structural model is helpful in performing a systematic assessment of whether the data would support the hypotheses posed by the structural model (Khan, Gohar, Sarstedt, Shiau, Hair, Ringle & Fritze, 2018). Upon successful validation of the measurement model, the structural model can be subject to analysis. In PLS, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and path coefficients (beta values) is used to evaluate the model

The researcher employed the bootstrapping procedure to assess the path with resampling of 5000. According to Hair et al. (2014), the number of bootstrap samples must be greater than the number of valid observations in the original data set. Typically, to establish the stability of results, 5,000 bootstrap samples are suggested. The number of observations of each bootstrapping subsample must be exactly as large as the number of valid observations in the original data set. Path coefficient values were standardised in the range of 1 to 0, with coefficients closer to 1 representing a strong positive correlation and coefficients close to 0 indicating a negative relationship (Hair et al., 2014).

The first important criterion to assess the PLS structural model is evaluating the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of each endogenous LV. The  $R^2$ -value describes the LV's measure of variance compared to its total variance. There are three ways to describe  $R^2$ -value. First, a value of  $R^2$  nearing 0.67 is considered sizable; 0.333 is considered average; values that are 0.19 and lower are considered weak (Chin, 1998). Second, an  $R^2$ -value of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 respectively describe the substantial, moderate, and weak predictive accuracy (Hair et al., 2014). Third,  $R^2$ -values of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.02 respectively describe substantial, moderate, and weak predictive accuracy (Cohen, 1988). The researcher applied the third indicator by Cohen (1988) to predict the  $R^2$ -values because this indicator widely used in social and behavioural science papers.

Meanwhile, by investigating the path coefficient value, a researcher would be privy to how strong the relationship between two LVs is. To assess the relationship between two latent variables, the path coefficient, algebraic sign, magnitude, and significance should be examined. According to Henseler et al. (2015), the path coefficient should go beyond the 0.100 value to ascertain the impact within the model and must be significant at least at the 0.05 significance level.

Next, the effect size for each path model was assessed by computing Cohen's  $f$ -squared value ( $f^2$ ). The  $f^2$  is calculated from the change in  $R^2$  when a particular construct is removed from the model. The effect size allows the researcher to evaluate to which extent does the exogenous construct contribute to the  $R^2$ -value of the endogenous latent variable. The  $f^2$  value ranges from 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, which indicate a small, medium, and large effect size, respectively, for the exogenous construct (Cohen, 1988).

The last step was to assess the model's predictive relevance through the  $Q^2$  and  $q^2$  effect sizes. Predictive relevance was evaluated through a blindfolding analysis. Blindfolding is the process used to obtain cross-validated redundancy measures for each endogenous construct. Blindfolding analysis entails reusing a sampling technique that omits every D-value between 5 and 12. The  $Q^2$ -value was greater than 0, thereby indicating that the exogenous construct has predictive relevance for the endogenous construct. Blindfolding produces should be applied only for the reflective measurement model (Hair et al., 2014). Since this study applied a Type I model, the  $Q^2$ -value was used for reflective constructs (exogenous, endogenous, and mediator) (refer to Table 10).

**Table 10 : A summary of validity guidelines for assessing the structural model**

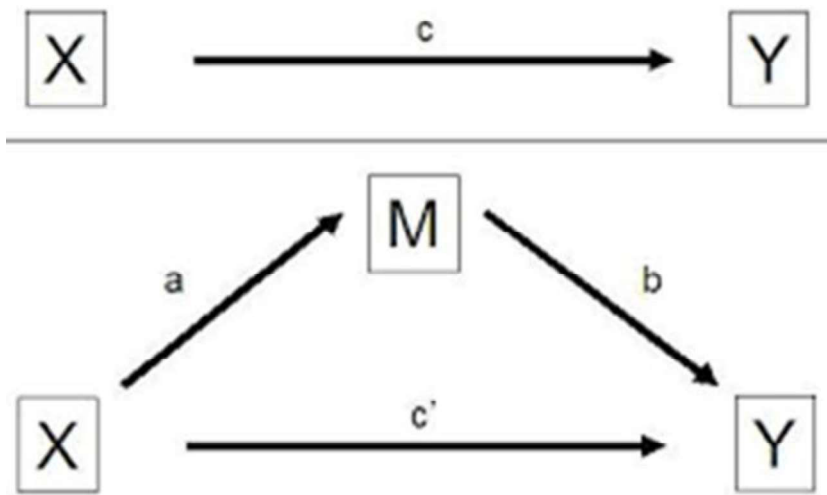
Assessment Test	Name of Index	Level of Acceptance	Literature Support
<b>1. Collinearity</b>	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)	VIF < 3.3 / VIF > 5.0	Diamantopoulos & Sigaouw (2006), O'Brien (2007)
<b>2. Path coefficient</b>	Path coefficient	$p$ -value < 0.05, $t$ -value > 1.96	Hair et al. (2014)
<b>3. R<sup>2</sup></b>	Coefficient of determination	0.26 – Substantial 0.13 – Moderate 0.02 – Weak	Cohen (1988)
<b>4. f<sup>2</sup></b>	Effect size to R <sup>2</sup>	0.35 – Large effect size 0.15 – Medium effect size 0.02 – Small effect size	Hair et al. (2014) Cohen (1988)
<b>5. Q<sup>2</sup></b>	Stone-Geisser Q <sup>2</sup> Predictive relevance	A value larger than 0 indicates that the exogenous constructs have predictive relevance over the endogenous constructs	Stone (1974) Geisser (1974) Hair et al. (2014)

### Mediating Relationship

Baron and Kenny (1986) described a mediating factor as a third variable that explains the relationship between the independent (predictor) and dependent (outcome) variables. In simpler terms, a mediator is a mechanism that bridges the predictor variable's influence over an outcome variable.

In analysing a mediation relationship, previous researchers most commonly refer to the guidelines given by Baron and Kenn (1986) and Carrion, Millán, Landroquez, and Rodriguez (2016). There are four important steps in mediation analysis:

- i. Independent constructs significantly affect the mediator ( $X \rightarrow M$ ),
- ii. Independent constructs significantly affect the dependent construct in the absence of the mediator ( $X \rightarrow Y$ ),
- iii. The mediator has a significant unique effect on the dependent construct ( $M \rightarrow Y$ ),
- iv. Figure 4 explains the mediation relationship, which is theoretically established through direct (between X and Y) and indirect (component M) relationships. The effect of the independent constructs on the dependent construct is lowered after adding the mediator to the model, as in Figure 4 (c).



**Figure 4 : Mediation effect**

Mediating effects can be analysed using the Sobel (1982) test and bootstrapping. However, the Sobel test relies on a normal distribution of the sample size to determine the indirect (implicit) effect and requires an unstandardised path coefficient. Moreover, it is lacking in statistical strength, more so when used with smaller sample sizes (Hair et al., 2014). Instead of the four common steps outlined in Baron and Kenny (1986) and the Sobel test, Preacher and Hayes (2008) recommended one simple solution to calculate the indirect (implicit) effect ( $a*b$ ). Lately, many scholars have recommended using Preacher and Hayes's (2008) mediation analytical technique because of its bootstrapping advantages.

Bootstrapping is a nonparametric resampling method that is widely seen as one of the most powerful and rigorous ways of testing the mediator's effect (Hayes & Scharkow, 2013). Hayes (2013) recommended analysing the mediation interaction by considering the relative size and significance of the total and direct effects. In bootstrapping analysis, mediation analysis should be indicated from the indirect or direct effect of the beta values and confidence interval (upper and lower limits). In this study, the mediation analysis based on Hayes and Scharkow (2013) and Henseler et al. (2015) were determined as follows:

- i. Confidence interval (upper limits and lower limits) was calculated at the same time as discriminant validity (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015).
- ii. The mediation decision was made based on the total effect of the news media consumption constructs on the sense of civic responsibility variable taken as the sum of the direct (c) and indirect effects (path a and path b). The result can be seen at the path coefficient for each of the interactions (beta values) in the measurement model (Hayes, 2013).

- iii. The mediation results present a “yes” when there is a mediation effect and “no” if there is no mediation effect (Henseler et al., 2015).
- iv. The independent variables do not have a significant effect on the dependent variable in direct relationship and significant after inclusion of the mediation variable in indirect relationship is determine as full mediation (Hair et al., 2014).
- v. The independent variable and dependent variable have a significant effect in direct and indirect relationship is determine as partial mediation (Hair et al., 2014).

### **Data Analyses according to Research Objective**

A summary of the research objectives is presented in Table 11

**Research Objective 1:** To identify the level of news consumption among final year undergraduate students were described using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage.

**Research Objective 2:** To identify the level of sense of civic responsibility among final year undergraduate students were described using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage.

**Research Objective 3:** To identify the level of civic talk among final year undergraduate students were described using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage.

**Research Objective 4:** To determine the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among final year undergraduate students. In PLS-SEM, a measurement model and a structural model were established to identify the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous constructs.

**Research Objective 5:** To examine the relationship between news consumption and the civic talk among final year undergraduate students. In PLS-SEM, the measurement model and the structural model were established to identify the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous constructs.

**Research Objective 6:** To determine the relationship of civic talk with the sense of civic responsibility among final year undergraduate students. In PLS-SEM, the measurement model and structural model were established to identify the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous constructs.

**Research Objective 7:** To examine whether civic talk is a partial or full mediator of the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. The results were presented in the structural model (bootstrapping) and identified through t-statistics, significant value, and the decision on whether mediation is supported or not (Henseler et al., 2015).

**Table 11 : A summary of the research objectives, type of data, and statistical analyses**

<b>Research Objective</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Statistical analyses</b>
<b>Research Objective 1</b>	Categorical	Descriptive statistical (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage)
<b>Research Objective 2</b>	Categorical	Descriptive statistical (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage)
<b>Research Objective 3</b>	Categorical	Descriptive statistical (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage)
<b>Research Objective 4</b>	Interval	Structural Model (Beta and p-value)
<b>Research Objective 5</b>	Interval	Structural Model (Beta and p-value)
<b>Research Objective 6</b>	Interval	Structural Model (Beta and p-value)
<b>Research Objective 7</b>	Interval	Mediation Model (Bootstrapping)

### Summary

This chapter described the research design, population and sampling, instrumentation, pre-study, pilot study, data collection, and data analysis. The main objective of this study was to identify the influence of civic talk in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

The target sample size was determined based on Hair et al.'s (2010) and Israel (1992) approaches. A total of 300 respondents were used in the analysis. All measures applied in this study were adopted and adapted from an established instrument with acceptable validity and reliability. Descriptive statistics and PLS-SEM were utilised to answer the five research questions.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are presented in this chapter, through two sections: descriptive analysis and hypotheses testing. The results of the descriptive analysis were derived using SPSS software while the results of the hypotheses testing were produced using PLS-SEM.

#### Demographic Profile of the Respondents

A total of 300 students took part in the survey. There were more female respondents, representing 56% of the total sample, compared to male respondents (44%). This figure corresponds with the gender ratio of the student population in public universities in Malaysia, where female students make up 60% of the overall population and male students only consist of 40% (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2016–2019). As shown in Table 12, summarises of number of student's intake for bachelor degree by gender in the public universities in Malaysian from 2016 till 2019. The figures represent student's intake from twenty public universities in Malaysia. The data shows that more female students in the public universities and align with gender ratio in this study.

**Table 12 : Number of Students' Intake for Bachelor Degree by Gender in Public Universities (2016-2019)**

Year	Male	Female	Total
2019	37,562	62,269	99,831
2018	35,992	62,613	98,605
2017	31,665	61,693	96,483
2016	34,790	57,684	89,349

(Source : Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, Education Statistics 2016-2019.)

Most of the respondents (40.7%) were Malays while the rest comprised other ethnicities such as Chinese, Indian, and others. All ethnicities were well represented in the sample. A significant portion of the respondents (63%) were 20 to 23 years old ( $M = 24.37$ ,  $SD = 1.334$ ) and out of the 300 respondents, 175 (58%) were enrolled in Science and Technology programs followed by 125 (42%) enrolled in Social Sciences and Humanities. Table 13 summarises the demographic profile of the respondents.

**Table 13 : Distribution of Respondents by Demographic and University (N = 300)**

Variables	Percentage			
	All n =300	UPM n = 100	UKM n = 100	UM n = 100
Gender				
Male	44	38	56	38
Female	56	62	44	62
Age (Year)				
20-23	63.3	51	73	66
24-27	35.3	48	25	33
29-30	1.33	1	2	1
Mean	24.37	24.31	23.04	24.67
SD	1.334	1.060	1.575	1.223
Ethnicity				
Malay	40.7	43	41	38
Chinese	26	28	25	25
Indian	22.7	18	25	25
Other	10.7	11	9	12
Program of Study				
Science and Technology	58.3	51	76	48
Social Sciences and Humanities	41.7	49	24	52

Note: UPM: Universiti Putra Malaysia  
 UKM: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
 UM: Universiti Malaya

### Level of news consumption

The first objective of this research was to determine the degree of news consumption. A descriptive analysis was conducted to obtain the proportions (in %), mean, and standard deviation of all the relevant variables. In this step, the data collected from the participants was analysed. The level of news consumption was analysed for the full sample as well as the institutions.

As illustrated in Table 14, the students were asked questions about how frequently (measured in terms of time spent) they would read and listen to the news in a day. The low-level news consumption indicated as less than 30 minutes, 31 minutes to 60 minutes reflected moderate levels of news consumption and more than 61 minutes indicated as high level of news consumption. The findings showed that a large proportion of the

respondents had low news consumption levels; they spent only a few hours consuming news, which was less than 30 minutes a day.

A breakdown of the level of news consumption by institution provides a clearer pattern of the level of news consumption on mainstream and non-mainstream media. At Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Malaya (UM), the respondents indicated a low level of news consumption on mainstream and non-mainstream media, which was less than 30 minutes a day.

Respondents from the three institutions preferred to use non-mainstream media for consuming news compared to mainstream media. That is, UPM (9%), UKM (12%), and UM (11%) respondents showed a high level of news consumption using non-mainstream media compared to mainstream media. The findings show that the respondents at these three institutions had a low level of news consumption and they preferred to use non-mainstream media compared to mainstream media to consume news. However, this observation is based on descriptive statistics; therefore, only the pattern has been identified, which is not conclusive.

**Table 14 : Distribution of Respondents according to Level of News Consumption (Mainstream and Non-Mainstream Media)**

Level of News Consumption	All n = 300		UPM n = 100		UKM n = 100		UM n = 100	
	MM	N-M	MM	N-M	MM	N-M	MM	N-M
Low	87%	77.8%	91%	81%	86%	73%	84%	78%
Moderate	8.3%	12%	7%	10%	9%	15%	9%	11%
High	4.7%	10.7%	2%	9%	5%	12%	7%	11%

Note: Low = Less than 30 min, Moderate = 31–60 min, High = More than 60 min

MM = Mainstream media, N-M = non-mainstream media

UPM = Universiti Putra Malaysia

UKM = Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

UM = Universiti Malaya

This finding displays consistency with past studies (Wonneberger & Kim, 2017; Roger, 2019), which also found that students spent less than 30 minutes a day to read and watch the news. This low level of news consumption corroborates with the finding of Tamam (2015), who also used a local dataset.

The mainstream and non-mainstream news media were not the main sources of news information for the students. This argument concurs with the findings of the Pew Research Center Survey (2018), which found that youth were consistently less knowledgeable about current events than their elders. The popularity of social networking and communication apps has increased and they have gained wide acceptance alternative communication mediums among the youth. Social networking and communication apps have become part of the lives of most youth nowadays due to

their ability to present and share information interactively and attractively. The youth are in the thrall of social networking and communication apps, which distract them and keep them away from learning about more meaningful issues.

Nonetheless, non-mainstream media have evidenced to be fertile for fake news and misinformation for the modern societies especially youth (Talwar, Dhir, Kaur, Zafar & Alrasheedy, 2019). Fake news misleads the youth's psychological, social, political and economic thoughts. This matter increases the worriedness of the people and government, further becomes a critical challenge to overcome (Duffy, Tandoc & Ling, 2020). Most of the youths are unable to reliably evaluate the quality news information, which they encounter in the mainstream media due to lack of the skills and contextual knowledge to effectively distinguish between fake and real news content. Therefore, universities are encouraged to teach digital and media literacy to the students to protect them against misleading content and false claims.

The students' low level of news consumption deprives them of learning and development opportunities afforded by news media. This is because the news media are a significant source of learning and resource for student development. In spite of the deficit in news consumption, educators need to relook at their instructional strategy and incorporate the use of news media as an educational tool. They should strategically embed news media as learning tools to ensure students are exposed to an experience-rich diverse learning style that would prepare them to integrate well into society and face any societal problems that may arise. Hence, students with holistic knowledge and competence, who are also responsible citizens in a democratic society, can be produced.

### **Level of Sense of civic responsibility**

The second research objective aims to determine the level of sense of civic responsibility among youth at selected higher education institutions. In addressing this objective, descriptive statistics is applied. This analysis assessed the sense of civic responsibility (low, moderate, or high) according to specific dimensions. As depicted in Table 15, a majority (88%) of the respondents had a high sense of civic responsibility ( $M = 6.10$ ,  $SD = 0.733$ ). A higher mean indicates a better sense of civic responsibility among the students in tertiary education.

When disaggregated by institution, it can be observed that the respondents at all locations had a high sense of civic responsibility. The majority of the respondents at UPM (89%), UKM (83%), and UM (92%) showed a high sense of civic responsibility. This indicated that students from the selected universities for this study, possess with greater level of civic responsibility to the problem or issues in the community.

**Table 15 : Mean and Distribution of Respondents according to Sense of Civic Responsibility**

Level	All n = 300	UPM n = 100	UKM n = 100	UM n = 100
Mean (SD)	6.100 (.733)	6.171(.655)	5.928 (.872)	6.200 (.622)
Low	0.3%		1%	
Moderate	11.7%	11%	16%	8%
High	88%	89%	83%	92%

Note: Low = 1.00–3.00, Moderate = 3.10–5.00, High = 5.10–7.00

UPM = Universiti Putra Malaysia

UKM = Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

UM = Universiti Malaya

Based on a 7-point Likert scale

Youth who have attained a high sense of civic responsibility would be more responsive and supportive of developmental efforts at all levels such as social, political issues, the integrity of action, and active participation. Education is a tool that helps students learn about civic society. Higher education plays a major part in encouraging students to participate in public life. Past studies (Roksa, Kilgo, Trolian, Pascarella, Blaich, & Wise, 2017 & Flett, Khan, & Su, 2019) have found that higher education not only produces students with the positive educational outcomes but also develops students with a positive self-concept, problem-solving skills, good leadership and cultural awareness, as well as a high level of civic outcome. A sense of civic responsibility is posited to be a vital outcome of student educational and socialisation experiences during their university period (Tamam & Waheed, 2019).

In Malaysia, tertiary education institutions are entrusted to facilitate developing a sense of civic responsibility among students. Higher education is not just aimed at preparing students for productive careers, but also to mould a citizenry with public good at the forefront. Malaysia's Minister of Education has continuously demanded universities and colleges to produce highly qualified graduates that can serve the society; therefore, prompting institutions of higher learning to reconsider fostering a strong civic consciousness among university graduates.

This line of thinking is consistent with the aspiration of the Malaysian government to produce well-rounded and holistic graduates, as per Shift 1 in Malaysia's Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education). Hence, the results of this study prove that Malaysian universities can inculcate an improved sense of civic responsibility among students. The university educators must prepare the student with high competencies, by providing the students with positive and rich diversity learning experiences, further enhance their social skills to survive in the multicultural society like Malaysia.

## Level of civic talk

The third research objective aims at determining the level of civic talk among the respondents, who were local final year undergraduate students at three higher education institutions. Table 16 shows the level of civic talk (high, moderate, or low) of the full sample. Half of the respondents (48.3%) participated with a high level of civic talk while another 47.3% participated in a moderate level of civic talk. The analysis shows that the respondents across the three institutions do engage in frequent civic talk with peers and other adults they were not related to.

A breakdown of the level of civic talk by institution provides more details on the level of civic talk among the respondents. At Universiti Malaya (UM) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), the respondents indicated engaging in a moderate level of civic talk. Almost half of the respondents (48%) from UPM ( $M = 3.555$ ,  $SD = .752$ ) were and more than half of the respondents (51%) from UM ( $M = 3.536$ ,  $SD = .646$ ) moderately engaged in civic talk. Respondent at UM and UPM engaged in civic talk occasionally to discuss about current affairs in country with peers and other adults. More than half of the respondents (53%) at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) engaged in high levels of civic talk ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = .709$ ). However, respondent at UKM shows frequently involve in the civic talk with peers and others adult.

Furthermore, frequent discussion about social and politic issues among the student is important to understand Malaysian values and sense of community. Such communication regarding social and politic, especially about community issues important resource to enhance quality of student upon graduates. Despite of existing of University and University College Acts (AUCCU), did not limit the student's involvement in communicate about social and political issues of the community and country. Student and lecturer enable to talk about socio-political issues with the permission allowed by university management, under provision of this act.

**Table 16 : Mean and Distribution of Respondents according to Level of civic talk**

Level	All n = 300	UPM n = 100	UKM n = 100	UM n = 100
Mean (SD)	3.578 (.703)	3.555 (.752)	3.643 (.709)	3.536 (.646)
Low	4.3%	5%	4%	4%
Moderate	47.3%	48%	43%	51%
High	48.3%	47%	53%	45%

Note: Low = 1.00–2.33, Moderate = 2.34–3.67, High = 3.68–5.00

UPM = Universiti Putra Malaysia

UKM = Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

UM = Universiti Malaya

Based on a 5-point Likert scale

High levels of civic talk among respondents indicate that the youth are involved in communicating social issues happening around them with family and friends. Frequent civic talk with family and friends shows that the youth are aware of current issues happening in society. This result indicates that the youth have built a strong connection with their community and have the abilities to understand societal problems reflected by the environment that they live in.

These findings support the study of Wok et al. (2011), who found that youth were more likely to have a discussion with family members and friends regarding current national news. Moreover, youth are probably more prone to get updates and information from interpersonal sources. Hence, civic talk is a more convenient way for youth to share current issues. The nature of the relationship with a person itself will influence them to engage in more open talk. For example, close relationships such as friendships would have a higher likelihood of being influenced by similar economic and geopolitical factors, thus propelling similar political viewpoints.

Moreover, the existence of current digital communication channels is a prevalent mechanism in sharing information with family members and friends. According to Subramanian (2017), instead of face-to-face communication, social interactions have been reduced to mobile contact or through other available electronic media. Information is more easily shared via social networking and communication applications. The youth can get current information and could take immediate action to solve social issues. Since the youth have a pivotal part to play in fostering social responsibility, they should have more awareness of their responsibility and be more attentive to the social problems occurring within society.

### **Structural Model**

The following section discusses the structural model which was used to test the hypotheses of this study. As seen in Chapter 3, path coefficients and effect size ( $f^2$ ) will be utilised to assess the structural model. Additionally, this study also evaluates the mediator relationship that is being proposed in the research model.

### **Multicollinearity Assessment**

Collinearity was studied before examining the structural relationships to determine that the absence collinearity in the inner model. Multicollinearity was evaluated based on the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, where a higher VIF value is an indicator of a greater level of collinearity. VIF values greater than 5 indicate possible collinearity problems among the predictor constructs. Collinearity problems may happen with lower VIF values, typically 3 to 5 (Becker et al., 2015). Preferably, the values should be near 3.3 and lower. Should there be a problem with collinearity, an option that is regularly exercised is to form higher-order models that can be corroborated by theory (Hair et al., 2017b). As displayed in Table 17, the VIF value for all the study variables was within

an acceptable range. The threshold value is 3.3 (Diamantopoulos & Sigouw, 2006), so there are no inner collinearity issues in this study.

**Table 17 : Collinearity assessment**

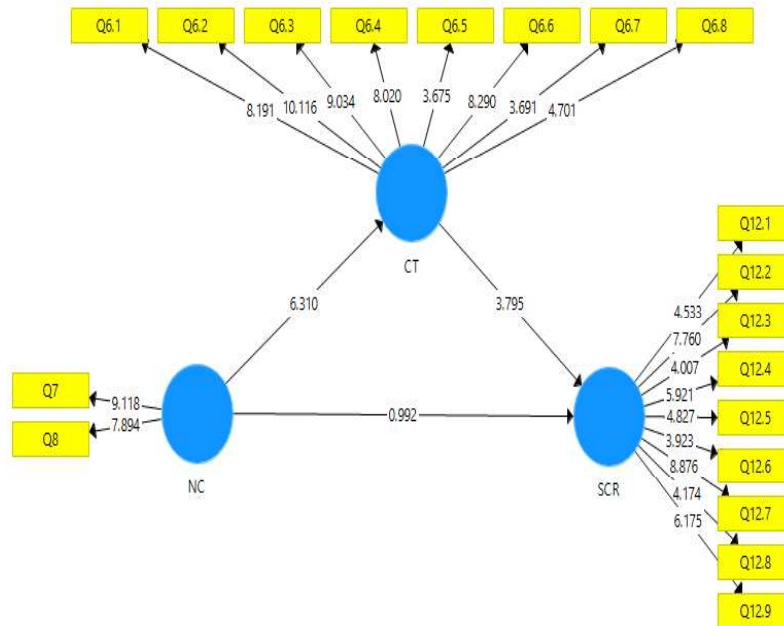
Construct	VIF
News consumption	1.000
Sense of civic responsibility	1.190
Civic talk	1.190

### Hypothesis Test

Using PLS-SEM, the structural model was tested to investigate the inter-variable relationships and to perform a test on the models. PLS-SEM is a combination of path analysis and a measurement model. The former evaluates the relationships among several observed variables and latent constructs (Hair et al., 2017). If the reliability and the validity of the measurement models are verified, the structural model should be a precursor. In this study, the validity and reliability of the measurement models were evaluated and verified, so these models could be useful in investigating the direct and indirect relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

The path coefficient (beta) value, the bootstrapping value (5000 resample), the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), the effect size ( $f^2$ ), and the predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) were the important statistical parameters for determining whether or not the hypotheses are accepted (Hair et al., 2017). The path coefficient (beta) should range between  $-1$  (smaller value) to  $+1$  (larger value). The structural model relationship was evaluated based on a significant decision i.e. the  $p$ -value or  $t$ -statistic, with a 95% confidence interval and effect size ( $f^2$ ). The two-tailed  $t$ -statistics value was measured on three conditions, namely with a  $p$ -value of 2.57 (significance level = 1%), a  $p$ -value of 1.96 (significance level = 5%), and a  $p$ -value of 1.65 (significance level = 10%). This study applied a  $p$ -value of 1.96 for significant conditions. This study applied  $p$ -value of 1.96 because most of the social sciences and business research commonly use this value to evaluate the significant decision (Kennedy-Shaffer, 2019). Based on an Alpha of 0.05, the results of the test statistic should be greater than  $\pm 1.96$  for the research hypothesis to be accepted. The structural model for this study is illustrated in Figure 5.





**Figure 5 : The Structural Model for the Mediation of SCR and NC**

Note : Exogenous construct (NC = News Consumption), mediator (CT = Civic Talk), and endogenous construct (SCR = Sense of Civic Responsibility)

### Relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility

The fourth specific objective of this study was to test the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. In the next section, the individual path relationship is discussed with regards to the specific hypotheses.

H1: *Students that have a higher level of news consumption are more likely to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility*

The first hypothesis mentions that students who display higher levels of news consumption are more inclined to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility. The results show that news consumption did not have a statistically significant relationship with sense of civic responsibility ( $\beta = 0.104$ ,  $t = 0.992$ ,  $p = 0.321$ ). As indicated in Table 18, the effect of the news consumption construct on sense of civic responsibility was small. The effect size,  $f^2 = 0.010$ , influenced the significance of the path relationship. The larger the sample size, the better the effect size indicator, and hence the stronger the significant values. However, in this tested hypothesis, the effect size was very small and this value affected the significant values of the relationship. This result implies that the respondents' level of news consumption did not lead to a sense of civic responsibility. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this research is not supported.

**Table 18 : The path coefficient for the hypothesised relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility**

Path coefficient	Direct effect (B)	$f^2$	t-statistic	p-value
NC → SCR	0.104	0.010	0.992	0.321

Note: NC = News Consumption; SCR =Sense of Civic Responsibility

The finding reveals that news consumption is not a strong predictor of sense of civic responsibility and the relationship was no significant. This result contrasts that of past studies, which provided empirical evidence of the link between news consumption and civic participation/engagement/duty/awareness (Beam et al., 2016; Cho et al., 2014; Ha et al., 2016; Hao et al., 2014; Hashim et al., 2016; Zhang & Lallana, 2013).

Previous studies indicated that news consumption on mainstream and non-mainstream media was one of the prominent factors that developed a civic attitude and behaviour among the youth. However, in the current study, the news consumption construct did not have a direct relationship with sense of civic responsibility. News sources that are now being disseminated via different channels do not build the youth's awareness about what is happening around them. It also does not help them understand community problems and do not foster an increased reflection about civic life. Although the Internet is a more convenient medium for accessing information, the youth are not apathetic to consuming news.

More broadly, this study provides evidence that news consumption is not a major factor influencing the youth's sense of civic responsibility and there exist other factors carrying the influence. As claimed by Halpern (2013), the connection between consuming the news and engaging civically is not necessarily direct.

### **Relationship between news consumption and civic talk**

*H2: Students that have a higher level of news consumption news are more likely to engage in frequent civic talk*

As shown in Table 19, the result shows that news consumption positively correlated with civic talk ( $\beta = 0.403$ ,  $t = 6.310$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). A medium effect size ( $f^2 = 0.190$ ) was observed between news consumption and civic talk. This positive correlation implies that a greater level of news consumption is linked to a greater level of civic talk. This means that high levels of news consumption will positively affect the youth's involvement in civic talk. Therefore, H2 is supported.

**Table 19 : The path coefficient for the hypothesised relationship between news consumption and civic talk**

Path coefficient	Direct effect (B)	$f^2$	t-statistic	p-value
NC → CT	0.403	0.190	6.310	0.000

Note: CT = Civic Talk; NC= News Consumption

The results show a direct relationship between news consumption and civic talk; thus, further supporting the hypothesis of the present study. The finding corroborates with the finding of the exploratory analyses earlier which indicated that the respondents do engage in a frequent level of civic talk. This finding implies that news consumption among students has a greater contribution to civic talk. Although there is a low level of news consumption among the students, it still contributes to civic talk. The youth can get the latest and most updated information from their daily conversation with parents, peers, and other members of society. However, there is generally a medium effect size of the relationship between news consumption and civic talk. This aligns with earlier study findings (Hayat, Juliana, Umer, 2015; Kligler-vilenchik, 2015; Mascheroni & Murru, 2017), which found that news consumption predicted better civic talk.

Furthermore, the digital revolution has fundamentally increased the opportunities for people to talk and discuss civic issues. Social networking and communication apps have enabled the respondents to share and disseminate information within seconds. As an emerging platform for news dissemination and information sharing, the Internet provides a novel outlet for the spreading of uncensored news around the world. The modern era has access to a thousand different networks to review news such as YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. to get up-to-date news and people can share this information with whomever they want.

The older generation, however, prefers to review newspaper, television news, and radio news to get updates on the daily, which consumes more time. Therefore, digital and mobile technologies play a stronger role in facilitating online public discussion. The results reveal the students' concern over the community by communicating and sharing the news that they have read or listened to.

### **Relationship between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility**

H3: *Students that engage in the frequent civic talk are more likely to have a stronger sense of civic responsibility*

Table 20 depicts the relationship between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility. The result shows that civic talk has a positive correlation with sense of civic responsibility ( $\beta = 0.280$ ,  $t = 3.795$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). As the effect size of civic talk and sense of civic responsibility was small ( $f^2 = 0.068$ ), it may be surmised that civic talk has a significant effect on the sense of civic responsibility but the impact is not necessarily meaningful. The finding also reveals that there is a significant relationship between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility but civic talk on its own does not strongly predict sense of civic responsibility, because of its weaker effect size. The positive correlation insinuates that respondents who engage in a greater level of civic talk would more likely have higher levels of civic responsibility. Thus, H3 is accepted.

**Table 20 : The path coefficient for the hypothesised relationship between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility**

Path coefficient	Direct effect (B)	$f^2$	t-statistic	p-value
CT → SCR	0.280	0.068	3.795	0.000

Note: CT = Civic Talk; SCR = Sense of Civic Responsibility

This study found that there is a substantial positive link between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility. Therefore, the more the respondents talk or discuss community issues, the greater their sense of civic responsibility. The findings corroborate past claims that interpersonal communication and citizen communication enhance the sense of civic responsibility (Klofstad, 2007, 2015; Peacock & Leavitt, 2016; Scott & Šerek, 2015). Klofstad (2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2015) found that civic discussion increased civic engagement and led to the discussions to mobilise one another to engage in civic activities.

Civic talk is not just talking about the community, it is talk that makes and remakes the community. It is the best platform for youth to interact as a group over common concerns in a setting that empowers them to participate and make changes in the community. Civic talk can be considered a form of participation that has the potential for shaping opinions and establishing a sense of civic responsibility.

Engagement in civic discussion depends on the type of relationships such as parents, peers, and other members of society. Hence, the nature of the relationship between the discussants also betters and strengthens the effect of civic talk and the sense of civic responsibility. Individuals who have a closer relationship with each other will influence one another more easily because they trust each other and share everything. This level of closeness in the relationship makes the youth feel secure and provides a strong foundation that allows them to openly discuss community problems with others.

## Indirect Path

### Mediation effect on civic talk

To test for the mediation effect in PLS-SEM, the researched employed a method proposed by Hayes and Preacher (2014) and Hair et al (2017), that is, bootstrapping the indirect effect. According to Hayes and Preacher (2014), to prove a mediation effect, the indirect effect when bootstrapping at 95% should not straddle the “0” mark in between the upper limit (UL), 97.5%, and lower limit (LL), 2.5%.

The seventh research objective was to evaluate the mediating effect of the civic talk variable on the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Thus, it is hypothesised that:

H4: Civic talk significantly mediates the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility

To test the fourth hypothesis, three relationships were examined: i) the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, ii) the relationship between the independent and mediating variables, and iii) the relationship between dependent and mediating variables. The result shows that the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility was not significant ( $\beta = 0.104$ ,  $t = 0.992$ ,  $p = 0.321$ ) in the direct model. Civic talk as the mediator variable was added to the model and bootstrapping was done with 5000 resamples to evaluate the significance of the direct and indirect effects.

**Table 21 : A summary of the structural model of the direct and indirect effect between NC, CT, and SCR**

	Std. Be	t- statistic	Confidence Interval Low	Confidence Interval Up	p-value	Result
<b>NC → CT → SCR</b>	0.107	2.869	0.050	0.196	0.004	<b>Significant</b>

Note: CT = Civic Talk; NC = News Consumption; SCR = Sense of Civic Responsibility

As indicated in Table 21, the indirect relationship between the independent variable (news consumption), the mediating variable (civic talk), and the dependent variable (sense of civic responsibility) was significant and positively correlated ( $\beta = 0.107$ ,  $t = 2.869$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ), with a confidence interval of less than zero (0.050, 0.196). Therefore, H4 is accepted. This finding provides evidence that the role of civic talk as a mediator between the news consumption and sense of civic responsibility relationship has given an added value. Moreover, the findings imply that civic talk fully mediates the link

between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Full mediation occurs when the indirect effect is significant but the direct effect is not significant. This description is consistent to the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility with the intervention from civic talk, where the direct effect is not significant, but the indirect effect is significant.

The results show that civic talk fully mediated the positive effects that were brought by news consumption on sense of civic responsibility. Hence, the fourth hypothesis of this research (on the mediating effect of civic talk on the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility) is supported. The link between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility is made significant with the intervention from civic talk. In other words, news consumption does not affect the sense of civic responsibility directly but through the civic talk able to develop better sense of civic responsibility among the youth. The amount civic talk which discusses about the current information from the news influences youth's community involvement.

The important role of civic talk as a mediating variable in the relationship of news consumption and civic development supports similar earlier works (Chan-Olmsted et al., 2012; Claes, Maurissen, & Havermans, 2017; Eveland & Hively, 2009; Homero Gil, 2012; Homero Gil de Zuniga et al., 2013; Park, 2014; Subramanian, 2017; Zukauskien, 2012). This study revealed a glimpse into the influence civic talk as a mediator for the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Although civic talk as a mediator has been studied in the context of civic engagement, political engagement, civic duty, and civic development, its significance has not been explored in the context of sense of civic responsibility.

Using news media as a platform for communication has enormous potential as highlighted by previous research. Studies have directly related usage of news media with civic engagement (Hao, Wen, & George, 2014) and political engagement (Eze & Obono, 2018; Mushtaq et al., 2018), arguing that the news media is a provider of informational resources, opposing viewpoints, and mobilises information similar to civic talk (Nainan, Xiaoming, & George, 2013). Evidence gathered under the rubric of civic talk mediation (Chan, Chen, & Lee, 2016; Klofstad, 2007, 2015; McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999) posits that the news media has an indirect effect on civic participation, bridged through citizen communication or interpersonal communication, and which are further enhanced by the increased efficacy of community development.

Respondents have two ways of following up on the sparse information regarding societal issues. One option is to try to get the information from directly consuming the news. Another alternative is to engage in civic talk to gain more information. These discussions trigger and lead to an increase in the sense of civic responsibility among students. Overall, it is certain that civic talk holds a central role in stimulating and enabling a sense of civic responsibility among the respondents.

### Coefficient of Determination of ( $R^2$ ) and Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ )

The  $R^2$  value is a proportion of the statistical variation found in the dependent variable that is accounted for by the predictor variable of a study (Hair et al., 2014). Hence, a greater  $R^2$  value indicates the greater predictive ability of the structural model. Hair et al. (2017) asserted that a good model should have an  $R^2$  value of at least 0.10. The  $R^2$  value for the sense of civic responsibility was 0.104 and 0.160 for civic talk. Cohen (1988) concluded that the  $R^2$  values of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.02 for the endogenous variable represent strong, moderate, and weak predictions, respectively.

The  $R^2$  value of 0.104 indicates that the sense of civic responsibility weakly explains news consumption. This result concludes that 10% of the variance in the sense of civic responsibility can be explained by news consumption. The  $R^2$ -value of 0.160 for civic talk was above the 0.13 value suggested by Cohen (1988). The percentage of variance in civic talk through the predictor variable (news consumption) was 16%, which is relatively moderate. Although the variance value according to Cohen is at moderate level, the existence of civic talk increases the variance value from 10% to 16% in the model. Referring to Hair et al. (2017) the model of this study is considered a good predictor for the relationship of the independent and dependent variables. The variance value explains the sense of civic responsibility, so civic talk is deemed to have adequate predictive relevance in this study.

**Table 22 : The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) analysis of SCR and CT of study**

Constructs	$R^2$	$Q^2$
CT	0.160	0.044
SCR	0.104	0.044

Note: CT = Civic Talk; SCR = Sense of Civic Responsibility

The predictive power ( $Q^2$ ) for the hypothesised relationship is strong, as it was above the cut-off point (zero) for sense of civic responsibility and 0.044 for civic talk. Therefore, the endogenous constructs of the current study have predictive relevance (see Table 22). From a predictive viewpoint, this model could be considered as to predict the development of sense of civic responsibility in the youth.

## Summary

The findings of the statistical analysis conducted was presented in this chapter. In a nutshell, two types of statistical analyses were carried out in this study, namely descriptive statistics and PLS-SEM. Descriptive statistics were utilised to identify levels of news consumption, the sense of civic responsibility, and civic talk. In PLS-SEM, bootstrapping analysis was utilised to test for direct and indirect effects. Accordingly, news consumption and sense of civic responsibility were found to have no significant relationship. Besides, the hypotheses for the relationship between news consumption and civic talk and the relationship between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility are supported. Civic talk plays a significant role in fully mediating the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Next, Chapter 5 presents a snapshot of the study, a summary of all major findings, the implications of the study and gives recommendations for any works done in the future.



## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study with highlights on the research objective, the research methodology, the major study findings, and the research conclusion. This chapter also delineates the present study's theoretical and practical contributions to the existing literature. Finally, recommendations for future studies and the limitations of the study are discussed to enhance current knowledge in the field of news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

#### Summary of the research problem and objectives

A sense of civic responsibility is the action one takes to build a good quality of life and wellbeing in one's community. The youth are members of the society that are responsible for creating a better living environment. However, researchers have indicated that the youth engagement with the community is particularly declining (Ahrari, Othman, Hassan, Samah, & D'Silva, 2015; Omar, Ariff, Othman, & Mohd, 2016; Zeldin, Gauley, Krauss, Kornbluh, & Collura, 2017). Thus, scholars over the years have attempted to identify the reasons for the declining engagement between youth and the community, as these factors could enhance this group's involvement in society. In the Malaysian society, it is significantly challenging to engaging the youth because they are often disconnected from the environment in which they live.

This research aimed to analyse the role of civic talk as a mediator in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. The literature presented in Chapter 2 indicated that numerous studies in the past have investigated news consumption via different media with a focus on civic engagement and political perspectives but in the Western context (Curran et al., 2014; Homero Gil de Zuñiga Nakwon Jung & Valenzuela, 2012; McLeod, 2000; Peer, Malthouse, 2003). In Malaysia, most studies discussed media use and political participation (Dauda et al., 2016; Leong, 2015; Shiratudin, Sani, Hassan, & Ahmad, 2016) while some studies discussed volunteerism (Rabun et al., 2017; Raja-yusof et al., 2016), which is a portion of civic engagement as a broader concept.

This review also noted that the phenomenon of news consumption using a variety of media has been less explored and needs to be better understood (Ha et al., 2016; Ramachandran Ponnann & Mohd. Nor Shahizan Ali, 2015; Zhang & Lallana, 2013), particularly in stimulating civic talk and enhancing the sense of civic responsibility (Ahrari et al., 2015; Chan-Olmsted et al., 2012; Ibrahim, 2017; Pancer et al., 2007; Raja-yusof et al., 2016; Sherr, 2005).

In general, previous studies conducted in Malaysia have considered media use and civic engagement but these studies were run separately and emphasis was not placed on news consumption's impact on sense of civic responsibility. Therefore, to fill in this gap, the present study is aimed at investigating the two variables and exploring the link between them.

Since past studies did not integrate a mediating variable when examining the association between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility, this study aims to examine the role of civic talk as an assumed mediating variable in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among local undergraduate students in Malaysia's tertiary education institutions. In Malaysia, published research on engagement is still at its infancy level (Latib, Bolong, Hayati, Ghazali, & Nizam, 2016). Hence, more research should be conducted to understand the links between news consumption, civic talk, and sense of civic responsibility of the youth in Malaysia, especially university students, given their role as society's human capital and have a duty to lead their country to a healthy democracy.

This study focuses on university students because university life is an important time to understand and foster student connections with civic life in the communities surrounding them. University life helps mould the student to better engage society whilst enhancing his sense of civic responsibility. University students have higher relevance in this study not only due to their easy accessibility but also because they are the best-educated amongst their peers and have a higher tendency to express views and be engaged in civic matters. Hence, the present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between news consumption and the sense of civic responsibility among final year undergraduate students in Malaysia. The study also investigated the mediating role of civic talk in this relationship.

The primary research objective is to specify the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility, and to study the role of civic talk as an assumed mediating variable in the aforementioned relationship among youth in Malaysian Universities. Specifically, this study has the following objectives:

1. To identify the level of news consumption among youth.
2. To identify level of sense of civic responsibility among youth.
3. To identify the level of civic talk among youth.
4. To determine the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among youth.
5. To examine the relationship between news consumption and civic talk among youth.
6. To determine the relationship of civic talk with sense of civic responsibility among youth.
7. To examine whether civic talk partially or fully mediates the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

## Summary of research methodology

In addressing the research objectives, a quantitative research design using a survey questionnaire was employed. The survey research design was deemed appropriate because this study's purpose is to examine the relationship among the variables under study, in specific terms, the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility and the role of civic talk as a mediating variable. The population consisted of undergraduate students in their final year of study. Three public universities were selected as the study location.

To determine the sample size, the stratified random sampling technique was used together with the analysis proposed by Hair et al. (2010) and Israel (1992), which was to calculate the appropriate sample size for the study. The target sample for this research was 300 samples from selected universities. This number ensures reliable data and an increased degree of confidence is obtained. The number of respondents was stratified according to the size of the population of local undergraduate students at each public university.

The stratum used in this study comprised the ethnic makeup of the population within UKM, UPM, and UM themselves. The participant's ethnic identity was classified as Malay, Chinese, Indian, and others. The researcher then determined the number of respondents falling under each category. According to the population in UKM, UPM, and UM, the ratio of the four ethnic groups was 5:2:2:1. Thus, the sample size should be 50 percent Malay, 20 percent Chinese, 20 percent Indian, and 10 percent others to portray the different ethnic distribution in the three universities. Therefore, out of the 300 respondents, 150 students were Malays, 60 students were Chinese and Indians, and 30 respondents were from other ethnicities.

The data was analysed using PLS-SEM, based on a measurement model and a structural model. The validation of the measurement model was conducted by testing internal consistency, convergent validity, indicator reliability, and discriminant validity. Overall, the validity and reliability tests conducted for the measurement model yielded good results. The validity and reliability were confirmed, thereby determining that the measurement model used in this study is fit to be used in estimating the parameters of the structural model.

The structural model examines the relationship between latent variables. The validation of the structural model can be done by testing collinearity, path coefficient, effect size, model predictiveness, and model validity. The bootstrapping analysis was used to test the mediation effect in this study.

## Summary of findings

The demographic makeup of the respondents showed that there were more female respondents, compared to male respondents. A majority of the respondents were Malay while the rest comprised other ethnicities in Malaysia, namely Chinese, Indian, and others. All ethnicities in Malaysia were well represented in the sample. A majority of the respondents were 20 to 23 years old out of the 300 respondents, 175 were enrolled in Science and Technology courses, followed by 125 taking Social Sciences and Humanities.

The first research objective aimed to identify the level of news consumption among the respondents. The findings showed that the majority of the respondents had a low level of news consumption. They spent less than 30 minutes a day consuming news on mainstream and non-mainstream media. The second objective aimed to identify the level of sense of civic responsibility among the respondent. As for the sense of civic responsibility, the findings revealed that a majority of the respondents had a high sense of civic responsibility. The findings also indicated that the respondents were concerned and aware of community issues.

The third research objective aimed to identify the level of civic talk among the respondent. With regard to the level of civic talk, more than half of the respondents indicated engagement in a high level of civic talk. A breakdown of the level of civic talk by institution provides details of the level of civic talk among the respondents. At Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Malaya (UM), the respondents indicated a moderate level of civic talk. On the other hand, at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), more than half of the respondents indicated a high level of civic talk. This finding reveals that the respondents are indeed involved in communicating and discussing current social issues with family and friends. These results also demonstrate that the youth tend to build a strong connection with their community and have the ability to understand societal problems reflected by the environment in which they live.

The findings of the fourth research objective indicate that news consumption has a statistically non-significant link with sense of civic responsibility. Besides, the effect size of news consumption on the sense of civic responsibility was very small. This result implies that the respondents' news consumption level does not lead to a sense of civic responsibility.

The fifth and sixth research objectives aimed to determine the relationship between news consumption and civic talk and the relationship between civic talk and sense of civic responsibility. News consumption had a significant positive correlation with civic talk. Nonetheless, civic talk showed a positive significant correlation with a sense of civic responsibility.

The final research objective was to test the mediating effect of civic talk on the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. The hypothesis was found to be supported, and that civic talk fully mediates this relationship. News consumption had no significant positive correlation with sense of civic responsibility. However, this mediating variable showed a substantially significant and positive effect on news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

The variance value explains an adequate sense of civic responsibility and civic talk in this study. The predictive power ( $Q^2$ ) of the hypothesised relationship was strong, as it was above the cut-off point (zero) for sense of civic responsibility and civic talk. Therefore, the current study has predictive relevance values for its endogenous constructs. From a predictive viewpoint, the model in this study could be considered beneficial for the youth to cultivate an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

## **Conclusions**

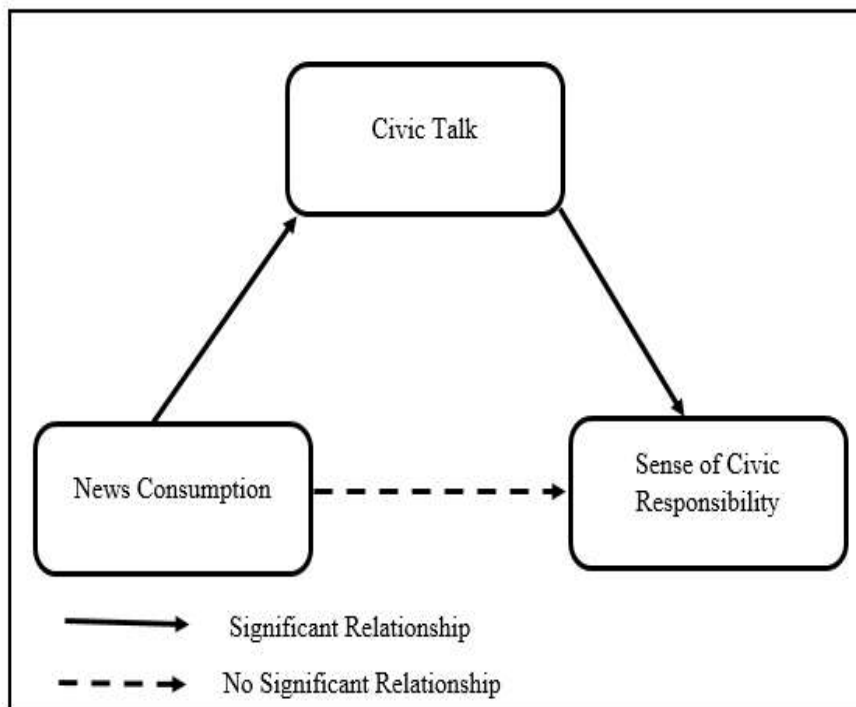
This research was done to identify the role of civic talk as a mediator in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among final year undergraduates in the three selected research universities in Malaysia. Based on the findings and the discussions, the following conclusions are derived:

First, the level of news consumption on mainstream and non-mainstream media among local undergraduate students was still unsatisfactory and should be further improved. Surprisingly, the majority of the respondents had a high sense of civic responsibility. Moreover, the results of this study provided the impression that final year undergraduates are more mature and could better understand the purpose and goals of community involvement. Besides, this study proved that many university students had little interest in consuming news. Despite the limited news consumption level among the respondents, this variable was found to not impact the students' sense of civic responsibility. Second, a high level of civic talk was found among the respondents, showing that the students were more prone to getting news from civic talk involvement with their friends and family members.

Next, news consumption does not contribute to the development of a sense of civic responsibility in the youth. Furthermore, news consumption is not a strong predictor of the sense of civic responsibility. One significant contribution of the study findings is that it has clarified the role of civic talk in the relationship between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. The study found that the level of civic talk involvement gave a varying impact on the news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. A respondent with a low level of news consumption seemed to benefit from civic talk involvement and this influenced the development of his sense of civic responsibility. This result is a pertinent input that could be used to ensure a good educational outcome for students, particularly to develop a sense of civic responsibility in them.

The findings of this study revealed that students indeed have a sense of responsibility to help others, and are willing to serve the community. They are also eager to contribute to building a good society and would prefer doing something worthwhile for the people in their environment. First and foremost, higher education institutions are responsible to develop and mould students with high commitment and contributions to society. This is in line with the aspiration of the Malaysian Government to produce well-rounded and holistic graduates as part of Shift 1 laid out in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education). Thereby, educational institutions not only play a role to raise job-ready students but also have the responsibility to produce students as a social medium to unite the community and engage them in civic issues. In doing so, the Government will provide an opportunity for students to foster and nurture authentic partnerships with the people in their community. In short, this sense of civic responsibility will develop and contribute to good citizenship behaviour.

Nonetheless, the findings imply that civic talk may be used as a mediator in analysing outcomes of news consumption and sense of civic responsibility within new and novel environments. The results of the analysis shows that the following is the fittest model (Figure 6):



**Figure 6 : Model Fit**

## **Implications**

This study has several significant theoretical, practical, and methodological implications.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This study extended and integrated the literature on news consumption, civic talk, and sense of civic responsibility. This research contributed to the literature on sense of civic responsibility in the following ways:

First, this study contributes to the body of literature by providing empirical evidence on the link between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility among final year undergraduate students. Numerous studies (Amirfarhangi et al., 2015; Hao et al., 2014a; Moeller & Vreese, 2015; Mushtaq et al., 2018; Peer, Malthouse, 2003; A Salman, Samsudin, & Yusuf, 2017) have established the link between news consumption and political engagements/civic engagements, yielding several outcomes, but not many have specifically examined the connection between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Moreover, referring to previous literature in Malaysia, not much research has explored the connection between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility. Tamam, Tien, Idris, & Hamzah (2006) and Tamam (2011) have discussed the importance of the news consumption relationship with national pride and ethnicity tolerance in Malaysia. The present study provides further clarity on the nature of news consumption among the youth by examining the connection between news consumption and sense of civic responsibility.

Second, this study adds to the understanding of the underlying process of news consumption and sense of civic responsibility by clarifying the role of civic talk as a mediator in this relationship. The findings provide empirical evidence that news consumption has different influences on the sense of civic responsibility, depending on the level of civic talk. Civic talk is, therefore, an important medium for transmitting information from one person to another. The amount of interaction shared with people close to us will develop into a better understanding of our community and it may further improve the way the community solves the problems and challenges it faces in the future.

Third, this study enhances the applicability of the Communication Infrastructure Theory. This result implies that the Communication Infrastructure theory, originally a socio-ecological theory and later embedded with the Media System Dependency (MSD) theory, could be applied from focusing on the relationship between mass media and individuals to the interplay between communication environments, individuals, and communities. The significant findings of this study lent credence to the applicability of this theory in understanding how news consumption can facilitate civic talk and contribute to a sense of civic responsibility.

Whereas the Theory of Communication Infrastructure emphasises interpersonal and neighbourhood engagement as one of its key factors in forming civic discourse, creating a mutual sense of local issues and goals, this study narrows down and highlights the role of news consumption and civic talk in enhancing a sense of civic responsibility. By integrating the Communication Infrastructure Theory in this study to analyse the development of the sense of civic responsibility, the heuristic value of the theory is thus demonstrated.

This study has contributed an additional perspective to the Communication Infrastructure Theory by incorporating the aforementioned relationship among university students. Results from this study theoretically confirm the robustness of Communication Infrastructure Theory in another context, which is the theory's applicability in the communication environment of educational institutions. In addition, the Communication Infrastructure Theory was used as a news theory to highlight the issue of civic responsibility among students of higher education. Hence, this analysis will support the theory's dynamism and evolution.

### **Practical Implications**

This study's findings posit some practical contributions. Firstly, the research frameworks defined in this study may be adopted by other researchers to understand and bring into focus the drivers that impact the development of a better sense of civic responsibility. The findings of this study also provide a practical framework for the sense of civic responsibility, which Malaysian studies currently lack. In particular, taking civic talk as a mediating variable has broadened the scope of studies on the sense of civic responsibility.

Another practical implication is intended for educators as well as university lecturers and university management and policymakers. Institutions of higher education should go the extra mile in encouraging lecturers and students to engage in more civic talk. For example, they should initiate discussions with students regarding current or latest news in the media during lessons. Lecturers in higher education institutions have to establish group activities or assignments that allow students to learn more about civic issues. Universities have to encourage students to engage in civic talk about political, economic, and social which will enhance civic responsibility among youth.

Universities and lecturers should apply their capacity in this regard to educating and enhancing the sense of civic responsibility of the student by promoting face-to-face discussion of civic issues among students. As a result, students are aided in recognising the real community problems, witnessing and cultivating a constructive political attitude to community issues. When students encounter various ideas, viewpoints, and community problems, they will learn and observe a social atmosphere that certainly encourages them to be more active later in their social life.



Additionally, University and University College Acts (AUCCU) need to be replaced with better and more comprehensive law. Current existing act is limit student and academican to actively talking about social and political issues in the country. The AUCCU restricted freedom of thought and speech among the undergraduate's students. Therefore, the act needs to be amended to provide more democratic space for the student and academican in the higher education to produce future democratic leaders.

Tertiary education has to establish a centre for civic engagement. This centre plays a role to promote students' leadership, civic responsibility and enhance the citizenship skills among the undergraduate's student. This centre should develop project through practical, conduct trainings embedded with public policies and promote ideas to meet challenges in campus and with the community. So that, students have opportunities to experiences real world incidents or issues which will enhance self-leadership, forging citizens who can become active, engaged, responsible and promotes Malaysian universities as incubators of civic engagement.

Besides, they could also implement news media education by developing immersion experiences in classes, as this will help students to recognise their connection to and their role in the community and society at large. Policymakers need to introduce news media education that integrates media and community. A rich diversity of media offering information to internet users has provided incentives for more nuanced news consumption. Nonetheless, due to accessibility to the news and perspectives on contemporary events across an array of platforms, ranging from news websites to social media and online blogs, it may be an arduous task for consumers, particularly the younger generation, to differentiate false and real facts.

Following current pandemic climate, digital media is becoming a major source of information and a torrent of false news. The new course introduced must stress greater confidence in the mainstream mass media. And no matter what news students get from digital media they will check the information in mainstream media again rather than believe it. This will further promote a culture of news consumption among students. In turn, this action could be an effective strategy towards promoting a sense of civic responsibility among students.

Furthermore, the results have shed some light on news service organisations, by showing that students have a low level of news consumption and that news media very rarely motivate the student's sense of civic responsibility. The news media landscape must change to accommodate youth preferences. To increase news media consumption among students, media organisations must identify multiplatform news delivery using the latest technology. Media organisations should increase perceived usefulness, credibility, accuracy, informativeness, and quality when covering topics to attract more students.

Meanwhile, the news organisations and journalists in Malaysia need attract the youth by providing news in the infographic styles rather than long essay types story. Something like, quick reading and comprehensive information. Through this, the news organisation will be able to fulfil the demands and charms the young readers. The news organisations have to provide interesting content, guarantee news value and have the ability to influence the student's perception.

### **Methodological Implications**

Methodologically, this study used the quantitative method to investigate the sense of civic responsibility among youth. The questionnaire designed in this study was borrowed from other resources and amended according to the culture and environment of the Malaysian youth lifestyle. The questionnaire captured the youth's views of the determinants and effects of news consumption and civic talk in enhancing their sense of civic responsibility. This instrument was proven valid and reliable and is thus a viable option for measuring news consumption, civic talk, and sense of civic responsibility among Malaysian respondents. This finding is pertinent since there is a lack of such instruments available for the Malaysian context. The questionnaire can be used for future research to test the variables in different environments.

The survey sample was an adequate representation of the population of university students who are consuming news on different media. It is important to note that similar research in this field has taken a different approach to explore the relationship between news consumption, interpersonal communication, and political engagement/civic engagement (Boyd et al., 2011; Homero Gil, 2012; McLeod, 2000; Shah & Scheufele, 2006; Valenzuela et al., 2016). However, each study produced a different result with regards to the level of contribution of the variables.

The PLS-SEM method was able to maximise the variance explanatory power of the endogenous latent constructs with a focus on the predictive ability of the model. This method is helpful to more accurately explain how mediator processes happen in the relationship between the selected variables. PLS-SEM can take measurement errors into consideration by explicitly including measurement error variables. Therefore, the conclusion on the relationship between constructs is not biased by measurement errors. Using this method, this study has helped overcome the limitation of other methods of analysis most commonly used in Social Science studies. In the exploratory research, the data with normal condition and larger sample size (more than 100) CB-SEM and PLS-SEM results are highly similar. PLS-SEM results are good approximation of CB-SEM results (Benitez, Henseler, Castillo & Schuberth, 2020). In this way, the present study has provided methodological contributions on a different front by including these variables.

## Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although the research has significantly contributed to the existing literature, it still faced a few limitations. First, since the data for this study were collected from undergraduate students from three Malaysia Research Public Universities only, i.e. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Malaya (UM), any generalisation to the findings should be made with caution, as the targeted respondent group of university students may not be the best representatives of the entire Malaysian youth population.

Furthermore, another limitation is that the current study was done with specific groups of respondents, namely undergraduate students while youth that has abstained from pursuing further studies and students from private institutions may have a different sense of civic responsibility and news consumption. This limitation paves the way for future studies to replicate this study and conduct it with various target respondents such as rural adolescents, secondary school students, and uneducated youth. The resulting information would give researchers the opportunity to compare different populations in order to obtain a clearer picture of how news consumption and sense of civic responsibility may differ in the context of various populations. As a result, the generalisation of the study would increase.

This study acquired data using a self-administered questionnaire. Therefore, future studies should consider incorporating a phenomenological research design or other methods such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions to conduct a qualitative investigation on the level of news media consumption as well. In other words, more useful information could be gathered by harnessing the power of both qualitative and quantitative methods to paint a better picture of the nature of news consumption in Malaysia. In the case of news consumption, deeper research is required to determine the factors affecting the decrease in news consumption. In doing so, such a study could provide some bases for future research to explore the type of news that students consume and why they are not interested in watching and listening to the news. Hopefully, this approach would be able to garner more in-depth knowledge of the student's news consumption level.

Furthermore, future longitudinal studies are also encouraged to demonstrate any changes in the sense of civic responsibility after the students graduate. Hence, future studies could improve upon this current study by conducting a longitudinal study to obtain more in-depth information on the progress of the sense of civic responsibility among the youth. Besides, other variables can also be added in future studies to predict other factors that could significantly influence the sense of civic responsibility among students, as the adjusted R-squared value for the current research model involving all variables was only 16%. This result means that the remaining 84% might be contributed by other factors that were not included in this study.

In conclusion, universities play an important role in cultivating and monitoring students' sense of civic responsibility. In this fast-evolving world, the nation requires able citizens, as well as dynamic and excellent leaders. The university bench is where the act of shaping society should start — cementing the value of student involvement in civic activities, which has been shown to produce better and successful students who subsequently emerge to become future leaders and responsible citizens. Hence, more research should be done to shed more light on this area.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Soalselidik Penyelidikan

Responden yang dihormati,

Nama saya ialah Tilagavati Subramaniam. Saya kini sedang mengikuti pengajian program Ph.D. dalam Komunikasi Kemanusiaan di Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Pada masa sekarang saya dalam proses mengumpul data menerusi soalselidik keadah tinjauan (survey) bagi maksud penyelidikan saya.

Anda dipelawa untuk menyertai kajian penting berkaitan pengalaman pembelajaran dan pendedahan kepada kepelbagaian dalam kampus. Sila berikan maklumat kepada soalan-soalan berikut dengan jujur dan tepat yang mungkin.

Justeru, saya memohon kerjasama dan jasa baik anda agar sudi meluangkan sedikit masa (20 – 25 minit) untuk melengkapkan borang soalselidik penyelidikan yang dilampirkan. Segala maklumat yang diberikan adalah sulit.

Terima Kasih di atas kerjasama anda,

Tilagavati Subramaniam

Q1. Secara purata, berapa minit dalam sehari anda membaca mendengar berita dalam media perdana?

- Tiada
- 1-6 minit
- 6-10 minit
- 11-15 minit
- 16- 30 minit
- 31-60 minit
- 61-90 minit
- Lebih dari 90 minit

Q2. Secara purata, berapa minit dalam sehari anda membaca atau mendengar berita dalam media selain dari media perdana?

- Tiada
- 1-6 minit
- 6-10 minit
- 11-15 minit
- 16- 30 minit
- 31-60 minit
- 61-90 minit
- Lebih dari 90 minit

Q3. Berikut adalah pernyataan tentang komunikasi civik anda dengan rakan atau orang dewasa lain. Sila nyatakan dalam tiga bulan kebelakangan ini, sekerap manakah anda berbincang dengan rakan atau orang dewasa selain keluarga anda tentang perkara berikut?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

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**Tidak pernah      sekali-sekala      kurang kerap      kerap      sentiasa**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Skala</b>				
1.	Berita terkini apa yang berlaku dalam negara yang anda dengar.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Berita terkini apa yang berlaku di dunia yang anda dengar.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Isu politik	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Isu sosial	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Isu alam sekitar	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Isu ekonomi	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Isu budaya	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Isu agama	1	2	3	4	5

Q4. Sila nyatakan sepenting manakah perkara yang di senaraikan di bawah pada anda, berdasarkan pada skala respon 7-mata berikut?

- 1 = tidak penting langsung,  
 2 = tidak penting,  
 3 = agak tidak penting,  
 4 = berkecuali,  
 5 = agak penting,  
 6 = penting,  
 7 = sangat penting.

	Item	Skala
1.	Keadilan sosial (memerangi ketidakadilan dan mengambil berat terhadap masyarakat yang kurang bernasib baik).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2.	Bekerjasama membina masyarakat yang lebih sejahtera.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3.	Membantu orang lain.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4.	Memastikan komuniti adalah selamat untuk kelangsungan hidup.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5.	Memastikan manusia dilayan dengan adil.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6.	Bersuara untuk kesamarataan (setiap orang mempunyai hak dan peluang yang sama).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7.	Menyumbang kepada komuniti dan masyarakat.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8.	Membawa perubahan atau memberi impak positif kepada masyarakat.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9.	Membantu mengurangkan kemiskinan dan kebuluran dalam masyarakat.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10.	Saya mengaku kesalahan setiap kali melakukan kesilapan walaupun tidak diminta.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11.	Saya tetap bersopan walaupun dengan orang yang berkasar dengan saya.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12.	Saya tidak pernah mengeluarkan kata-kata yang mengguris perasaan orang lain.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Bagi soalan Q5 hingga Q13, Sila tandakan (✓) dalam kotak yang sesuai, atau sekiranya perlu, tulis jawapan anda di ruangan yang disediakan.

Q5. Adakah anda:  Lelaki  Perempuan

Q6. Anda dilahirkan pada tahun berapa? 19\_\_\_\_\_

Q7. Apakah bangsa anda?

- Melayu
- Cina
- India
- Lain – lain (nyatakan: \_\_\_\_\_)

Q8. Apakah agama anda?

- Islam
- Kristian
- Hindu
- Buddha
- Lain- lain
- Tiada agama

Q9. Nyatakan universiti di mana anda mengikuti pengajian.

Universiti \_\_\_\_\_

Q10. Apakah bidang pengajian anda?

- Sains dan teknologi,
- Sains sosial dan kemanusiaan,
- Lain – lain (nyatakan \_\_\_\_\_)

Q11. Berapa semester (termasuk semester ini) anda telah belajar di universiti ini?

Jumlah semester: \_\_\_\_\_

Q12. Apakah jenis sekolah menengah yang anda telah hadiri?

- Sekolah kebangsaan,
- Sekolah jenis-kebangsaan,
- Sekolah agama,
- Sekolah kebangsaan dan jenis- kebangsaan,
- Sekolah kebangsaan dan agama.

Q13. Apakah jenis komuniti di tempat kediaman ibubapa anda?

- Kesemua atau hampir kesemua sama etnik,
- Sebahagian besar sama etnik,
- Setengah etnik lain,
- Sebahagian besar etnik lain,
- Kesemua atau hampir semua etnik lain.

Terima kasih di atas kerjasam anda



## BIODATA OF STUDENT

Tilagavati Subramaniam a girl from estate starting journey of higher education in 2004 (undergraduates). The identity as an estate girl never stops her to explore the world. Her desire to achieve higher in education, led her to pursue PhD. In May 2014, she embarked on a doctoral program in Human Communication at the Modern Languages and Communication Faculty.

Tilagavati Subramaniam starting her first job as a lecturer in July 2007. She has experiences working as the lecturer in few institutions. Now, she is a Lecturer at the General Studies Unit, Faculty of Social Sciences, Quest International University (QIU). Throughout her 13 years of service as educator, she has grown tremendously, both personally and professionally. She has held professional responsibilities such as the Head of Department and Programme Coordinator.

She has also conducted training on online teaching and learning and professional communication skills at her institution. She has presented papers at local and international conferences to date. For her the journey is not over, she still wants learn more and share the knowledge and skills to the larger society. The PhD journey has taught her priceless lessons and a lot of unforgettable moments. Her unlimited thanks always to her husband and kids. An estate girl never stops learning and serve the society.

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

- Subramaniam,T., Tamam,E., Bolong,J., & Waheed,M., (2021). The Relationship Between News Media Consumption and Civic Responsibility Among University Students. *Asian Journal of Management and Commerce*, 2(1), 74-77
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