

Media role in elections



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During the pre-election, the election candidates usually will choose appropriate media as their tools to disseminate their asserted statements of future's government policies and to convey the way to improve the citizen's living. It also a tool to gaining the ruling power from opposition parties, which may sway the voters' decision of balloting. This manual offers a basic description of a new method of developing journalistic skills to cover elections, and provides some essential information about elections and reporting responsibilities and techniques. Although it has been used in a wide range of elections, referenda and others similar event around the world but it actually designed for purpose of coaching journalists in countries marked by conflict, or countries in the midst of a transition to democracy. Newspaper, as you will see, is foremost intended for those persons, we call them coaches ad that are assisting in skills development.(I don understand wat u try to said xD) It is a handbook for those who are doing the coaching, or providing the training. But the information about elections and reporting is also meant to be passed on to reporters, editors and managers who are

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developing their skills. So the information here is to be shared, copied and used as journalists' guidelines, as much as possible. So what is media? Why does media so important during the pre-election period? The media are included the whole host of modern communication systems, for example cinema, television, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, radio, and interactive multimedia. These developments depend on the use of industrial technology to produce, send and receive message.

Country information

From the overview coaches and trainees that like working journalists will need to do some intensive research before they arrive in an unfamiliar country. It is enormously beneficial to have a basic understanding on the country. That included their demographics, culture and history, as well as the current political situation and their media environment. This information is important in setting the context for the specific election. They also need to know about the specific conditions of the election. We will able to know the country information thought today's internet system and also some country-specific guidebooks. Besides that, the local government's websites will also present some basic information on the country's population, economic conditions and health standards to educational levels. In examining guidebooks, we also can look for information such as life expectancy and number of citizens of voting age, extent of literacy, different ethnic groups, religions and languages, and urban and rural populations. These are factors to consider in guiding media coverage of an election campaign because they identify important groups of voters, challenges to voter education, and regions or issues which otherwise might be neglected. However in Malaysia,

the Sultan is elected by hereditary state rulers to serve in a 5-years term. Prime Minister is designated by parliament. In the Senate (Dewan Negara), 44 members are appointed by the monarch to serve 3-years terms and 26 members are elected by the state legislatures to serve for 3-years. For the House of Representatives (Dewan Rakyat) 222 members are elected by direct popular vote to serve in a 5-years terms.

Media role in elections

The media has a role to inform the citizens about the competing political parties and their programmes and candidates, and to contribute to the formation of opinion of the electorate. This may include formal voter education material provided by the electoral management body; alternatively or additionally, the media themselves may produce their own voter education materials.

The overall aim of media coverage during elections campaigns in democracies is fair and objective reporting and information dissemination. This can, for instance, be achieved through measures such as a just allocation of broadcasting time between all the competing parties and candidates, (voluntary) agreements on fair news programmes, reports, and non-news programmes, or debates between party leaders. It is crucial in the first instance to ensure that every party and/or independent candidate has access to the media, in particular radio or television, since most voters gain their knowledge about politics via the media. That means that a broadcaster is not entitled to influence the public opinion by different treatment of one or another candidate or party. But still it is often the broadcaster who decides who is gaining access to the debates and discussion programmes.

Media is sometimes manipulated by the governing party to report in their favour. Manipulation can take place during the designing of the programmes, reports and news, discussion programmes, and even non-news programmes, such as pure entertainment shows and movies. Propaganda may be disseminated under the guise of objective public information by the government. The danger of misuse of government power for campaigning purposes can be limited if laws and regulations are in place to regulate the role of the media in the elections campaign.

Media

The phrase “ the media” began to be used in the 1920s, but referred to something that had its origins much further in the past. The invention of the printing press in the late 15th century gave rise to some of the first forms of mass communication, by enabling the publication of books and newspapers on a scale much larger than was previously possible.

Newspapers is the first high-circulation newspapers arose in the eastern United States in the early 1800s, and were made possible by the invention of high-speed rotary steam printing presses, and railroads which allowed large-scale distribution over wide geographical areas. The increase in circulation, however, led to a decline in feedback and interactivity from the readership, making newspapers a more one-way medium. Since the beginning, high-circulation newspapers have been a medium for conditioning public opinion.

Electrical telegraph is In the 1840s; the first commercial electrical telegraph was developed, allowing separating communications from transportation, enabling messages to be transmitted instantaneously over large distances.

Movies are the Cinema began to be a large-scale entertainment industry in 1894, with the first commercial exhibition of film. The first films with a narrative began to be distributed in 1897. Radio is the first commercial broadcasts in the United States began in the 1920s. Television is the first television broadcasts for a mass audience began in 1936 Germany and UK. Regular mass TV broadcasts in the United States only began in 1948, with a show hosted by Arturo Toscanini and starring comedian Milton Berle.

Political role in advanced capitalism since the '50s, when cinema, radio and TV began to be the primary or the only source of information for a larger and larger percentage of the population, these media began to be considered as central instruments of mass control. From the above statements, it emerged the idea that when a country has reached a high level of industrialization, the country itself “ belongs to the person who controls communications.”

Mass media has play a significant role in shaping public perceptions on a variety of important issues, both through the information that is dispensed through them, and through the interpretations they place upon this information. They also play a large role in shaping modern culture, by selecting and portraying a particular set of beliefs, values, and traditions, as reality. That is, by portraying a certain interpretation of reality, they shape reality to be more in line with that interpretation.

The media environment

The first priority is to identify the principles of the country's media freedoms and regulations. Coaches must then determine the practical realities of these freedoms and regulations. In some countries there may be wide-ranging

protection for media freedoms in the constitution or in legislation but the freedoms are much abused or ignored by authorities or journalists in daily life.

Firstly, newspaper is the best way to research because it is a regularly scheduled publication containing news, information, and advertising, has emerged as one of the important media throughout the entire world. However, its multifunctional purpose has caused it to be manipulated in many forms. In Malaysia, the most obvious manipulation towards newspaper is in the form of political view. Political parties especially the ones who act as the rulers of the country are continuously taking advantage in the name of veto power to use newspaper as the primary tool to promote their propaganda. (Media Stereotyping: Reporting War and Terrorism, 2007). For example, Democratic Action Party (DAP) delivery rocket newspaper. As a definition, propaganda stands for a form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of a community toward some cause or position. As opposed to impartially providing information, propaganda in its most basic sense, presents information primarily to influence an audience. Propaganda often presents facts selectively (thus possibly lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or uses loaded messages to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. The desired result is a change of the attitude toward the subject in the target audience to further a political agenda. “ It is proven as it is used in the ancient times; the Roman Empire published Acta Diurna, or government announcement bulletins, around 59 BC, as ordered by Julius Caesar.” (Acta Diurna, 2010). Looking back during the National Election campaign in 2008,

the Barisan Nasional governments launched their massive political campaign through the means of newspaper and other forms of media to sell out their propaganda in order to influence the minds of the citizens to vote for them. To make things easier, they are the rulers of this country and thus, no one can put the barrier on them on what-so-called restriction of press. The determination of press freedom is on their hands. However, in the campaign, they suffered the most humiliating defeat in the history of Malaysia as they lost five states to the opposition sides, Pakatan Rakyat; Kelantan, Kedah, Perak, Selangor, and Penang. How could it happen?

This situation lied on several factors. The non-government newspapers played their role in publishing news on the truth behind every promise made by the governments sold out to the society during the election campaign. This actually worked out as citizens realised that they could not be continuously cheated off by the fake promise. It can be said that propaganda does not always work the way it should. Currently, the issue of the concept of 1Malaysia is another case regarding the manipulation of newspaper by the authorities to promote their propaganda. The introduction of this concept has been massively spread out to the mass audience via various kinds of mass media including newspapers. The spreading out can be classified as successful as everyone is talking about 1Malaysia now. However, the concept, introduced by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak, is still on the surface and the truth behind it is hidden from the acknowledgement of the public. 1Malaysia concept is still blurred and confusing. Everybody seems to accept the propaganda without realising the effects on them. The most obvious effect that will someday happen is that it

harms and destroys the special rights enjoyed by the bumiputra especially Malays. Before things turn from worst to worse, Pakatan Rakyat try to stop the citizens from getting carried away by the cheat through the only medium they are able to; newspapers owned by them.

Example of The Rocket Newspaper.

Conclusion

In this research, there are three main problem statements that are aimed to be found out. The first problem statement is that newspaper is being used as the primary tool to promote Malaysia government propaganda. The matter that is about to be conveyed is the advantage enjoyed by the government to simply use their veto power to spread their propaganda. Newspapers like Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian, New Straits Times and many others are owned by the government. The question is that are these “puppets” being manipulated to do the promotion on behalf of the Barisan Nasional government neither directly or indirectly to set up the minds of the society. The second one is that the use of newspaper as a medium of spreading government propaganda is effective and giving impacts to the society or it is either occurring the other way around. The governments are the ones who act as the gatekeeper to all media including print media like newspaper. They pick what to publish and eliminate news that is risky to harm them. The question whether it is totally effective or not in manipulating the citizens’ minds will be answered in the findings of this research.

Last but not least, the opposition-own newspapers are also playing their role in revealing the hidden truth behind every propaganda of the ruler of this

country and how effective their messages in setting up citizens' minds? Newspapers like Suara Keadilan and Harakah are owned by the opposition sides. This research will reveal whether they succeed in showing the truth behind the propaganda of the government in the high-risk situation of do-or-die as there is a very high possibility that the government will misuse their power in stopping these kinds of newspapers to continue showing their true colours.

Harvard-style for List of References

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