

INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT (IEA) REPORT: Youths, Nationwide Malaysia

Empowering Communities One At A Time



CIJ is a feminist, freedom of expression watchdog and non-profit organisation that aspires for a society that is democratic, just and free, where all peoples will enjoy free media and the freedom to express, seek and impart information.



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FOREWORD

The Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ), a freedom of expression and media freedom watchdog based in Malaysia, champions community media. In collaboration with Internews, and supported by UNESCO, a project was spearheaded with youths nationwide, initiated through engagement with a public university, Universiti Utara Malaysia, based in Kedah. The first phase of the project was executed in 2019, involving an inception visit to Kedah together with Internews to meet potential partners. This was followed by a baseline Information Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) to determine the media needs and priorities of youths in Malaysia.

Community media projects are aimed at supporting various communities and constituencies to claim the space and be their own voices in advocating for change via diverse media platforms. Alongside this project, CIJ also initiated community media needs assessments within two indigenous communities in Sabah and another two in Sarawak, as well as with one more indigenous community in Johor. Similarly, Internews spearheaded another project with an indigenous community in Gua Musang, Kelantan.

In working with these constituencies and communities, CIJ aims to evaluate their needs and see how we can support in filling existing gaps through:

(1) a baseline Information Ecosystem Assessment by means of consultative and inclusive engagements with youths, community representatives, activists and groups who work closely with said communities, to determine their needs and priorities, and;

(2) supporting the constituencies and communities by providing them with relevant skills training, tools and means to highlight their stories and/or priority issues through self-determined media channels/platforms.

CIJ's role in the implementation correlates with the organisation's ongoing national-level engagement on strengthening media freedom and supporting the creation of an enabling environment, which could be further enhanced through policy reforms. The results of the assessment will offer age and gender specific information that will inform the implementation of project activities, and feed into CIJ's ongoing engagement with the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia (KKMM) and civil society stakeholders to ensure that the voices of youth, women, rural and marginalised populations are represented in the reform process.

CIJ partnered with a key resource person, Dr. Mohd. Kharie Ahmad from Universiti Utara Malaysia, to complete the IEA through a series of initiatives. This included, interviews, focus group discussions and survey questions. We hereby record our appreciation of Dr. Khairie and his research assistants for their work and hope this project is able to progress further, so that the constituencies we aim to continue working with will be empowered as voices of change.

01. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Freedom of information is a core value in the democratic process. It ensures people are able to discuss, exchange, and debate ideas. Freedom of information supports the development of informed citizens and civilised society through the media and public debate, whether online or offline. As the youths represent almost 30% of Malaysian population, they are valuable assets to the nation. It is therefore important to develop and equip young people with the awareness, attitudes and skills that the country needs for a supportive and progressive information ecosystem. The Pakatan Harapan government administration from May 2018 to February 2020 had provided the necessary space for engagement and discourse without fear of repercussion. Malaysians in general enjoyed more press freedom. In the 2020 World Press Freedom index by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Malaysia leaped 22 spots to 101st place, outranking neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar and Thailand. Meanwhile, Malaysian households' access to the Internet rose by 3.1 % points to 90.1 % in 2019 compared to 87 % in 2018, based on a report by the Statistics Department. These scenarios have indicated some dynamic and significant developments of information ecosystems in the country, which are critical in shaping civil society, governance and individual well-being.

This study aimed to identify the various information ecosystems in place among the youths in Malaysia. Conducted between August and September 2020 with a mixed-method approach, data was gathered from an online survey and a series of focus group discussions (FGD). The survey gathered 305 respondents, while a total of 44 individuals participated in the four FGDs carried out. All respondents who took part, be it through the survey or the FGDs, were sampled across all states, localities, ethnicities and genders. The research focused on seven domains that aimed to provide insights on information ecosystems among young Malaysians.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this project are to:

- i. Recognise and highlight the importance of understanding information gaps, the prevalence or absence of different communication channels, levels of media literacy, and trust in different channels, among others, within the target groups;
- ii. Determine the challenges and opportunities in promoting community media within the target communities, and;
- iii. Determine appropriate channels of communications, identify skills and knowledge requirements, and identify related support that would be required in establishing community media projects within the target groups media projects within the target groups.

The first set of findings corroborate the **current media phenomenon among Malaysian youth** – new media being the main source of information. Interestingly, traditional media such as the television (TV), radio and newspapers are still considered valuable sources of information by the respondents. However, a rather interesting finding here is that traditional media is regarded to be more trustworthy as compared to new media. Content-wise, the most trustworthy are reports on economy and sports, and the most distrusted reports are those on politics. However, the majority of the sample asserted that information related to health is their priority. This may be explained by the current COVID-19 pandemic situation. The respondents also concluded that censorship of content has been practised by the media, meaning that they felt the media deliberately and selectively withholds information. On the other hand, the respondents often practice self-censorship. The primary explanation for self-censorship is that so much “fake news” exists.

The second set of findings also corroborated the **current trend and popularity of media usage among youths** - social media and mobile applications are the main new media sources, while broadcast media (television and radio) is the preferred conventional outlet. According to the respondents, these forms of media have had an impact on their economic, social and political routines. The majority of the respondents described the effects of the information relayed through these media outlets to them as immediate but subject to certain circumstances. The study also found that respondents actively engage with the information they receive by sharing it with the people around them. Among the reasons for sharing is that the news is connected to the society, the information is valuable and it sharing the information is also seen as a way to verify its



authenticity. In order to deal with “fake news”, respondents generally take matters into their own hands by carrying out validations through a general search on the Internet or through *sebenarnya.my*, a fact-checking website run by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission.

The study’s third prominent finding was that **Members of Parliament, State Assembly representatives and religious figures are the top influencers** among the youths surveyed. This can be considered as something that is natural and strongly rooted in Malaysian culture and societal values. However, the data also showed that community “celebrities” or personalities with an active social media presence and following were considered influencers for the youths. This was because they are also helpful in disseminating information in terms of the economy and were often the spokespersons for the local community’s problems. Besides, the economy and education level of the community were also found to be important factors that influenced community well-being.

Findings on community engagement for information ecosystems showed that there was high motivation among the youth to have better information ecosystems. Their responses also suggested that integrated and holistic approaches of information sharing and delivery will result in better frameworks. Therefore, a more aggressive campaign is needed to create better awareness of information rights among the community. Law enforcement efforts to ensure a healthy and productive information environment are also needed. Besides that, public authorities and corporate entities need to be more professional in acknowledging and upholding right to information (RTI).

In order to develop better information ecosystems, respondents were asked to provide recommendations of their own. A fundamental suggestion was related to infrastructure. Although Internet penetration in Malaysia is considered high, the quality of Internet speed and access needs to be improved. A majority of the respondents also said that more stable mobile phone connections and Internet connections were required. Respondents further urged for the implementation of more supportive regulations for better information environments for youths.

With regards to the possible challenges in setting up their own community media, political interference and weak support from the community were considered the biggest threats. While it is true that greater political will is needed to push for media freedom, youths’ awareness and knowledge of the issues need to be increased. In order to establish better information ecosystems, the respondents proposed empowering society through outlets such as community-based media. For them to be able to do that, the youths suggested that they be equipped with digital skills, sufficient funds and know-how.

Overall, the respondents indicated they were keen to have information ecosystems in place through community media outputs. They also believed that new media innovations and technologies can provide the foundation for a progressive information ecosystem. Furthermore, a gradual change in values, culture and empowerment of the community system has the potential to produce a healthier and more responsive model of information ecosystems.

02. METHODOLOGY

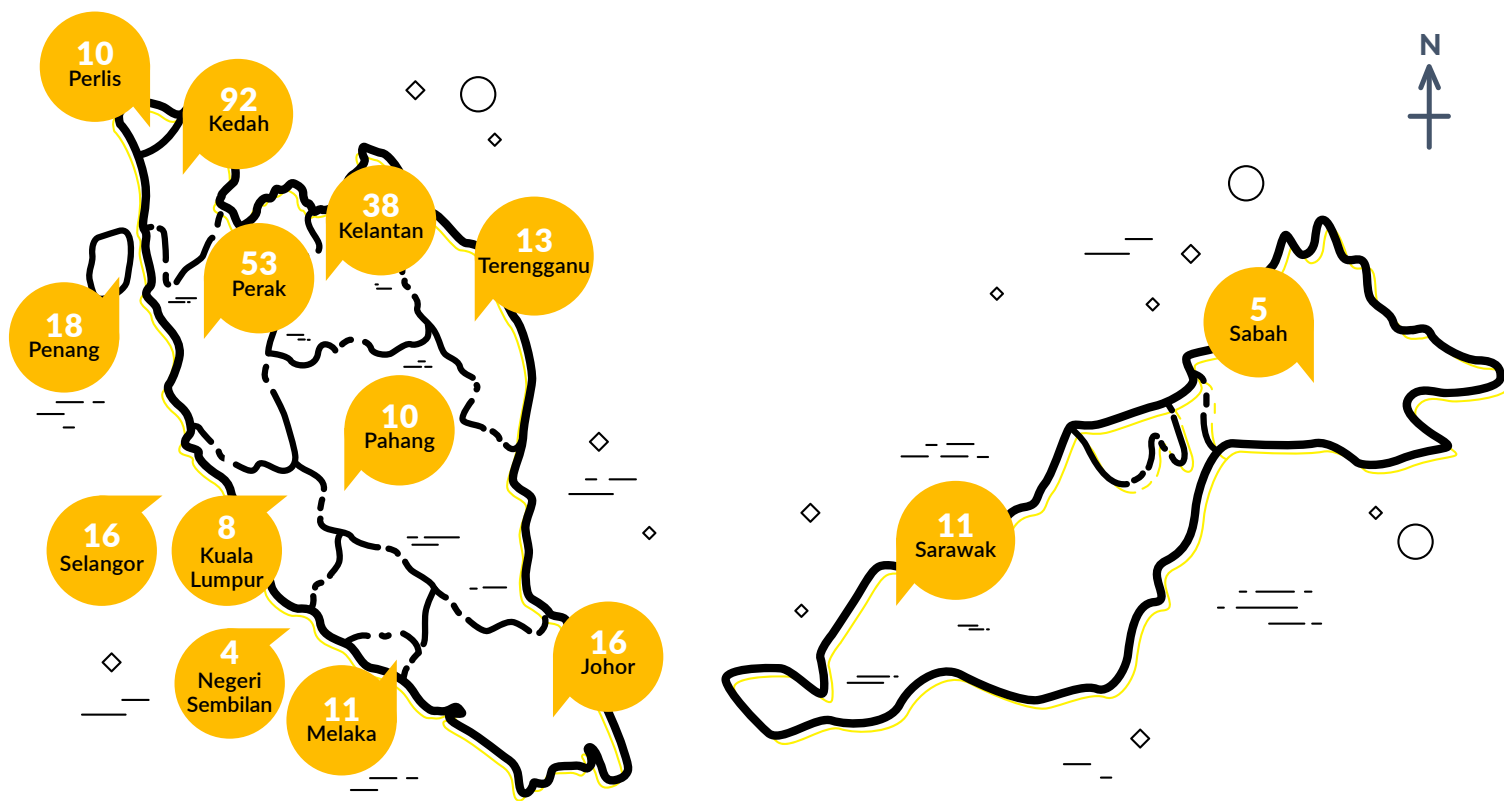


Figure 1: Survey's Sample State and Age Category

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
15-19	29	9.5
20-24	230	75.4
25-30	46	15.1

The validity of a research is highly dependent on its operating procedures. In an effort to ensure that this study is comprehensive, a quantitative and qualitative approach was adopted in the form of mixed-methods research. This was done for several reasons, including to ensure that multiple sources of data from multiple approaches will add value and gain more perceptions into the social world.

As this study involves important and relatively sensitive matters, a variety of methods was used to properly identify and analyse the data gathered.

Quantitative Approach

The assessment used a survey questionnaire for data collection, comprising closed questions and open-ended questions. This enabled the collection of data from a large number of respondents and was also suited to the aim of getting input from the youths, thus representing their views.

There were seven components of the information ecosystem in the questionnaire - media consumption, media ownership, community access, information and media sustainability, opportunities and needs assessment. Data collected from participants was used to answer the current status of the information ecosystem among the respondents, which in turn was used to reflect the situation in Malaysia. The study sample consisted of those aged 15 to 30¹. The sample of this study also consists of youths who represent each state in Malaysia. The survey's sample state and age category is reflected in Figure 1.

1. The age category is as stipulated in the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act (Amendment) 2019 (Act 668).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia, the majority of the data was collected digitally through an online survey. Invitations to participate in this study were mainly distributed through social media platforms. The conventional (physical meeting) data collection method was also carried out, but on a limited scale. Online data collection took place for 20 days in September 2020. A total of 305 questionnaires returned were deemed complete and appropriate for further analysis. The data was coded and analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences software. Descriptive data analysis methods were then used to evaluate the status of the seven information ecosystem components.

Qualitative Approach

The second research methodology utilised in this study was the qualitative approach based on personal experiences and subjectivity, and this emphasised on personal insights and perceptions. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were carried out to gain insights into the personal experiences, beliefs, attitudes and feelings that underscore

behaviours. FGDs provided direct evidence on similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences, as opposed to deriving such conclusions based on individual statements. Purposive sampling was employed to recruit the participants to ensure they had experienced the phenomena under study and be willing to participate. Besides adhering to the criteria as a Malaysian youth, participants were selected based on a wide and diverse range of age, gender, ethnicity and locality.

There were four focus group interviews conducted between September and October 2020. Two of the sessions were conducted face-to-face, while another two were conducted using virtual platforms. Each of the FGDs lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The focus group protocols included in-depth follow up questions based on the quantitative research analysis outcomes. Audio recordings of the discussions were transcribed, coded and analysed using NVIVO, a qualitative data analysis software. Then, a thematic analysis technique was employed to examine the data.

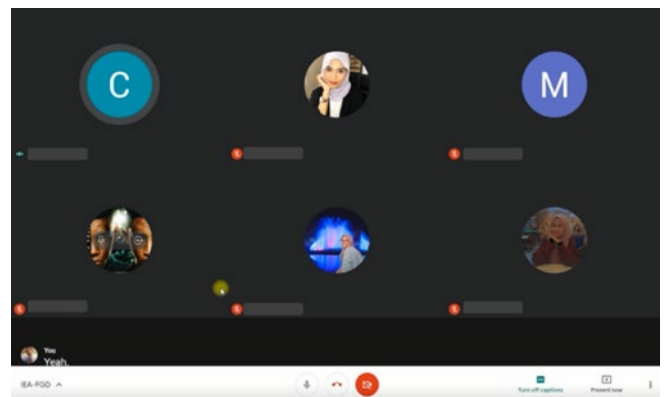


Figure 2: IEA Youth Focus Group Discussions - Physical and Virtual

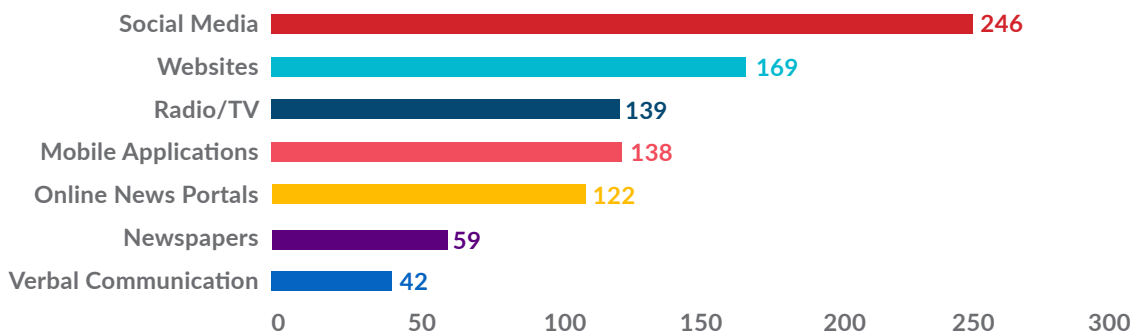


Figure 3: Source of Information

Main Source of Information

The study sample was aged between 16 and 35. The bulk of them belong to the millennial generation, as they were born in the era of rapid communications technology development. In this regard, it is not surprising that this group's main and preferred source of information is new media. As reflected in Figure 3, only about 26% of the study sample identified their main channel for obtaining information as conventional media - e.g. television, radio, newspapers and interpersonal communication. The rest (74%) preferred new media such as social media, websites, mobile applications (i.e., Astro Awani, News Malaysia and Malaysiakini) and online news portals. The pattern of media used among respondents to obtain information is seen to be no different across genders, ethnic groups and localities.

In terms of conventional media usage, it turns out that television and radio are more utilised than print media (newspapers) in the process of obtaining information. This finding supports the notion that youths are more likely to engage a form of media that is deemed easy and comfortable. Newspapers need to be bought or borrowed and read before any information can be known, but television and radio news can be heard or watched through the click of a remote or a switch. Study data also showed that 67.9% of the sample did not subscribe or did not have access to newspapers. A total of 96.4% of the samples, on the other hand, had access to radio or television.

A key finding of this study is that social media appears to be the most common platform used to obtain information. This is followed by websites, mobile applications and online news portals. However, the respondents stated that they did face some problems in accessing information through new media due to Internet accessibility issues. About 15.4% said they did not have a subscription to or lacked Internet coverage in their settlement area. Meanwhile, another 44.6% stated that they had problems with unstable Internet networks.

Trusted Media Source

Although a specific type of media may be popular among the community, the same community may not necessarily regard it as a trustworthy source. The findings of the study show that even though conventional media is less popular among the youth, they still consider it to be more credible than new media. Of 305 respondents in total, 63% trusted mass media the most. As illustrated in Figure 4, about 43% of respondents chose radio and television as their most trusted media source, followed by 20% who trusted newspapers more. Collectively, new media platforms were only seen as most trustworthy by less than 20% of respondents (19% chose online news portals, 9% chose social media, and another 8% chose websites).

The findings also revealed several gaps in communities' trust in media outlets. Findings indicate that female respondents expressed more trust in new media compared to male respondents, who expressed more faith in traditional media. No significant differences were observed from an ethnic perspective in this regard. However, from the perspective of locality, those residing in urban areas displayed a higher degree of trust in conventional media compared to those from suburban and rural areas.

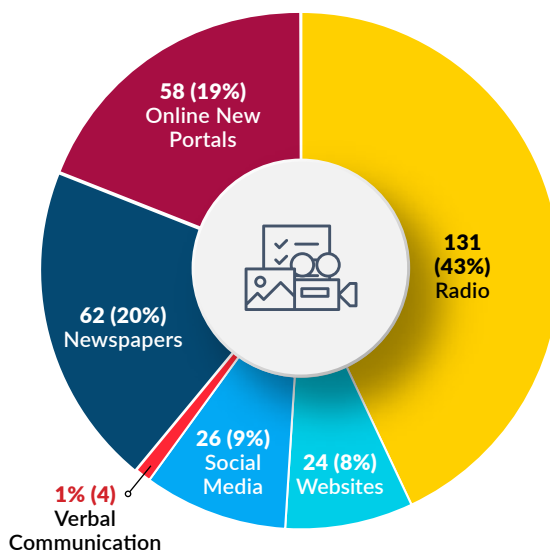


Figure 4: Most Trusted Media Source

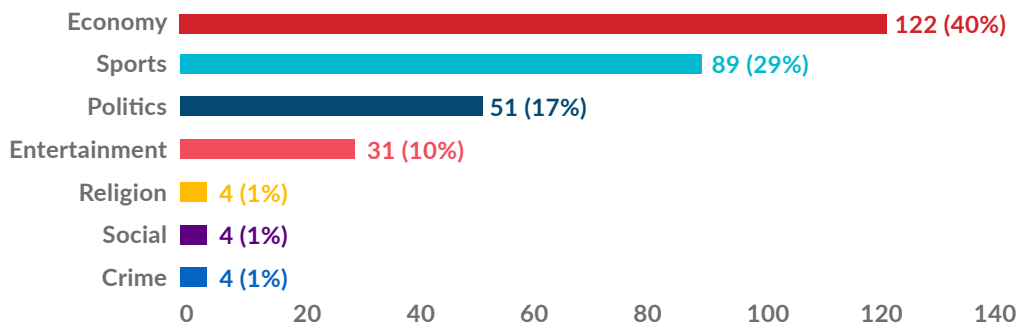


Figure 5: Trusted Media Content by Category

Trusted Media Content

The function of the media, among others, is to disseminate information that the community can use to take action on matters that impact their daily lives. The results of the analysis on the seven categories of media content found that information and news about the economy was classified as the most trusted. As per Figure 5, about 40% of respondents chose economics as their most trusted content, while 29% chose sports content. According to respondents in the focus group discussion, sports is something that is very close to them and is one of their main interests. Political content ranked third in order of trustable content (17%), followed by entertainment content (10%). Other forms of content, namely religion, social and crime, only recorded 1% or less each.

The outcomes of the focus group interviews found that the youths desperately need information that can help their lives financially. Media information is said to assist them in seeking job opportunities, generating business ideas, and getting information about sources of funds.

Further findings on the basis of the FGDs revealed that the Malays considered news of the economy as the most reliable, compared to the Chinese and Indians who considered political news as most reliable. The data suggests that the majority of respondents living in suburbs and rural areas have a high degree of confidence in economic information, whereas respondents living in the city have the highest confidence in sports content. The data does not indicate significant variations in terms of gender.

Interestingly, the results of the analysis found that 254 respondents (83%) do not trust the content of politics in media. This perception is not significantly altered across genders, ethnicities, or localities. Most respondents think that political information, whether published in new or conventional media,

is biased. They also believe that the existence of cybertroopers is a sign that political information and reports are based on the propaganda of political parties.

Constraints on Access to Information

The question of unreliable Internet access appears to be a major restriction on ease of access to information, as the majority of respondents tend to interact online. This was listed as a problem by nearly 29% of respondents, as illustrated in Figure 6. Respondents who were interviewed expressed disappointment with the Internet Service Provider’s efficiency of the Internet connectivity.

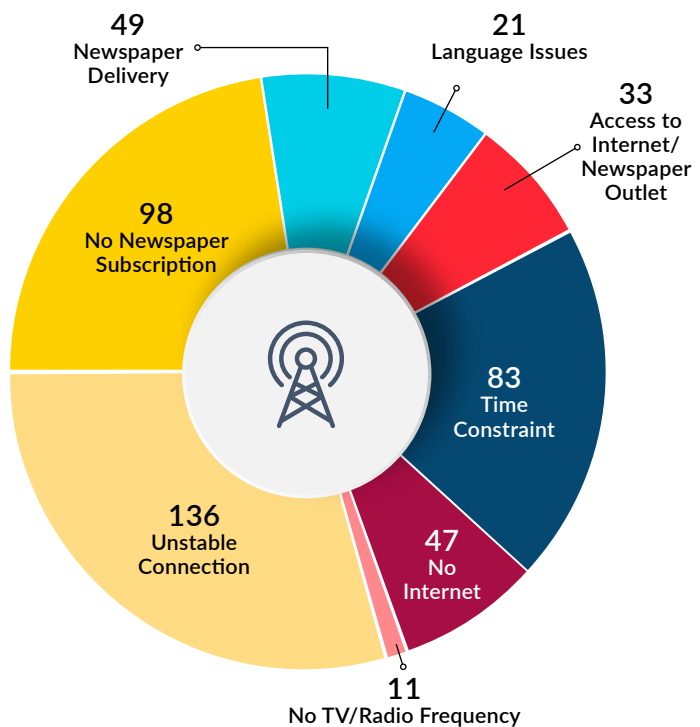


Figure 6: Information Constraints

The second issue faced by respondents is access to newspapers. 21% said they did not subscribe to newspapers and another 10% claimed they have

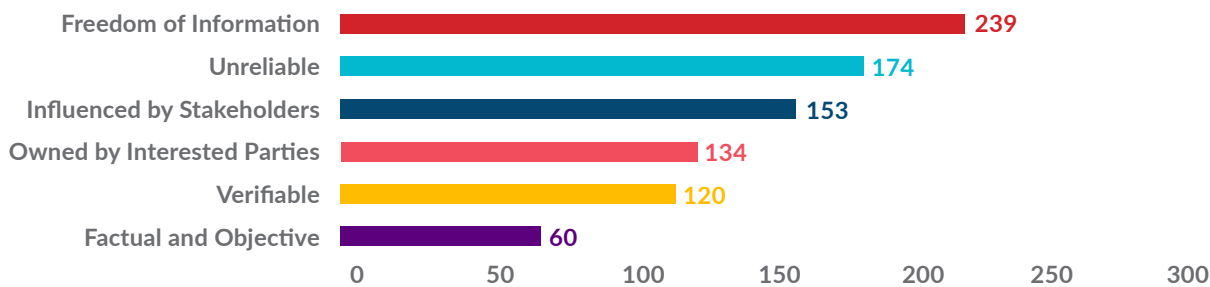


Figure 7: Views on Information in the Digital Media

problems with newspaper circulations in their area. Meanwhile, 7% of respondents complained about the lack of public Internet centers or difficulty finding outlets that provide print media. The third restriction is related to lifestyle, such as time constraints in obtaining information (17%) and the language in which the information is delivered. This affects the comfort level of people who prefer to get information in their native languages, which is especially the case among those with lower levels of education, according to the findings of the focus group study.

Views on Information in the Digital Media

The phenomenon of the new media boom is undeniable. It is important to understand why this form of media is preferred by the youth in particular. The survey found that there are six categories of perceptions regarding information in digital media, as shown in Figure 7.

Freedom of information is the main view that respondents have towards information available on digital media, with 239 respondents stating this. However, the respondents have a perception that this media also contains a lot of unreliable information. In addition, respondents described information on digital media as influenced by many stakeholders. Nevertheless, 120 respondents believed that the authenticity of information on digital media is easier to check.

The results of the focus group interviews also revealed that many of the respondents practiced self-verification of information obtained online. For example, they will use the web browser to check the authenticity of information. This was done by comparing comments of the information by netizens, validate from related authorities' website or www.sebenarnya.my portal. For them, it is easier to verify the authenticity of information in digital media compares to the mass media. The results of the focus group interviews also showed that youths consider the open state of digital media as having enabled various parties to channel their information and views. This situation has balanced

the information so that it is not one-sided. However, as has been explained, the situation of non-bias does not mean that the information is considered reliable.

Views on Information via 'Word-of-Mouth'

The study also examined face-to-face communication and its relation to information effectiveness. The findings of the study found that this medium is considered low in terms of effectiveness, as shown in Figure 8. The majority of respondents (283) stated that there is a need to further validate information obtained face-to-face, thus expressing their lack of trust in the information. A total of 230 respondents were also of the view that information of this nature was influenced by a third party, further cementing their lack of trust in the information.

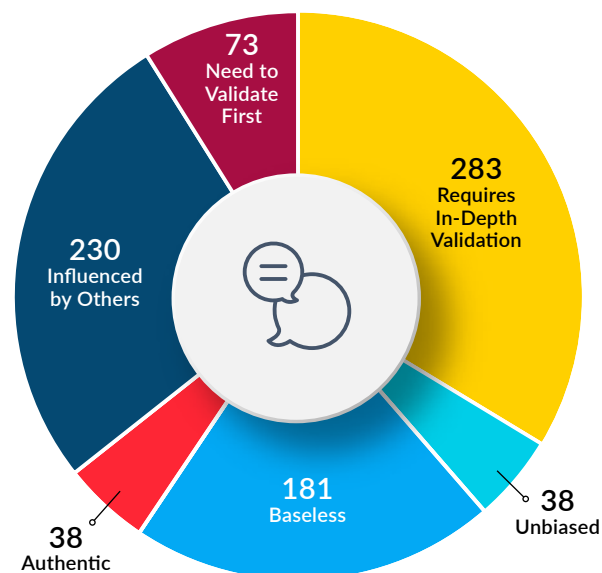


Figure 8: Views on Information via 'Word-of-Mouth'

Only 73 respondents thought the information was authentic because it was confirmed by the presenter. A total of 38 respondents believed that such information is usually true, and an equal number of respondents think information communicated face-to-face does not contain element of bias. Through the data presented, it is clear that respondents

generally have a low level of trust in the information conveyed through face-to-face communication. Results of the analysis based on gender, locality and ethnicity show no significant difference.

Information that is Deemed Most Important

This survey also aims to understand young people’s need for information. The results of the study found that health information gets the highest response, with 34% of respondents selecting it as the key required information. This is very distinct from previous research findings, which revealed information on economics or employment as typical priority (MCMC, 2018; Shaifuddin, Ahmad & Mokhtar, 2011). About 29% of respondents deemed local news or information as the most important. Economic and political information received a balanced response from respondents, with 14.5% reporting that this information was a priority for them. Entertainment and sports appeared as the fourth priority lists to the youths. Next, religious and educational information got the lowest response with 1.3% of respondents choosing each of these categories.

When examined more closely, the need for political information becomes more important for the female respondents than for male respondents. Male respondents also indicated their tendency to prioritise economic, entertainment and sports news. Also, respondents in the suburbs and rural areas chose to prioritise health-related information while respondents in urban areas focused more on local news.

Trusted and Reliable Media Information

The quality of information is usually based on the validity and trust in the information. Therefore, this study also seeks to understand the perception of respondents on the reliability of information in the media, the results of which are summarized in Figure 9.

Many respondents believed that information related to health issues were highly valid and reliable. This may be explained by the current situation related to the COVID-19 outbreak. It is interesting to note that despite the lower level of trust in political news discovered earlier, the findings here indicate that information related to politics is second in the list of trusted and reliable information in the media.

Economy and public facilities recorded the third and fourth highest level of trusted media information. While information on local and foreign news is in the fifth level of trust. On the other hand, a small number of respondents have suggested that they do not trust all types of media information.

Frequency Accessing News

News published through various media is one of the main sources of information to the community. Frequent access to news can explain some of the phenomena related to the existing information ecosystem. Dependence of information through media news, among others, explains a healthy and productive media system. The results of data analysis in this regard are summarized through Figure 10.

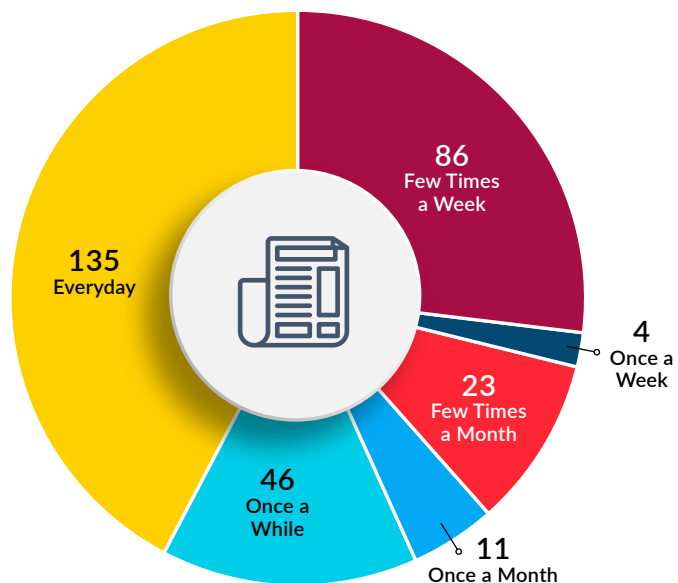


Figure 10: Frequency in Accessing Media News

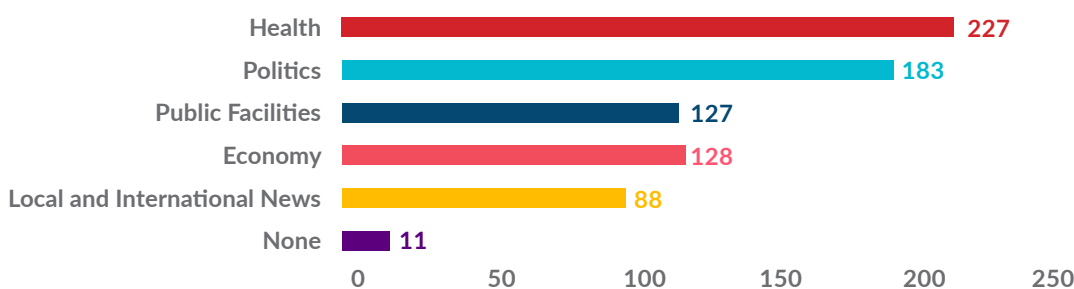


Figure 9: Trusted and Reliable and Media Information

Data indicates that majority of respondents (44%) are accessing the news every day. Meanwhile, 28% (305 respondents) access news from the media several times a week. Only 1% say they get the news once a week. Also, 8% get their news several times a month while another 4% access the media for news once monthly. A further 15% of respondents said they only accessed the news in once a while.

Further analysis showed no significant difference based on gender. In terms of ethnicity though, Malays and Indians tend to access the news every day, while the Chinese and Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak tend to access the news only a few times in a week. Other races appear to prefer getting the news once in a while. In a similar vein, a majority of urban respondents prefer to access the news several times a week, as opposed to suburban and rural respondents who tend to access the news every day.

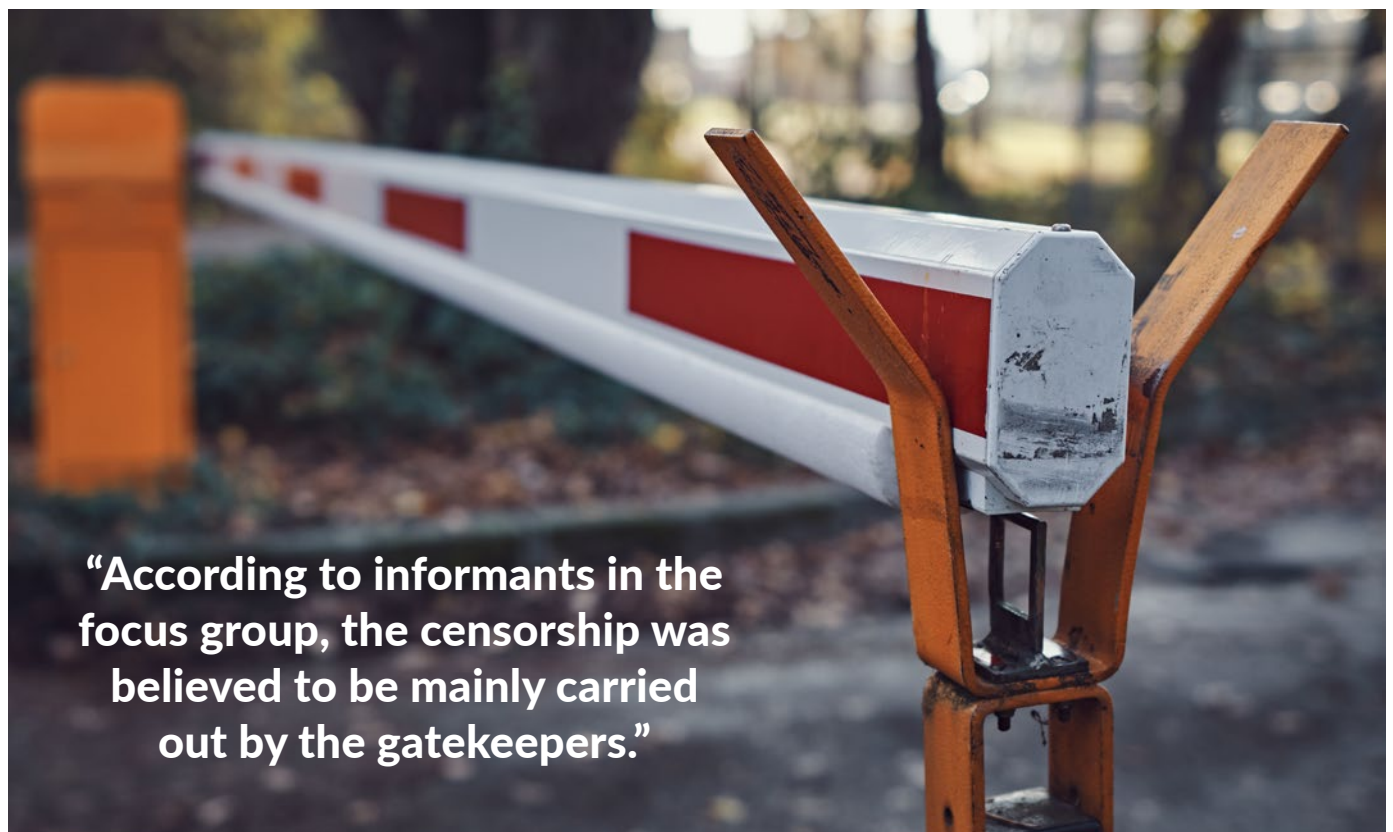
Censorship

Trustworthiness of information sources is also influenced by censorship measures, which can occur in two situations. First, it can be implemented by the gatekeeper of the information channel. Second, the recipient of information can perform a self-screening of the information received before using or trusting it.

The findings of the study found that 208 respondents (68%) believed that the content in the media they rely on has undergone some form of censorship. According to informants in the focus group, the censorship was believed to be mainly carried out by the gatekeepers. They further believed that media are associated with certain political parties and their proxies. This pattern of belief on information censorship does not show differences in terms of gender, ethnicity and locality of respondents. This means that respondents from different demographic backgrounds have similar perceptions of information censorship.

To confirm the respondents' perception of information control by the media, respondents were also asked whether they had implemented self-censorship practices (validate or classifying) on information obtained through the media. The findings of the study showed that a large number of respondents (82%) admitted that they have practiced self-censorship. This number is much higher than those who view the media as practicing content filtering.

Based on the findings of the focus group discussions, most informants have the assumption that the media, conventional or new, is controlled by stakeholders such as political parties or organisations associated with politics.



“According to informants in the focus group, the censorship was believed to be mainly carried out by the gatekeepers.”

03. MEDIA OWNERSHIP



One of the important factors in information ecosystem is media ownership by the community. Based on media theories, ownership and exposure to the media may contribute to information richness. Therefore, an understanding of media ownership in the community can provide an idea of the position of the community's information ecosystem.

Media Accessibility

The results show that the majority of respondents, as seen in Figure 11, have access to digital media as well as traditional media. In total, 98% of respondents use social media, while 97% use mobile or smartphones. Meanwhile, 68.9% of respondents have watched television or listened to radio and 25.6% have consumed print media. Only 5.9% of respondents use landline phones as their means of communication.

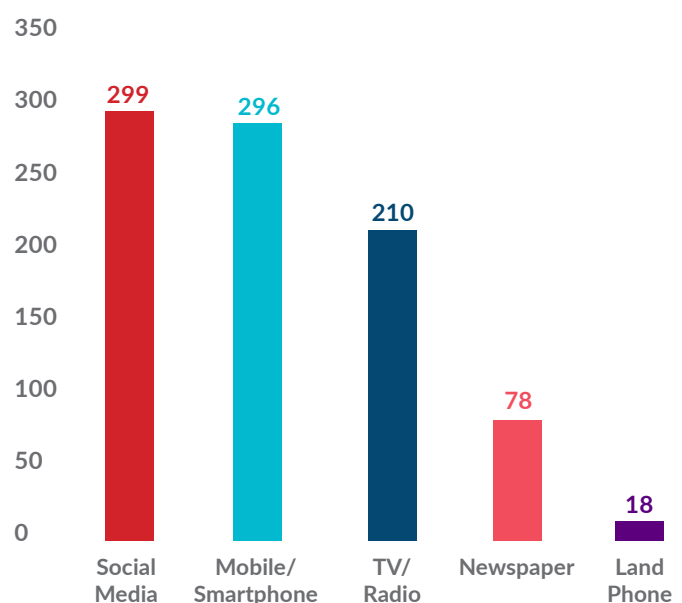


Figure 11: Media Consumption

04. COMMUNITY ACCESS AND OWNERSHIP

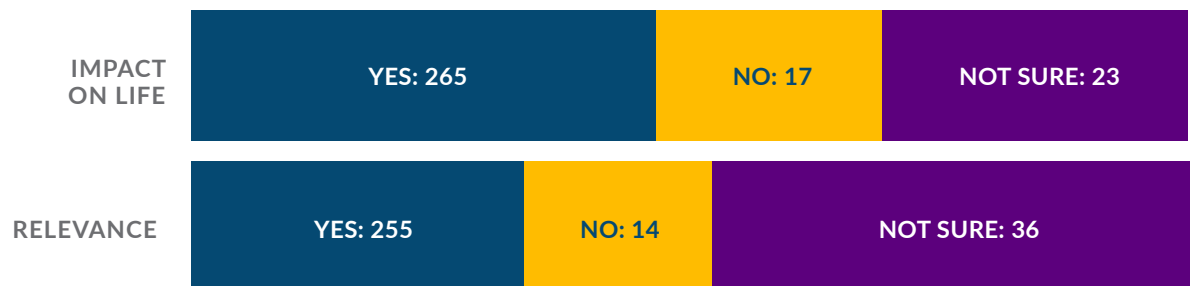


Figure 12: Perception of Media Consumption

Perception on Media Consumed

In general, the majority of respondents think that the media they use is relevant and beneficial to their lives. The data displayed in Figure 12 shows this phenomenon. A total of 255 respondents or about 84% of those involved in this study admitted that the media used was relevant to themselves. Meanwhile, 265 respondents (87%) said the use of media has had an impact on their lives. Further analysis on the data states that there is no difference in the respondents' views on this matter based on their differences in gender, ethnicity and locality.

Impact of Media Information

This research also examines what facets of life are influenced by the media information consumed. The respondents of the study were asked questions about the effect of information obtained from the media on some aspects of their lives as shown in Figure 13.

Of the five aspects of life surveyed, social issues recorded a major impact (80.3%). Among these issues are social relations, social problems in society, conditions or quality of life, and community development. Many of the focus group study informants explained that information from the media had an impact on their perceptions and relationships with community members. About 69.5% of respondents said their education choices and options were impacted by the information from the media. According to them, not only was the knowledge beneficial for the present learning process, but it is also very useful for future education planning.

The political aspect emerged as the third effect on the respondents' lives. About 60.7% of respondents acknowledged that information from

the media offers them an understanding of politics and influences their attitude towards it. A significant number of informants in the focus groups (56.4%) stated that through media information, they were able to know and recognise politicians and politics. The third impact is the economic factor. Things such as finance and business are generally better understood via the information gathered by the media.

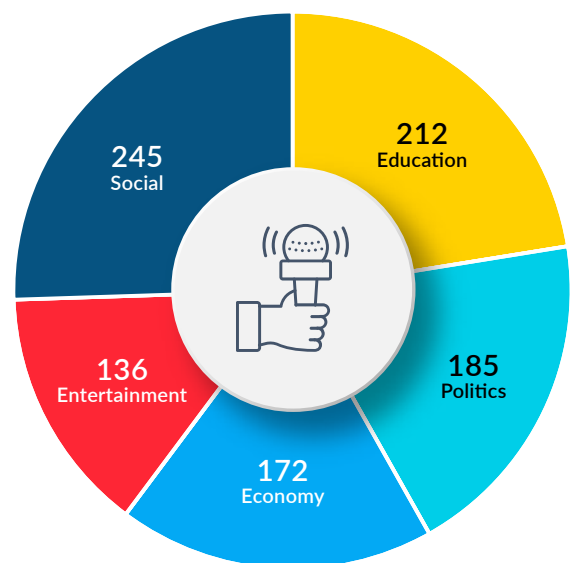


Figure 13: Impact of Information Received

Information Speed and Effect

Based on the above discussion, it was found that media information is generally useful to respondents and in fact, the information also impacts their lives in various aspects. Furthermore, the majority of respondents agree that the impact of the media information is very effective. As reflected in Figure 14, 91.5% of respondents stated that the impact is very fast. Of those, 69.8% said the impact was rapid and depended on their circumstances, 17% said the impact was fast and very significant, and 4.6% said the impact was

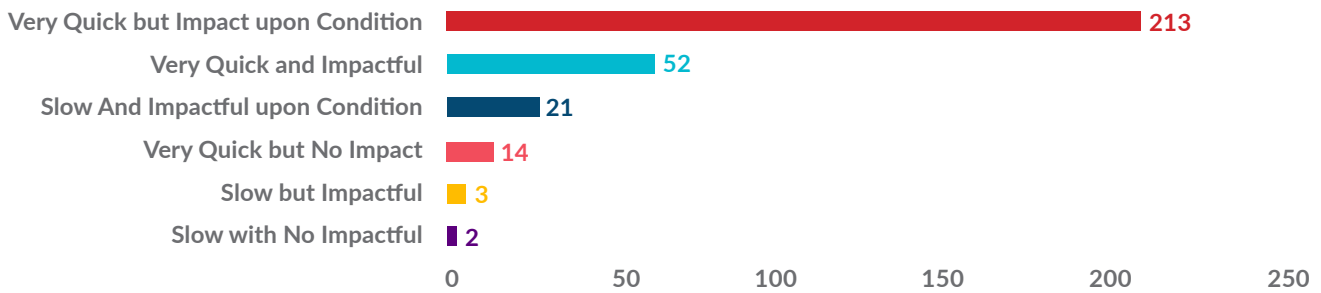


Figure 14: Impact of Information on Respondents

fast but not impressive. On the other hand, only 8.5% felt the impact of media information was slow. Of these, 6.9% thought the effect depended on certain circumstances (i.e. needs, interest, relevance).

Further analysis of the impact of this media information based on gender, ethnicity and locality does not show significant differences. This means that media information has a similar impact despite the respondents' different backgrounds.

Actions on Information Received

Information is a commodity that can affect many aspects of life. Therefore, the study also explores an understanding of the actions taken by the respondents on the information received. The summary of the data analysis is as shown in Figure 15.

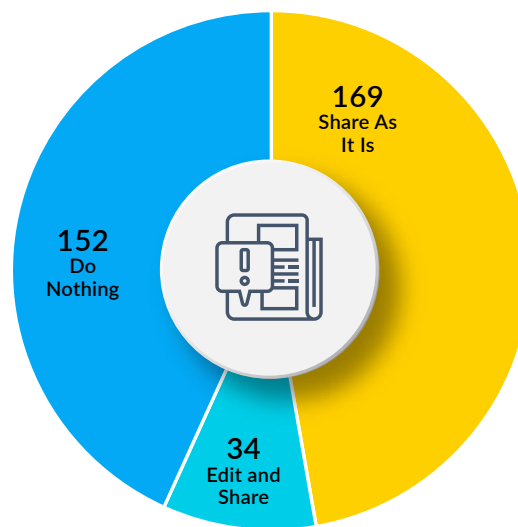


Figure 15: Actions on Information Received

The findings of the study show that the majority of respondents have taken action by sharing information. A total of 169 respondents said that they shared information without editing, while 34 respondents were more active by editing information before sharing it with others. A total of 152 respondents admitted that they usually do not take any action on information received. Further research on the data shows that there is no difference in the action of sharing information based on gender. However ethnic-based data indicates that Malays and Indians prefer to share the information received as it is. In contrast, the Chinese and Bumiputerans of Sabah/Sarawak tend not to take any action.

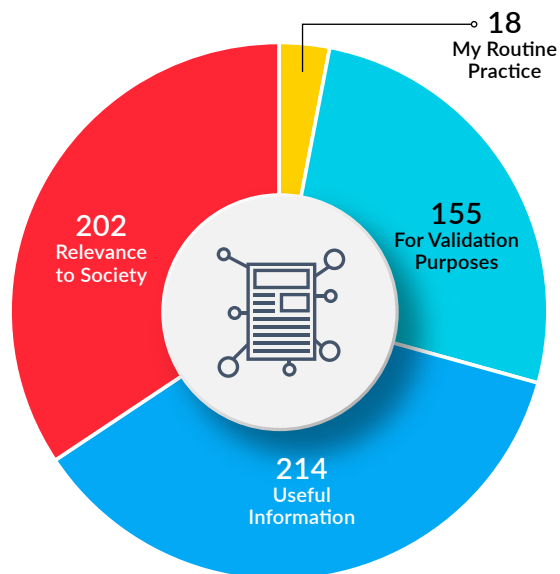


Figure 16: Reasons for Sharing Information

Subsequently, the study further examines respondents' reasons for sharing information with other individuals. It is identified that there are four main reasons for their actions, as shown in Figure 16.

The main reason given by the respondents is that they consider the information beneficial to the community. A total of 214 (70.2%) respondents made the argument as their main reason for sharing

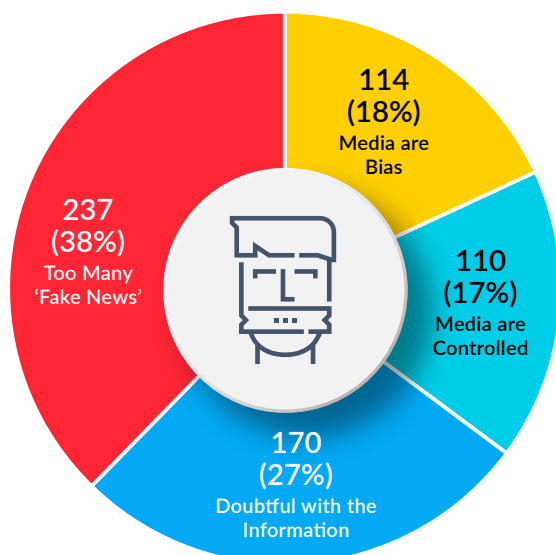


Figure 17: Reason for Self-Censorship

“Due to such controls, the media was seen as a third-party instrument (mostly political) which might possess a less transparent attitude.”

information. A total of 202 (66.1%) respondents stated that they believed the information they shared was relevant, or that the community had an interest in the information. The third justification given by was that they shared the information in order to validate it (155 respondents or 50.8%). Another 18 (5.9%) respondents stated that it was common practice for them to share information.

In this case, it was found that female respondents had a higher tendency to share information because they consider it relevant to society.

Self-Censorship on Information Received

In general, this study found that all respondents did self-censorship of the information received. There are generally four main arguments for them to take such action, as shown in Figure 17.

The main reason for self-censorship is because they are aware of “fake news” and false information

that is [rampant nowadays](#). A total of 237 (77.7%) respondents expressed that concern as the main reason for their performing self-censorship. Another 170 (55.7%) respondents said they were doubtful of the information received and this led to self-censorship. Another explanation for the self-censorship practises of the respondents is that they see the media as not being objective. A total of 114 (37.4%) respondents argued that the media was biased, therefore, it was necessary to self-censor the information by choosing not to forward it to friends and family. The fourth reason stated by 110 (36.1%) respondents is the perceived control over the media. Due to such controls, the media was seen as a third-party instrument (mostly political) which might possess a less transparent attitude. Respondents therefore agreed that media information had to be investigated and analysed first.

05. OWNERSHIP STRUCTURES FOR YOUTHS

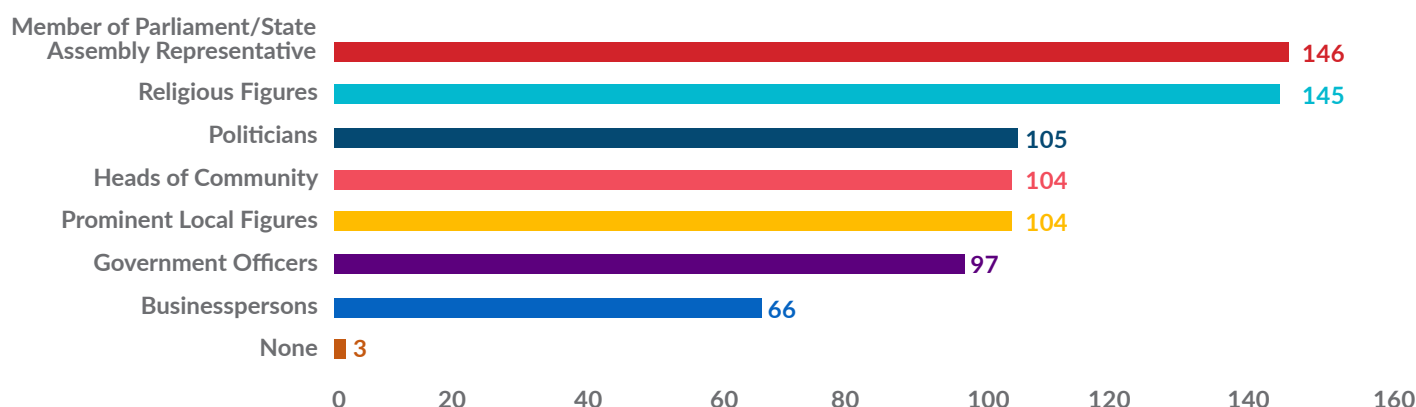


Figure 18: Influencers in the Community

Influencers

The effective flow and dissemination of information is influenced not only by the medium used, but by the identity of the senders themselves. It is vital to identify the influencers in a community to ensure information is channeled appropriately. As such, this study posed some questions to obtain data that could shed light on the matter.

The results of the data analysis show that Members of Parliament (MP) or the State Legislative Assembly (ADUN) are most widely considered as “influencers”, as indicated by 146 respondents. Religious figures rank second by just one vote: 145 respondents identified them as influential to community news. Respondents also named politicians (105), village heads, community leaders and prominent local figures (104 each), alongside government officials in management or professional rank and above (97), and entrepreneurs (66).

An advanced analysis of the data found that male respondents were more likely to choose religious figures as their influencers, whereas, female respondents were more likely to choose a member of parliament or state assemblyman. Malay respondents indicated a stronger preference for religious figures as influencers, while Indian respondents preferred government officials. All other races displayed a stronger preference for elected representatives as their main influencers.

Factors Influencing Community Situation

The effectiveness of the information ecosystem for the society also depends on the situation in the community. In addition to the influencer, the factors that affect the state of the community

must also be understood before introducing any changes to the information ecosystem so that it could accommodate the changes. The results of the data analysis indicate that the economic dimension is considered to be the most relevant. 209 respondents agree that economic issues have a major effect on the condition of their community. Findings from the focus group analysis also showed that the informants were very much in search of information related to economy such as work prospects, information on business opportunities, and financial assistance [Bantuan Sara Hidup-BSH, National Higher Education Fund Corporation-PTPTN, *zakat* (alms), business start-up funds] that can improve their livelihoods.

A total of 197 respondents named education as another crucial factor. One’s level of education is associated with awareness of human rights such as freedom of information, opportunities to improve the socio-economy of the family, improving the level of healthcare and so on. Meanwhile, 173 respondents said the age factor was another aspect that affected the state of society, while only 36 respondents said gender could be a factor that influenced condition of the community.

Further data analysis shows that there are significant differences in the factors that influence the condition of the community based on ethnicity and locality. The Malays and Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak give priority to economic factors, while the Chinese place more emphasis on the education level, and the Indians prioritise the age factor. Meanwhile, majority of respondents living in rural areas see the economic level factor

as important. Those in the suburbs think that the level of education more strongly affects the state of society, but urban respondents consider the age factor as the most important.

Inclusivity

The United Nations sustainable development agenda emphasizes the importance of inclusivity in every aspect of society. Inclusivity is also important in forming a good information ecosystem. The results of this study found that the respondents' awareness in this regard is positive. Findings show that gender, marginalized groups (minority groups, persons with disabilities, etc.) remote area representatives and ethnic groups are among the main responses received. A total of 260 respondents prioritised gender inclusivity, while 150 respondents went for inclusivity for marginalised groups. Another 150 respondents stated the need to involve rural communities in the information ecosystem. A total of 109 respondents also stressed that the different needs of major ethnic groups must be taken into account when creating a community media outlet or information body. However, through focused group discussions, respondents regardless of race stressed that a combination of each ethnicity in the community was essential. In their opinion, this was especially important when the society is confronted with issues relating to the culture and ethnic values of non-majority groups. Some of the respondents also mentioned the need to include those from marginalised and/or vulnerable groups, such as the disabled, and former drug addicts. In fact, according to the informants, community information will be more effective when presented in a language appropriate to specific groups in the community.

Source for Effective Dissemination

Medium or source is an important aspect in addition to the information channeled. The results

of this study identified two categories of sources to support the information ecosystem, namely the media and non-media. The results of the analysis are as displayed in Figure 19.

Based on the diagram above, the sources of effective information delivery are mass media and social media. Although the current generation is very close to new media, 192 respondents (63%) stated that mass media such as television, radio and newspapers is the most effective medium to convey information. This is associated with the notion that public trust in mass media institutions is slightly higher than new media, as explained by participants in the focus group studies. Meanwhile, social media has been chosen by 59.3% of respondents as an effective medium in the process of disseminating information.

As for non-media, MPs and ADUNs emerged as the most effective medium, with 58% of respondents asserting it. This was followed by government officials (55.4%), the respondents themselves (52.8%), prominent local figures (48.5%) and teachers/lecturers (41%). Meanwhile, community leaders are seen to be the lowest effective medium of information, with only 32.5% of respondents choosing it. Further investigation found that Malays, Indians, and Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak respondents displayed a tendency to believe information from mass media sources, as compared to the Chinese and other ethnic groups who believed their elected representatives as a more effective source.

In order to better understand the usefulness of the medium selected by the respondents, approaches have also been taken to ensure that the party they select can channel information effectively. The results (Figure 20) of the study

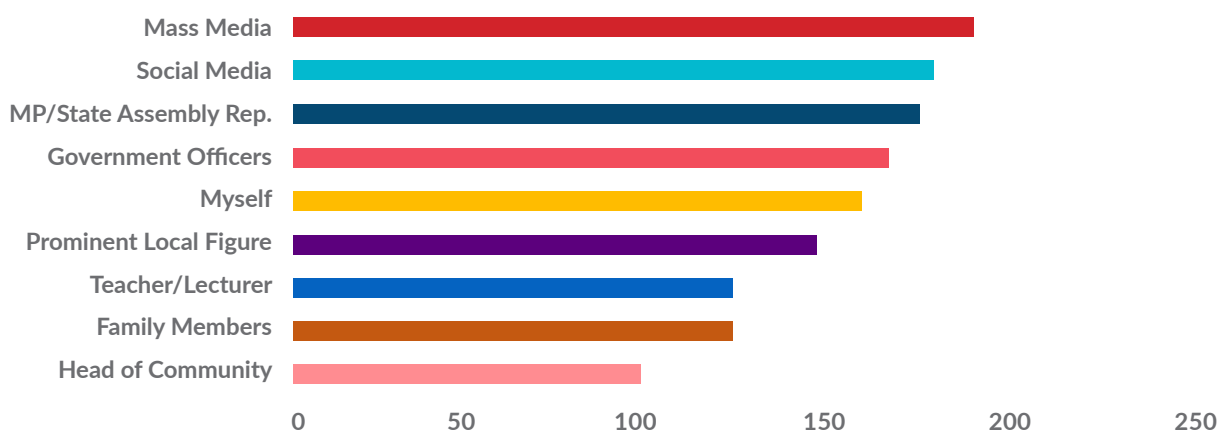


Figure 19: Source for Effective Information Dissemination

found that there are three main views submitted by the respondents. The most significant advice is to increase the community's awareness of the right to information (RTI). A total of 87.9% or 268 respondents expressed this view. On the other hand, 67.9% or 207 respondents are of the opinion that adequate legal provisions are one of the methods that can help a person to better access information.

Some informants during the focus group studies said that certain laws needed to be introduced so that institutions responsible for public information will be legally required to take action. In fact, several informants have claimed that there should be regulations to ensure that the information requested by the community can be disclosed upon request. The third suggestion was for the related organisation to practice and enhance professionalism when dealing with public information. About 189 (62%) of respondents proposed that institutions should have a clear policy on public disclosure of information.

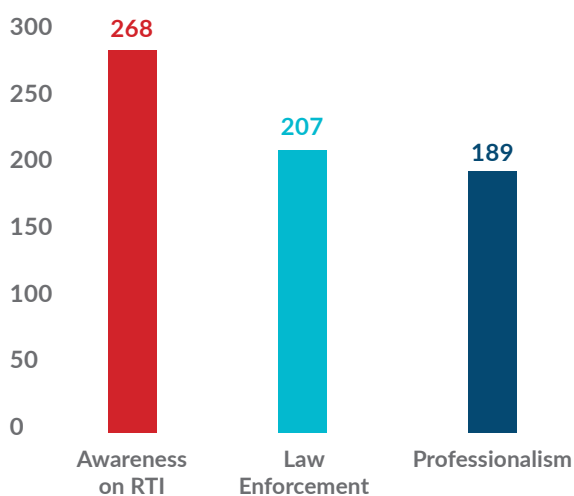


Figure 20: Ideas to Ensure Accountability of the Medium of Sources

Handling 'Fake News'

"Fake news" or misinformation contributes to an unhealthy atmosphere within the information ecosystem. In this ICT era, this negative phenomenon is very widespread and is seen as a threat to freedom of information. According to a statement by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) as reported by The Star, [the top five most prevalent fake news topics in Malaysia](#) were governance, crime, health, consumerism and security. The www.sebenarnya.my portal (a portal developed by the government for the public to check the authenticity of state-related news) has identified

and debunked tens of thousands of false news items of public interest that were spread in the country.

Asked how the respondents handled this matter, the majority said they searched or validated news using an online medium. The data reveals that 182 respondents verified suspicious news using the Sebenarnya.my portal. In addition, 178 respondents searched the Internet to check the truth of the information they received. This was mainly done via three techniques: (i) Googling the information, (ii) searching for the information in the official website of the relevant organisation, and (iii) checking the www.sebenarnya.my portal. The next method taken to determine the authenticity of information was to contact related government agencies. A total of 162 respondents said they would communicate with respective government institutions to check the validity of the news. Some of the informants claimed they approached the respective institutions in person but, not all their queries were successful. About 101 respondents referred to family members and friends to confirm the truth of the information received and to find answers. Around 10%, or 30 respondents, admitted to not taking any initiative to check potentially dubious news.

Further data analysis showed that male respondents were more likely to take the lead in verifying the authenticity of the news than female respondents, who were more likely to refer to others. Though rural and suburban respondents preferred to refer to online platforms as the key means of validation, urban respondents preferred to confer directly with the authorities.

"The most significant advice is to increase the community's awareness of the right to information (RTI)."

06. SUSTAINABILITY

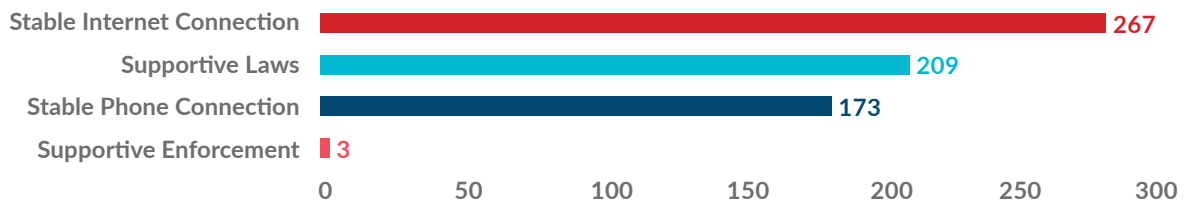


Figure 21: Environments that Support Youth Community Media

Enabling Environment

In an increasingly complex environment and fractured society, the role of community media in creating a stable information ecosystem is undeniable. The results of the survey on the potential of community media showed a positive response. Some methods, such as channelling and sharing information, are already being practised by respondents. This research also aims to understand how the information ecosystem will survive.

Given that society is now connected online, the stability of the Internet network is stated as a major support factor to community media. As illustrated in Figure 21, a total of 87.5% or 267 out of 305 respondents thought Internet quality was important for community media to function effectively. About 68.5% or 209 respondents stated that introducing policy enforcement related to the importance, rights and freedom of information was a step towards cultivating a positive information ecosystem. Currently, only two states in Malaysia have enactments related to freedom of information: Selangor and Penang. Meanwhile, 173 respondents said a stable telephone line was the third most important factor in ensuring the survival of an information ecosystem in a community. Three respondents had also wanted more law enforcement support in relation to freedom of information.

Gender-based analysis did not show differences in respondents' views on information ecosystem sustainability support factors. The same goes for the locality of respondents who show the same point of view. However, data analysis shows that differences exist in terms of ethnicity. Malay, Indian, Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak and others stated that a stable Internet network was the key factor, but the Chinese mentioned legal support as the most important factor.

Potential Threats

To examine the sustainability of the information ecosystem, this study also identifies aspects that are considered to be a threat. In general, the potential threats faced arose from various aspects as shown in Figure 22.



Figure 22: Environments that Support Youth Community Media

The main challenge posed by most respondents is related to cooperation among the community. A total of 226 respondents admitted that the success of a good information ecosystem depends a lot on themselves. Lack of interest and commitment (do not feel the need or urgency) among them was found to be the main threat. This is followed by the intervention of politicians in the information ecosystem, voiced by 222 respondents as a major threat. Further analysis on the focus group study found that the involvement of political parties will cause information manipulation. When this happens, the community may feel that the freedom and legitimacy of the information has been compromised. The third aspect that

can threaten the information ecosystem in the community is the lack of cooperation between community members. A total of 211 respondents expressed this view. Generally, they are lacking an initiator or leader to form a team. In addition, some informants even claimed they do not know peers in their community well enough.

The lack of digital skills (using software for editing, publishing, manage digital platform) is voiced as another obstacle or challenge in ensuring the sustainability of community media. The financial resources challenge was also mentioned by the respondents. They claim that it requires some amount of costs to mobilise and manage the media that is used to disseminate information to the community. Concerns about legal matters were also found to be another threat. Through a focus group study, they stated that the phenomenon of netizens being arrested and charged in connection with the dissemination of online information had, to some extent, left a negative impact on them. The final challenge found in the study analysis is third-party intervention in the community information ecosystem. It covers interventions in terms of management, finances as well as the involvement of self-interest parties.

Further analysis, through general remarks, showed that the Malays and Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak stated political interference as a major threat, while other races cite the lack of cooperation among the communities involved. Analysis of respondents based on locality found that those living in urban areas see political interference as a major threat. On the other hand, for those living in the suburbs and rural areas, the lack of interest or motivation in the community is considered a major threat.

Sustaining Community Media

In the face of the threats described above, respondents have suggested several steps to increase the sustainability of community media. A total of 261 respondents or about 85.6% suggested efforts to increase interest in the importance of community media among the local community. A study of the findings of the focus group study explains the need for the local community to be made aware of the importance of seeking necessary information, and the right to information. Some of these respondents also stated that the awareness of consumer rights should be expanded beyond products and services to include the right to information. To ensure the information ecosystem is healthy, 249 respondents (81.6%) suggested that communities

be given skills to improve their digital skills.

The top third proposal by 185 respondents (60.7%) involved providing funds to mobilize and manage community media. While the respondents could not suggest the best method regarding the distribution of these funds, they said the allocation of funds should be liberated from any control by the funder. Avoiding political interference is the fourth proposal submitted by 180 respondents (59%). However, during the focus group study, the informants were unable to submit concrete suggestions on how to ensure that this interference did not occur. They simply stated that any individual with political membership should not be involved in the management of this community media. The fifth suggestion is related to avoiding corporate parties' involvement in the management and finance of community media. According to the informants interviewed in the focus group study, corporate parties are often seen as a proxy for political groups or those with vested interests.

Ensuring Community Media Is Trusted and Relevant

Management of the information ecosystem is especially important to ensure that it remains reliable and relevant to the community. Understanding the respondents' perspective to ensure the atmosphere is one of the things that was also reviewed. The results of the data analysis is shown in Figure 23.

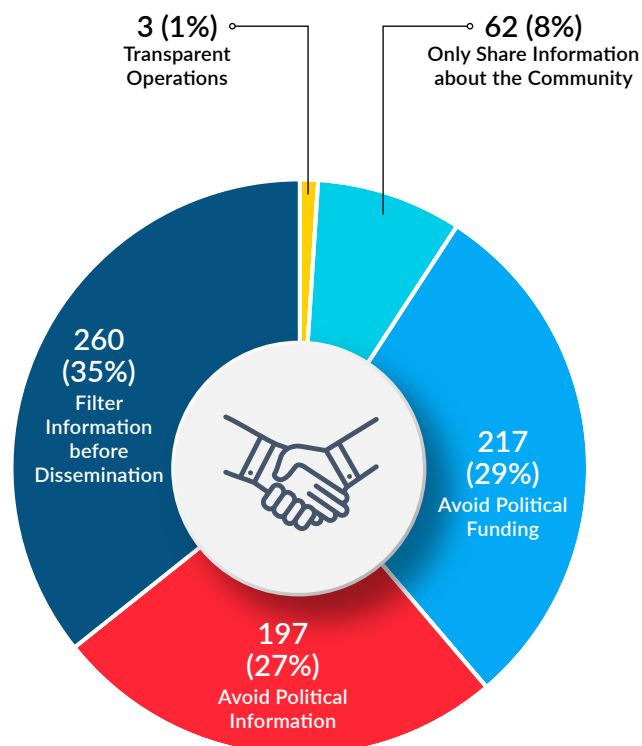


Figure 23: Ensuring Community Media Sustainability

“The freeing of community media from political information and interference is described as crucial to ensure the trustworthiness and relevance of community media.”

An important practice to ensure the community media is trusted and remains relevant is the information needs to be filtered before being disseminated in the community media. In this regard, the informants involved in the focus group study stated that self-censorship or self-filtering should be done by every community and its media operators too. Further findings of the focus group study explain that the first element of screening is to ensure the certainty of a news or information. The second element is to ascertain whether the information or news offers benefits or is of importance to the local community, while the third element is that it does not contain anything that can disrupt the harmony of the community.

The freeing of community media from political information and interference is described as crucial to ensure the trustworthiness and relevance of community media. Community media is advised to avoid political contributions. At the same time, information or news issued by political parties should not be circulated through community media. In addition, the respondents stressed that all information and news by the community media should revolve around the interests of the community. The last suggestion from the respondents is that those who operate the community media (i.e. youths) should practice transparency, such as disclosing potential conflict of interest, openness and accountability for the information disclosed.



07. EXPLORING TYPES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Current Opportunities

Examining the findings of the survey indicates that new media should be used as the main platform to mobilise the information ecosystem. Survey data showed that 266 respondents choose the Internet as their primary channel. This means they will use the Internet as a medium for the acquisition and distribution of information. The second media of choice is social media, with 258 respondents choosing it. This means that both the media preferences of more than 85% of the respondents is new media. The selection of these two media shows the similar pattern based on gender, ethnicity and also the locality of the respondents.

The next media that respondents are more inclined towards is conventional media, namely community television (145 respondents) and newspapers (124 respondents). Community radio was the lowest choice with 31 respondents only. From this data it can be said that conventional media is still an option. Many respondents in this study expressed confidence in the information channeled by these media as compared to new media.

Content Opportunities

This study also explores the issues that respondents want to share in the community media. In general, the information involves various aspects of life. Figure 24 below shows the results of statistical analysis of the issues.

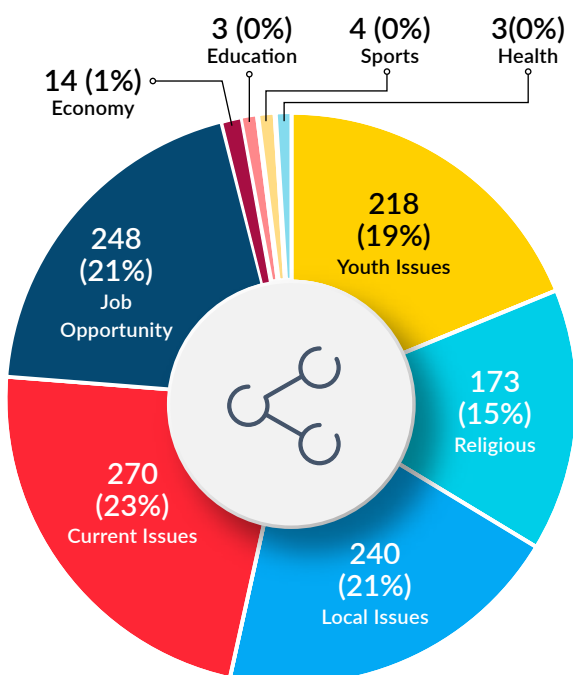


Figure 24: Issues to be Shared

Based on the analysis presented, it can be concluded that the youths have a tendency towards current issues. A total of 270 respondents placed current issues as the main choice of information needed or that will be shared. Issues of concern to the respondents include the COVID-19 epidemic, government laws or policies, cyber crime, politics, and good governance. These details were identified through focus group discussions. Information related to employment opportunities emerged as the second issue stated by the respondents (248 people). The majority of respondents who are still studying say this is important because it will determine their futures. Based on the findings of the focus group, information such as scholarship opportunities and studying aids, starting and developing a business, as well as career-related skills training are among the information they want to share or acquire.

Further, an issue of focus among the respondents are matters related to youth. A total of 218 respondents stated that this topic is important to them. Further analysis shows issues such as youth activities, problems among youths, their role in the local community and the contribution of youths as among the things they want to share. The fifth issue voiced by the respondents is related to religion. Matters relating to this issue are religious education, as well as the role of religion on economic, social and political, and religious activities.

Other issues that respondents focus on are economy, education, sports and health. However, the number of respondents who voiced these issues is relatively low compared to others. Based on further analysis, the findings show no significant differences when viewed in terms of gender background, ethnicity or locality of respondents.

“Further analysis shows issues such as youth activities, problems among youths, their role in the local community and the contribution of youths as among the things they want to share.”

08. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

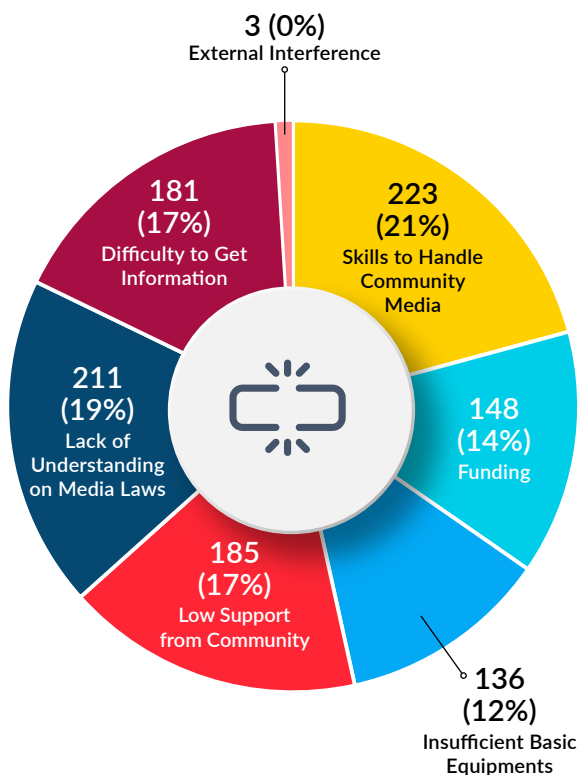


Figure 25: Constraints of a Community-Based Information Ecosystem

Information Ecosystem Platform

To enhance the information ecosystem, the study also explores opportunities and potential. Questions related to the need for a better information ecosystem were asked in this study. The basic thing that matters is related to the media platform that is suitable for the youth community. Findings from the survey show that most respondents stated that online media is the platform of their choice. A total of 207 respondents or about 68% of respondents chose online media. Through the focus group discussions, the youths described online media as not only suitable for their lifestyle, but that it also is seen to have far more effective advantages over other forms of media. According to some informants from Kelantan, Sabah and Sarawak, although there are constraints on Internet access, they think online media is much more effective in providing a good information ecosystem. On average, they are of the view that the authorities will definitely work to improve the quality of the Internet in suburban and rural areas. It is found that in the short-term, online media may be problematic, but in the long run it will definitely be better.

The second platform of the respondents' choice is the print media. This view represents 17% of

the respondents. Meanwhile, their third platform of choice is mass media (television and radio) as chosen by 15% of respondents. Based on these data, it can be said that the mass media or conventional media is not the best option in providing a supportive information ecosystem to the youth.

Information Ecosystem Challenges

The next section will discuss the challenges voiced by respondents towards the information ecosystem. Figure 25 presents the results of the analysis of these challenges.

Technical

Through the survey conducted, issues related to technical skills emerged as the main problem. A total of 73% of respondents described it as the most important thing to pay attention to. Although respondents use online media actively, many of them lack the skills to manage information. Through focus group discussions, the informants among the youths stated that they need skills in terms of producing, processing, filtering and channeling information to their community effectively. They acknowledge the ability to use a variety of online applications but again, lack the skills to operate them effectively. This is acknowledged by the majority of respondents regardless of whether they are living in urban, suburban or rural areas. Gender-based analysis also shows a similar situation. While awareness of the right to information is good, they are still lacking in terms of effective information practices.

Legal

Understanding of legal aspects is the second thing that respondents voice as important in forming a good information ecosystem among them. A total of 211 respondents or 69% thought that the lack of understanding of legal matters related to media and information affects informative behavior. Some respondents were fearful of expressing their views or sharing information, as they are concerned about violating the law. The data also shows that the concern of female respondents is higher than that of men in this regard.

From the feedback received through the focus group study, the informants stated that they need better knowledge and exposure on how they can be active in the information ecosystem from a legal point of view. Reports of legal action being taken

against social media users has to some extent left a negative impact on respondents actively sharing information with their community.

Awareness and education related to communication and information laws are able to provide better understanding to the youth. Some respondents claim that there should be a regulation that will protect the right to information in the society. Such legislation is considered complementary or reciprocal and is seen as contributing towards a more progressive and healthy information ecosystem.

Support

The findings of the study found that community support, as stated by 61% of respondents, is another matter that needs to be focused on. To create a good information ecosystem, respondents think that support from the local community as well as parties who have information is very much needed. According to them, weak support from the local community not only weakens motivation, but also complicates the process of sharing and channeling information. Data from the focus group study shows that among the challenges faced is the attitude of the community, that despises or considers the youth as less important. In addition, differences in political ideology also complicate the situation. The difficulty of getting the support of parties holding the information is also highlighted as another matter that needs to be addressed. The refusal of the parties involved to provide information or cooperation hinders the information ecosystem.

In this regard, there are suggestions from focus group study participants to institutionalize the role of youth in the information ecosystem. Establishment and recognition of youth groups to be part of the information ecosystem should be worked on. Even government and non-government agencies that store information should be made youth friendly in terms of providing information. In addition, there are also suggestions from respondents to formulate policies that can ensure the distribution of information to the community occurs effectively.

Financial

There is no denying that financial resources are important in building a good information ecosystem. Finance is needed for the purpose of educating, training, building and managing an information society system. To engage the youth in the information ecosystem, they need funds

to support and implement this agenda. The study found that 46% of respondents agreed on the importance of financial resources. According to the respondents, at least a certain amount of funds should be allocated to start the youth media community in an area. The financial resources are also needed to provide basic operations facilities such as Internet line subscriptions and basic media equipments. The provision of allocations for this agenda is seen as a commitment that must come from the government, in achieving the grassroots information freedom agenda.

Equipment

Building an information system network in the era of modern communication technology is not as difficult and complex as before. The Internet and some smart devices are enough to keep the basics of the information ecosystem operating. Having basic equipment is one of the requirements demanded in the success of this ecosystem. About 45% of respondents stated that the inadequacy of basic equipment hindered the information ecosystem agenda. Based on interviews with some focus groups, the availability of a good Internet network is a basic tool that needs attention. There are even informants who state that they not only need Internet services, but a stable network connection.

Among other suggestions for a youth community is to have an information centre. The centre not only provides Internet lines but also has computer equipment to access information. Basically, such infrastructure has already been provided but the lack of maintenance of the centre means the main goal of its formation is not achieved. Once upon a time, the government provided devices such as 1Malaysia netbooks that were supplied to the needy. But since the equipment was of poor quality, it did not seem to be able to support the needs of the recipients. Providing the basic infrastructure of information communication is very important. Failure to do so not only affects the support of a good information ecosystem, but would also generate new problems such as information and digital inequality.

“The centre not only provides Internet lines but also has computer equipment to access information.”

09. CONCLUSION

Corresponding to global phenomena, there is no denying that the new media is in line with the lifestyle of the youth in this study. Thus, it is not surprising that the new media is the main source of their media consumption. On the other hand, there are some issues about the Internet accessibility. This matter should be given attention by the authorities so that the quality of Internet network services can be improved. The youth community not only needs Internet access, but quality service. This issue has been highlighted as one of the main constraints on access to information. Although the Internet penetration level in the country has [reached 90% by the end of 2019](#), attention needs to be paid to the issue of network quality.

An interesting finding on the trusted media content is that respondents do not trust the content of politics on their preferred media. It turns out here that although the freedom of the media in Malaysia has become better in 2020 compared to 2019, as reflected in [Reporters Without Borders' 2020 World Press Freedom Index](#), the perception and reality of the respondents appears as if the level of freedom is not enough to convince them. Another remarkable outcome on the most important information required and potentially to be shared is health related matters. However, as the nation is facing a COVID-19 outbreak, health-related matters at this stage are likely seen as more significant.

Generally, the findings of the study showed that media literacy was exhibited by the respondents. With the rising number of fake news reported in the media, self-censorship is the wise action claimed by them. A few Muslims informants explained that the concept of “tabbayun” (meticulousness) in the Quran, requiring them to seek the authenticity of the information in the media. Therefore, self-censorship can balance the

issue of trust in the content or information offered by the media. The perception that the media practices censorship has also led to respondents practicing self-censorship. This suggests that young people typically have high media literacy as they have practised assessment or evaluation elements in their use of the media.

From all the data presented, it can be concluded that the respondents demanded a great commitment from the government in ensuring the sustainability of the information ecosystem. At the same time, the youth have indicated commitment and potential abilities in supporting community media projects.

Overall, the respondents, regardless of their identity, indicate some promising and better support for information ecosystem. They also believe that new media innovations and technologies have a foundation in providing a progressive information ecosystem. Gradual change in values, culture and empowerment of the community system has the potential to produce a healthier and more responsive model of information ecosystem.

Among the key factors in strengthening a healthy information ecosystem are government dedication to progressive policies, supportive legislation and funds. A legislation on right to information, for example, will contribute greatly to the sustainability of the information ecosystem. At the same time, youths should be given exposure, either formally or indirectly, about the importance of right to information as conceived in the 16th goal of Sustainable Development Goals by United Nations. In addition, civil society groups should step in by helping to set up community-based media for youth. The local community is also important in providing solid support towards the formation of community media that contributes to an effective information ecosystem.

“Gradual change in values, culture and empowerment of the community system has the potential to produce a healthier and more responsive model of information ecosystem.”

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11. RESOURCE PERSON BIO

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APPENDIX 1: IEA FRAMEWORK

QUESTIONS

1. Media Consumption

- a. Where and how best do you access information currently? *Eg: traditional and new platforms*
 - i. What role does traditional media play?
 - ii. Which is your most trusted form of media? Which content/issues?
 - iii. What is/are your least trusted form/s of media? Which content/issues?
- b. What media is being consumed?
 - i. What are the opportunities?
 - ii. What are the barriers? *Eg: electricity*
- c. What is your most trusted form of media? Why? And what basis?
 - i. Is the transition to digital platforms more trustworthy?
- d. How does it meet your needs? What issues are covered? How do you prioritise information?
 - *Eg: Health - what would be your main source? Are you able to get timely and relevant information from your local government clinics or MoH?*
 - *Eg: Land - Pejabat Tanah, MP, native courts, CSOs*
- e. What is the frequency of consumption?
- f. Is the media censored?
- g. What are the barriers to access? *Eg: Connectivity, language, economic, political*
- h. If you could receive more information on your related issue/s, what would be your preferred method?

2. Media Ownership

- a. Who owns the media and the related infrastructure?
- b. Who are the 'gatekeepers'?
- c. What is the geographical relevance of information received?
- d. Where does the related platform get their information from?
- e. What are the barriers?

3. Community access and ownership

- a. How relevant is the information to your daily activities?
 - i. Does it impact your daily life?
 - ii. Does it lead to call for action? What kind? How? *Eg: Decide on political alliances and other social issue (misogyny)*
- b. How frequent and the speed in which the different members of the community receive the information?
- c. Are there any gatekeepers?
- d. What do you do with the information you receive?

- e. What is the most frequent information you forward/share?
- f. How do you share the information you receive?
 - i. Any self-censorship? If so why and what form?
 - ii. What is the basis for your sharing? Do you share after reading the whole content?

4. Ownership Structures for Community

- a. Who has power in this setup? Who are the influencers?
- b. What determines the structure? *Eg: social economy; gender; age*
- c. How do you make sure there is inclusivity?
- d. Who is responsible to ensure effective dissemination of information and how do you hold them accountable?
- e. How do you address 'misinformation' or 'fake news'?

5. Sustainability

- a. What would be an enabling environment to support community media?
 - i. Legislations, regulations?
- b. Potential threats and barriers?
 - i. Financial costs
 - ii. Possible interference from those outside the community (politicians, business, etc)
- c. How do you ensure sustainability?
 - i. How do you maintain trust? And reliability?

6. Exploring Types and Opportunities

- a. What are the current opportunities?
- b. What would be the medium of choice?
- c. What content?
- d. How would you like to implement it?
- e. What are potential risks and challenges?

7. Needs Assessment

- a. Legal
- b. Technical
- c. Financial and human resources
- d. Equipment

Determining methodology

- i. Key information interviews
 - Ketua kampung
 - Village committee
 - Etc.
- ii. Focus group discussions
- iii. Surveys

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SOALSELIDIK PENILAIAN EKOSISTEM MAKLUMAT UNTUK KOMUNITI BELIA

Soalselidik ini bertujuan untuk mendapat kefahaman tentang keadaan bermaklumat dalam kalangan belia. Di samping itu kajian ini dilaksanakan untuk menilai potensi untuk mewujudkan satu sistem persekitaran maklumat bagi komuniti belia bagi tujuan pembangunan masyarakat setempat.

Saudara/Saudari dijemput untuk melengkapkan soalselidik ini. Bagi melengkapkan soalselidik ini, masa sekitar 10 hingga 15 minit diperlukan. Untuk makluman anda, maklumat yang dikumpulkan ini TIDAK dapat mengenalpasti identiti anda. Identiti anda adalah sulit dan tidak akan didedahkan kepada umum. Semua maklumat yang dikumpulkan adalah untuk kajian ini semata-mata.

Sebagai tanda penghargaan, setiap soalselidik yang lengkap layak untuk menyertai cabutan bertuah. Pemenang akan dihubungi bagi urusan penghantaran hadiah tersebut. Terima kasih kerana sudi mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini.

Salam hormat,

Dr. Mohd Khairie Ahmad

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MAKLUMAT DIRI

1. Jantina:

- Lelaki
- Wanita
- Lain-lain:

2. Umur (dalam tahun):

3. Bangsa:

- Melayu
- Cina
- India
- Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak
- Lain-lain (nyatakan):

4. Negeri tempat tinggal:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Perlis | <input type="radio"/> Pulau Pinang | <input type="radio"/> Sarawak |
| <input type="radio"/> Perak | <input type="radio"/> Kelantan | <input type="radio"/> Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur |
| <input type="radio"/> Negeri Sembilan | <input type="radio"/> Johor | <input type="radio"/> Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya |
| <input type="radio"/> Terengganu | <input type="radio"/> Pahang | <input type="radio"/> Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan |
| <input type="radio"/> Kedah | <input type="radio"/> Melaka | |
| <input type="radio"/> Selangor | <input type="radio"/> Sabah | |

MAKLUMAT DIRI

5. Lokasi tempat tinggal anda:

- Luar bandar
 Pinggir bandar
 Bandar

6. Nama lokasi tempat tinggal (rumah tetap) anda [contoh: Putrajaya]:

7. Tahap pendidikan tertinggi anda:

- Sekolah Rendah
 Sekolah Menengah
 Kolej/Universiti
 Lain-lain (nyatakan):

BAHAGIAN 1: KEMUDAHAN ASAS

1.1 Tandakan kemudahan-kemudahan asas yang anda miliki di rumah anda. (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Bekalan Elektrik
 Air paip
 Telefon (mudah alih/tetap)
 Talian Internet yang stabil
 TV/Astro/NJoi
 Kenderaan
 Lain-lain (nyatakan):

1.2 Apakah cara pengangkutan utama anda? (Pilih SATU sahaja):

- Kereta
 Motosikal
 Pengangkutan Awam
 Bot
 Kenderaan sendiri dan juga pengangkutan awam
 Lain-lain (nyatakan):

1.3(a) Terdapat dewan komuniti di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada
 Saya tidak tahu

1.3(b) Terdapat balairaya di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada

1.3(c) Terdapat pasar awam di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada

1.3(d) Terdapat kedai runcit di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km

1.3(e) Terdapat pra-sekolah (tadika) di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada

1.3(f) Terdapat sekolah rendah di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada

1.3(g) Terdapat sekolah menengah di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada

1.3(h) Terdapat klinik kesihatan di persekitaran rumah saya:

- Sekitar kurang 1km
 Sekitar 1 hingga 5km
 Lebih dari 5km
 Tiada

BAHAGIAN 2: SOSIO-EKONOMI

2.1 Sekiranya anda bekerja, apakah pekerjaan utama anda? (Jika TIADA, pergi ke soalan 2.2):

2.2 Sekiranya anda melakukan kerja sampingan (part-time) lain untuk menjana pendapatan, apakah pekerjaan tersebut? (Jika TIADA, pergi ke soalan 2.3):

2.3 Adakah anda menerima sebarang skim kredit/pinjaman (seperti PTPTN, pinjaman bank beli kenderaan, dan lain-lain)? Jika YA, sila nyatakan jenis pinjaman tersebut:

BAHAGIAN 3: PENGGUNAAN MEDIA

3.1 Dari manakah sumber utama maklumat anda? (Tandakan TIGA sahaja):

- Surat khabar (seperti Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian, The Star, Sin Chew Daily, Tamil Nesan dan lain-lain)
- Portal Berita Dalam Talian (seperti Malaysiakini, OhBulan, Malay Mail, mStar, Free Malaysia Today, World of Buzz dan lain-lain)
- Radio atau televisyen (seperti RTM, Astro, Njoi, TV3 dan lain-lain)
- Internet (laman-laman web)
- Aplikasi telefon pintar (seperti WhatsApp, WeChat, Telegram dan lain-lain)
- Media sosial (seperti Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube dan lain-lain, juga termasuk video dan infografik yang meringkaskan atau memaparkan berita atau laman web sesebuah berita)
- Dari mulut ke mulut (seperti dari keluarga atau kawan-kawan)
- Lain-lain (nyatakan):

3.2(a) Apakah sumber maklumat yang paling anda percayai? (Pilih SATU sahaja):

- Surat khabar (seperti Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian, The Star, Sin Chew Daily, Tamil Nesan dan lain-lain)
- Portal Berita Dalam Talian (seperti Malaysiakini, OhBulan, Malay Mail, mStar, Free Malaysia Today, World of Buzz, OhBulan dan lain-lain)
- Radio atau televisyen (seperti RTM, Astro, Njoi, TV3, dan lain-lain)
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- Media sosial (seperti Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube dan lain-lain, juga termasuk video dan infografik yang meringkaskan atau memaparkan berita atau laman web sesebuah berita)
- Dari mulut ke mulut (seperti dari keluarga atau kawan-kawan)
- Lain-lain (nyatakan):

BAHAGIAN 3: PENGGUNAAN MEDIA

3.2(b) Apakah isi kandungan yang paling anda percayai dari sumber maklumat tersebut (3.2)? (Tandakan SATU sahaja):

- Politik Sukan
 Ekonomi Hiburan
 Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

3.3(a) Apakah sumber maklumat yang paling anda TIDAK percayai? (Pilih SATU sahaja):

- Surat khabar (seperti Utusan Malaysia, Berita Harian, The Star, Sin Chew Daily, Tamil Nesan dan lain-lain)
 Portal Berita Dalam Talian (seperti Malaysiakini, OhBulan, Malay Mail, mStar, Free Malaysia Today, World of Buzz, OhBulan dan lain-lain)
 Radio atau televisyen (seperti RTM, Astro, Njoi, TV3 dan lain-lain)
 Internet (laman-laman web)
 Aplikasi telefon pintar (seperti WhatsApp, WeChat, Telegram, dan lain-lain)
 Media sosial (seperti Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube dan lain-lain, juga termasuk video dan infografik yang meringkaskan atau memaparkan berita atau laman web sesebuah berita.)
 Dari mulut ke mulut (seperti dari keluarga atau kawan-kawan)
 Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

3.3(b) Apakah isi kandungan yang anda TIDAK percayai dari sumber maklumat tersebut (3.3(a))? (Tandakan SATU sahaja):

- Politik
 Sukan
 Ekonomi
 Hiburan
 Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

3.4 Apakah isu-isu yang menghalang anda daripada menggunakan media bagi mendapat maklumat? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Tiada Internet
 Tiada akses kepada televisyen atau radio
 Sambungan atau talian elektrik/Internet/televisyen/radio yang tidak stabil
 Tiada langganan surat khabar
 Edaran surat khabar yang tidak konsisten
 Jarak rumah yang jauh untuk akses kafe siber atau kedai yang menjual surat khabar
 Tiada akses kepada berita yang ditulis/dipaparkan dalam bahasa ibunda/suku saya
 Faktor ekonomi (contoh: tiada masa untuk membaca kerana bekerja)
 Tidak kisah/rasa macam tidak terjejas dengan politik/isu semasa
 Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

3.5 Apakah pendapat anda mengenai maklumat yang terdapat dalam media digital? (Pilih TIGA jawapan sahaja):

- Maklumatnya lebih bebas
 Media ini dimiliki oleh pihak-pihak yang berkepentingan
 Pelaporannya tidak bias/memihak
 Mengandungi banyak maklumat yang tidak betul
 Kebenaran maklumatnya mudah disemak
 Maklumatnya dipengaruhi pihak lain

3.6 Apakah pendapat anda mengenai maklumat lisan (word-of-mouth) daripada rakan-rakan atau ahli keluarga? (Pilih**TIGA sahaja):**

- Lazimnya mengandungi kebenaran
- Kata-kata mereka banyak dipengaruhi pihak lain
- Maklumat mereka selalunya diselidiki dahulu
- Boleh didengari tetapi perlu diselidiki dengan lebih mendalam
- Apa yang mereka katakan tidak berpihak kepada sesiapa
- Banyak juga maklumat mereka tidak berfakta

3.7 Manakah isu berikut yang paling penting buat anda? (Pilih SATU sahaja):

- Kesihatan
- Berita tempatan
- Politik
- Ekonomi
- Hiburan dan sukan
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

3.8 Secara umum, saya boleh mendapat maklumat yang sahih dan boleh dipercayai daripada media tentang isu-isu berikut? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Kesihatan
- Politik
- Berita tempatan dan antarabangsa
- Kemudahan awam (air, elektrik dan tanah)
- Ekonomi
- Tiada yang berkenaan

3.9 Berapa kerapkah anda mengakses media seperti surat khabar dan portal berita dalam talian?

- Setiap hari
- Bebarapa kali seminggu
- Sekali seminggu
- Beberapa kali sebulan
- Sekali sebulan
- Sekali sekala

3.10 Adakah anda berpendapat bahawa terdapat tapisan (censorship) maklumat dalam media yang anda gunakan?

- Ya
- Tidak

3.11 Adakah anda mengamalkan tapisan sendiri (self-censorship) terhadap maklumat yang diterima menerusi media?

- Ya
- Tidak

BAHAGIAN 4: PEMILIKAN MEDIA DAN CAPAIAN KOMUNITI

4.1(a) Apakah media yang anda gunakan? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan).

- Surat khabar
 Telefon bimbit/pintar
 Telefon rumah
 Televisyen atau radio
 Media sosial
 Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

4.1(b) Apakah media yang menjadi pilihan utama anda? (Pilih SATU sahaja):

- Surat khabar
 Telefonbimbit/pintar
 Telefonrumah
 Televisen atau radio
 Media sosial
 Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

4.1(c) Adakah maklumat yang diterima melalui media yang ditandakan di atas (4.1(b)) relevan untuk anda atau golongan belia? (Pilih SATU jawapan sahaja):

- Ya Tidak Tidak Pasti

4.1(d) Adakah maklumat yang diterima melalui media yang ditandakan di atas (4.1(b)) memberi kesan kepada kehidupan harian anda? (Pilih SATU jawapan sahaja):

- Ya Tidak Tidak Pasti

4.1(e) Adakah maklumat yang diterima melalui media yang ditandakan di atas (4.1(b)) mempengaruhi tindakan anda terhadap perkara berikut? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Politik Ekonomi Hiburan
 Sosial Pendidikan Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

4.2 Berapa cepatkah anda menerima sesuatu maklumat melalui media dan kesannya kepada diri anda? (Pilih SATU jawapan sahaja):

- Sangat cepat dan memberi kesan
 Sangat cepat tetapi tidak memberi kesan
 Sangat cepat tetapi kesannya bergantung kepada keadaan tertentu
 Lambat dan memberi kesan
 Lambat tetapi tidak memberi kesan
 Lambat tetapi kesannya bergantung kepada keadaan tertentu

4.3 Biasanya, apakah yang anda buat dengan maklumat yang diterima? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Dikongsi seadanya
 Mengedit dan kongsikannya
 Tidak berbuat apa-apa

4.4 Apakah sebabnya anda berkongsi maklumat yang anda terima? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Maklumat itu berguna untuk semua
- Maklumat itu relevan kepada masyarakat
- Sudah menjadi kebiasaan saya berbuat demikian
- Untuk mengetahui kesahihannya
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

4.5 Biasanya, adakah anda menapis sesuatu maklumat yang diterima? Jika YA, kenapa? Jika TIDAK, sila ke soalan seterusnya. (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Kurang mempercayai maklumat yang diterima
- Terlalu banyak maklumat palsu pada masa kini
- Sumber media biasanya bias/memihak terhadap sesuatu pihak
- Maklumat dari media dikawal pihak tertentu
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

4.6 Adakah anda mengetahui seseorang kawan atau ahli keluarga yang memiliki saluran media seperti portal atau blog?

- Ya
- Tidak
- Tidak Pasti

BAHAGIAN 5: STRUKTUR MEDIA DALAM KOMUNITI**5.1 Siapakah yang dianggap sebagai individu berpengaruh (influencer) di dalam komuniti anda? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):**

- Ketua kampung
- Ahli Parlimen/Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (YB)
- Ahli politik
- Tokoh agama
- Individu tempatan di kawasan anda yang terkenal/berjaya
- Pegawai kerajaan
- Ahli perniagaan
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

5.2 Apakah faktor yang mempengaruhi keadaan komuniti anda? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Tahap ekonomi
- Tahap pendidikan
- Faktor kumpulan penduduk mengikut umur
- Faktor kumpulan penduduk mengikut jantina (gender)
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

5.3 Manakah kumpulan berikut perlu dilibatkan untuk membina media bagi komuniti belia?**(Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):**

- Diwakili oleh semua kumpulan jantina
- Diwakili seramai mungkin kumpulan terpinggir (marginalised group)
- Diwakili oleh etnik utama di komuniti tersebut
- Disertai oleh mereka yang tinggal di kawasan terpencil
- Disertai oleh kumpulan yang tinggal di bandar sahaja
- Tidak sesuai melibatkan kumpulan OKU

5.4(a) Siapakah yang bertanggungjawab memastikan penyaluran maklumat adalah berkesan? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Pegawai kerajaan
- Ahli Parlimen/Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (YB)
- Ketua kampung
- Media massa
- Media sosial
- Ahli Keluarga
- Guru/Pensyarah
- Diri sendiri
- Individu berpengaruh dalam komuniti anda
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

5.4(b) Pada pandangan anda, apakah yang boleh dibuat untuk memastikan pihak yang anda pilih di 5.4(a) bertanggungjawab menyalurkan maklumat? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Peraturan atau undang-undang yang wajibkan mereka beri maklumat
- Mereka perlu menjadi lebih professional
- Kesedaran kepada masyarakat tentang kepentingan mendapatkan bermaklumat
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

5.5 Bagaimanakah anda menyelesaikan masalah berita palsu (fake news)? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Semakan di portal SEBENARNYA.MY
- Semakan dalam Internet
- Semakan dengan ahli keluarga atau rakan-rakan
- Semakan dengan agensi kerajaan yang berkenaan
- Tidak berbuat apa-apa
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

BAHAGIAN 6: KELANGSUNGAN MEDIA KOMUNITI

6.1 Apakah situasi yang akan dapat membantu menyokong media komuniti belia? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

Sokongan undang-undang tempatan

- Talian telefon yang stabil
- Capaian Internet yang stabil
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

6.2 Apakah isu-isu yang boleh menjadi ancaman dan penghalang kepada media komuniti? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Peraturan dan undang-Undang tempatan
- Campur tangan politik
- Kos yang tinggi
- Campur tangan pihak peniaga
- Tiada kerjasama/minat dalam kalangan ahli masyarakat
- Kemahiran digital yang lemah
- Tiada perpaduan dalam komuniti
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

6.3 Bagaimanakah anda dapat membantu memastikan sesuatu media komuniti boleh kekal berfungsi bagi satu tempoh masa yang lama? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Elak campur tangan politik
- Mempunyai dana kewangan yang mencukupi
- Elak campur tangan pihak peniaga
- Meningkatkan kerjasama/minat dalam kalangan ahli masyarakat
- Meningkatkan kemahiran digital dalam komuniti
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

6.4 Bagaimanakah anda dapat membantu memastikan media komuniti dipercayai dan relevan? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Berkongsi maklumat tentang komuniti tersebut sahaja
- Tidak menerima dana kewangan daripada parti politik
- Elak berkongsi maklumat tentang politik
- Menapis maklumat sebelum disebar dalam media komuniti
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

BAHAGIAN 7: KELANGSUNGAN MEDIA KOMUNITI

7.1 Apakah media pilihan anda? (Pilih TIGA sahaja):

- Surat khabar
- Internet
- Media sosial
- TV komuniti
- Radio Komuniti
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

7.2 Apakah isu-isu yang anda ingin dapatkan dan kongsi dengan komuniti anda? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Isu Belia
- Keagamaan
- Isu tempatan
- Isu semasa
- Peluang-peluang pekerjaan
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____

7.3 Apakah platform yang paling sesuai digunakan untuk media komuniti anda? (Pilih SATU sahaja):

- Media bercetak
- Media penyiaran konvensional (radio atau televisyen bukan dalam talian)
- Media dalam talian

7.4 Apakah potensi cabaran/risiko dalam melaksanakan media komuniti? (Tandakan semua yang berkenaan):

- Kekangan kemahiran mengendalikan media komuniti
- Sumber kewangan tidak mencukupi
- Ketidacukupan peralatan asas
- Sokongan daripada komuniti rendah
- Ketidak fahaman tentang undang-undang media
- Sukar mendapat maklumat daripada pihak terlibat
- Lain-lain (nyatakan): _____



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