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Dewan Perdana FSSK
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MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

The Consumption of Astro & the Forging of Diasporic Links Among Indonesian Diasporic Community in Sabah, Malaysia
Haryati Abdul Karim

A Constructivism Approach to Media Affection: How Media Effects on Social and Collective Behavior
Mansoureh Ganjian, Hasmah Zanuddin, Jatswan Singh

Representasi Gender Melalui Proses Sosialisasi Dalam Siri Animasi Televisyen di Malaysia
Catherine Ugap, Wan Aida Wan Yahaya

Konsep Kredibiliti Maklumat dalam Era Masyarakat Jaringan
Cyril Moditi, Lai Che Ching @ Abd Latif, Syahruddin Awang Ahmad

Youth Lifestyles, Digital Engagement and Political Participation... Are We Measuring It Right?
Lai Che Ching, Hamisah Hasan, Jamal Samsudin

Promote Social Unity
Khairulwafy Mamat, Ruslan Abdul Rahim

Celebrity Couple’s Posted Image on Instagram: A Negative Malaysian Perspective
Siti Shareena Mohd Saharuddin, Aziyah Abu Bakar, Zarihan Shamsudin

Media Coverage on Halal Food and Its Impact on the Promotion of Muslim Friendly Tourism
Fadzilla Hernani Mohd Janis, Majidah Zawawi

Proses Akulturasi Pelajar Malaysia di Luar Negara
Sabariah Mohamed Salleh, Siti Khadijah Hussin

Pengalaman Adaptesi Pelajar Nigeria di Malaysia
Abdul Latiff Ahmad, Noor Haziqah Azlan, Ali Salman, Emma Mirza Wati Mohamad
A Constructivism Approach to Media Affection: How Media Effects on Social and Collective Behavior

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Abstract: Most contemporary scholars recognized that the media have an effective influence in individual communication behaviors. However, there has been no coherent attempt to articulate a testable model of social influence that can guide research on "how media could impact on social and collective behaviors." Since the individual's social behavior is a function of numbers of factors, such as attitude, feeling, social values, identity and norms, this article present an initial formulation of model that integrates media influence with effective elements in social behaviors. It has been done by drawing on social constructivist premises with concentrating on social identity and norms as determinant factors in social and collective actions. Given the centrality of this issue, the matter under the scrutiny is evaluating the crucial role of media in constructing and transforming the new identity and norms among a community. The present study attempts to explain the impact of media in the development of social movements as a social and collective behavior. To that end the discourse among the Left parties, particular the Television news during the 2009 Iran's Green Movement as a case study to analyze and interpret the relationship between media and social movements.

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Along similar line, constructivism argues that individuals' social identity is derived from their affiliation to a particular social group with common interests. Wendt believes that "interests presuppose identities because an actor cannot know what it wants until it knows who it is." Evidently, peoples are identified through their social relationships and interactions (Jepperson & Wendt & Katzenstein, 1996). Indeed, social interaction makes actors' sense of "self" and "other." These beliefs also help then to define the situation and constitute their interests (Pouliot, 2007). Accordingly, social identity explains group members' behaviour, answers the question 'who are we' in comparison to 'them' and moreover, how should we be, think and act. Constructivism also, emphasizes on the influence of norms in defining and shaping actor's behaviours. Social norms, "determine a proper action for a given identity" and propose the ways that individuals can deal with different social situation and the role they should play (Mackie, Moneti, Shakya, & Denny, 2015). The