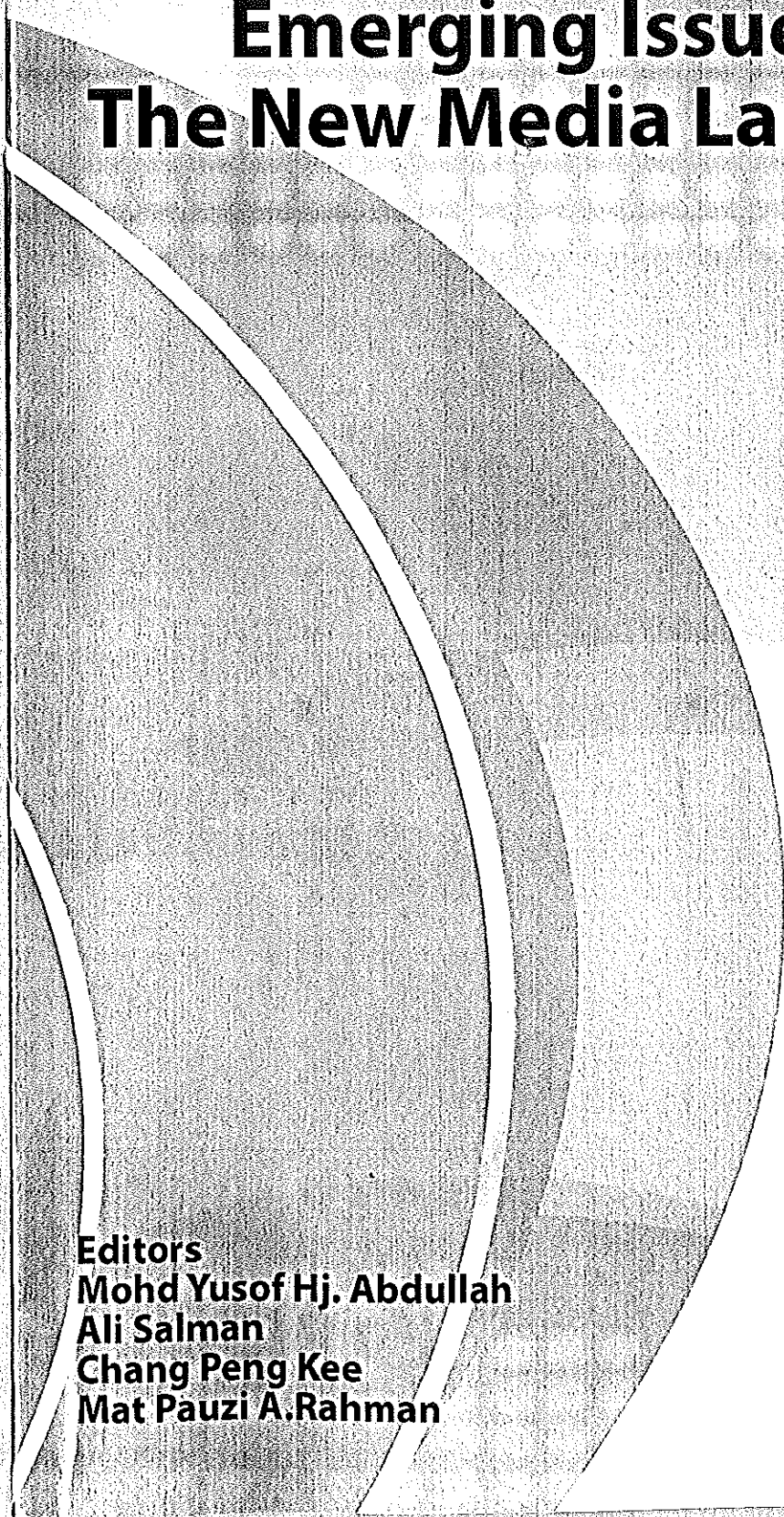




Emerging Issues In The New Media Landscape

Editors
Mohd Yusof Hj. Abdullah
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EMERGING ISSUES IN THE NEW MEDIA LANDSCAPE

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South-South Information Gateway
(SSIG)
Ministry of Communications and
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CHAPTER 9

ONLINE NEWSPAPER AND PERCEPTIONS OF HOMELAND POLITICS AMONG NIGERIAN STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA DURING THE 2011 NIGERIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

Lambe Kayode Mustapha and Saodah Wok
International Islamic University Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This study examines how Nigerian online newspapers shaped the perceptions of election issues and candidates' attributes of Nigerian students in Malaysia during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election. Based on the possibility of the online newspapers to set agenda of homeland politics for foreign resident citizens, the study examines the use of online newspapers among Nigerian students in Malaysia and the influence of online newspapers on their perceived election issues and candidates' attributes. The study survey Nigerian students in Malaysian higher learning institutions within the Klang Valley (N=321) during Nigerian presidential election in April 2011. Using agenda-setting and diasporic nationalism as the theoretical foundation, the results of this study showed that Nigerian students in Malaysia read Nigerian online newspapers and perceived the salience of election issues differently. Findings equally revealed that candidates' position on issues and candidates' attributes are perceived differently. Similarly, the study found significant relationships between perceived influence of online newspapers and perceived salience of election issues on the one hand, and candidates' attributes on the other hand. The results confirmed the importance of the online newspapers to

homeland political knowledge of transnational migrants, particularly during general election.

Keywords: Online newspapers, Nigerian students in Malaysia, Presidential election, Perceived election issues, Perceived candidates' attributes

INTRODUCTION

The advent of dynamic information hardware that compresses the temporo-spatial differences in human interactions and engagements opened new paths in communication research. Much attention has been paid to the centrality of media in the construction of migrants' identities. Similarly, a deluge of research has explored how transnational migrants' relied on the media to bridge the distance between the homeland and their current abodes. Being at the margin, migrant often find solace in the use of the media to respectively bond and bridge with their homeland and their new environments. Ogan and Ozakca (2010, p. 120), for example, posit that "Migrants are in a situation where bonding may take place to keep individuals grounded in their native cultures, whereas bridging may take place to become better integrated in the culture where they now live". While media discourse generally creates a sense of community (McCombs, 1997; Shah, McLeod & Yoon, 2001; Shaw & Martin, 1992; Yoon & Shah, 2005) transnational migrants' media use enhances the preservation of various interpersonal, institutional and symbolic ties built prior their sojourning into the 'new world' (Boccagni, 2012).

The need for migrants' imagination of homeland stem from alienation, discrimination and marginalization they often faced in the host communities (Burrell & Anderson, 2008; Chan, 2005). As an antidote, therefore, diasporic citizens maintain relationships with the homeland via various forms of transnational exchanges mediated by media and communication technologies. These relationships assist not only identity formation, but various forms of repatriated development that transform the lives of their kith and kin in the homeland. Besides, attachment to and interest in the homeland have become potent factors that shape migrants' political, social, or economic lives (Abdelhady, 2008).

Pursuant to the interest of migrants and diaspora in their homeland, a number of avenues have been used. Primarily, migrant communities have relied on the virtual public sphere for aggregation of their interests and continuation of their nationalistic agenda. The development of ethnic media has also been a great succor to the migrants who, according to Christiansen (2004) "tend to seek news very broadly". The ascension of migrants' homeland

mainstream media to the cyberspace provided additional space to consume timely and unadulterated homeland news and information. While migrants' media behaviours, with specific reference to ethnic cyber media, have received much theorization and empirical exploration, scholarship within diasporic, transnational and migrant studies have paid paltry attention to the use and effects of homeland mainstream media on the Internet that have become important media diets of the migrants (Elias & Lemish, 2011; Yin, 2013). Thus Yin (2013, p. 4) submits that "this largely under-researched area is most likely caused by the fact that the homeland media, until recently, had not been able to exert timely and direct influence on migrants and their communities". Besides, little has been done in the application of extant mass communication theories to media behaviours of the transnational migrants. This study thus explore the apparent gap in the literature with a view to document the important of homeland media to the critical nations' stakeholders residing in far flung locations across the globe.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Media and Reality Construction

Lippmann's magna opus, *Public Opinion*, documents the centrality of the mass media in audience's apprehension of a plethora of events in the outside world that are not only out of reach, but impossible to be observed firsthand by the members of the public. At the community and national level, this bridging function of the media is performed by the media system consisting of local and national dailies, magazine, radio, television, and, of course, various forms of new media platforms. According to Lasswell and Wright, these media apparatuses meet the surveillance, correlation, transmission, and entertainment needs of a teeming audiences (Baran & Davis, 2009; DeFleur, 2010; Rosenbery & Vicker, 2009; Severin & Tankard, 2009; Sparks, 2009). Scholars have also identified a corpus of other utilities offered by the media system via a theoretical tradition known as uses and gratifications perspective (Idid, Wok, Dhaha & Ab.Aziz, 2012; Jamal & Melkote, 2008; Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974).

Through their manifest and latent functions, therefore, the media help the audience to organise their daily life, form and hold opinions, respond to a myriad of external social, political, cultural and economic stimuli and transmit values from one generation to another. Beyond the national frontiers, international media institutions have filled the vacuum created by space and time differences for decades. Homeland media artifacts, however, command

the attention of transnational migrants as well as diasporic communities. Hence, diasporic communities depended on past editions of homeland media artifacts usually provided by recent visitors to the homeland on newly arriving migrants prior the advent of the new global electronic infrastructure (Ip, 2006, Thussu, 2007).

The convergence of communication media via Web 2.0 has radicalised homeland media use of transnational migrants. "Migrants nowadays have increasingly easy access through the Internet to the unadulterated and unedited 'pure' homeland media" (Yin, 2013, p. 6). News about the homeland thus helps migrants and diasporas to attenuate the nostalgic feelings associated with being uprooted from their base and transplanted to new locales (Christiansen, 2010). Additionally, advanced media technologies in this age of mass migration have transformative effects on the relationships between the migrants and homeland citizens (Waldinger, 2013). This perhaps explains the recent attention being accorded the relationship between homeland media and perceptions of the homeland among transnational migrants in the recent time.

Homeland Media and Transnational Migrants

Apparent in the daily lives of transnational migrants and the diasporas is their longing for the homeland. Hence, communication media fill the distance between the homeland and the hostland. Sequel to migration, migrants mitigate the challenges of personal, social and cultural transformation by taking advantage of available media resources that facilitate integration into their new society and maintenance of ties with the homeland (Bernal, 2006; Elias & Lemish, 2011; Hopkins, 2009; Kim, 2011). In addition to media artifacts from countries of settlement, regional media and transnational media, migrants also depend on a variety of media from their countries of origin to make meaning of their everyday lives (Aly, 2010; Christiansen, 2004; Hopkins, 2009; Macri, 2011). "Indeed, with advances in global communications and transportation technologies, migrants can now have multilocal attachments, traveling between the homeland and the host society and maintaining social and political ties with the country of origin" (Chan, 2005, p. 337).

Besides helping in the imagination of the homeland, media from migrants' countries of origin inundate passionate migrants and diasporas with the daily lived experience of the compatriots they left behind. The hope of returning to the homeland increases migrants' ritual attachment to the homeland and the need to follow events happening therein. Apart from facilitating their connection to the homeland, media reinforce migrants' sense of collective

identity (Alonso & Oiarzabal, 2010). Capturing the essence of homeland media in the lives of the migrants further, Anderson (1991) argued that "the national media contribute to the imagining of a nation as a shared territorial community of nationals through the production of homogenous discourse of identity and culture" (cited in Alonso & Oiarzabal, 2010, p. 7).

The recent expansion of the news sphere resulting from the melding of traditional and new media formats broadens migrants' knowledge of the homeland. As a repository of information and knowledge, the Internet provides easy opportunity for migrants to maintain 'here' and 'there' presence. The hosting of homeland legacy news media on the information superhighway dramatically eases access to homeland information with just a few clicks. Therefore, migrants today are able to manage their physical dislocation better, get information about occurrences of interest, and mobilise support for the homeland when the need arises (Alonso & Oiarzabal, 2010; Brinkerhoff, 2009; Hopkins, 2009). The increasing knowledge of the plights of their relatives who stay behind, and willingness to alleviate their situations has thus led to increased loyalty to home country among transnational migrants and diasporas (Abdelhady, 2008; Aly, 2010; Chan, 2005; Kim, 2011; Waldinger, 2013). This state of affairs buttresses Brinkerhoff's (2009) assertion that diasporas maintain allegiance and romanticize with ancestral home and constitute external influence on homeland political development.

Homeland Media and Diasporic Nationalism

As a key function of the media, nationalism entails the felling of attachment to one's national home. Papp (2002) conceptualises nationalism as a binding psychological force that confers feelings of attachment and sense of pride on members of a nation with a view to secure patriotism and allegiance from them. The mass media have been considered as huge contributors to development of nationalism since the day of the printing press (Papp, 2002; DeFleur, 2010; Severin & Tankard, 2009; Uche, 1989). Media discourses and narratives help in socializing members of the community to common values, ethos and beliefs that are central to the development of common identity, unity and autonomy. Being victims of push and pull forces, migrants carry along nationalistic zeal in their continuing relationship with the homeland. Hence, Migrants and diasporas are not only maintaining relationship with but continually offer support for the homeland (Chan, 2005).

Explicating the role of homeland media in the lived experiences and identities of migrants and diasporas, Kim (2011) concludes that homeland media consumption via the Internet reinforces the feelings of diasporic

nationalism. This nationalistic practice has been demonstrated in terms of economic social and political remittances to the homeland (Burrell & Anderson, 2008; Chan, 2005; Pérez-Armendáriz & Crow, 2010; Waldinger, 2013). Besides financial remittance, migrants maintained long-distance nationalism/cross-border politics which aimed at gaining political autonomy or regime change (Waldinger, 2013).

The concept of long-distance nationalism, popularized by Benedict Anderson, describes the role of communication technologies in migrants' remittance of funds, weapons and propagandistic materials with a view to influence political events in their homelands (Chan, 2005, p. 342). Other non-aggressive modes of long-distance nationalism include solidarity with compatriots and states, lobbying, and participation in homeland politics via diasporic voting rights (Waldinger, 2013). All these helped migrant to maintain great attachment to the homeland.

In a study of Middle East and African Arabs' media use in London, Aly (2010) similarly notes that migrant generations who are not born in their homeland, speak their mother tongue or visit their country of origin have deep attachment to their homeland. Documenting Nigerian migrants' homeland relations via media use, Akinrinade and Ogen (2011, p. 47) equally suggested that ICT-based Nigerian media are responsible for "...the coalescence of the Nigerian diasporas into a coherent force geared towards national development. In interviews with 17 Ghanaians living abroad Burrell & Anderson (2008) also document the importance of media technologies in maintaining contact with the homeland in addition to expanding the social horizon of the respondents. In an exploration media use, identity construction and nationalism among Chinese migrant in New Zealand, Yin (2013) found that 16 of the 18 Chinese migrants in New Zealand interviewed offered that they visit the portal of homeland mainstream media for identity-cultural- and politically-inclined narratives. Besides, it was found that the respondents internalise current events in the country home, and pick up the frame and agenda set by the homeland media. While the homeland media have the potential to set agenda for their teeming transnational migrants and diasporas little has been done to confirm this possibility. Hence we ask the following questions with regards to the salience setting power of Nigerian online newspapers for Nigerian students in Malaysia during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election:

RQ1: What are the main issues perceived as salient by Nigerian students in Malaysia during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election?

RQ2: What are the issues and attributes perceived as salient in the candidates' campaigns during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election?

RQ3: To what extent do Nigerian students in Malaysia perceived candidates' issues and attributes salience differently during the 2011 Nigerian presidential election?

RQ4: Are there relationships between perceived influence of online newspapers and perceived candidates' issues and attributes?

METHOD

Data for this research come from a large study conducted on online newspapers use and perceptions of 2011 Nigerian election issues and candidates' attributes among Nigerian students in Malaysia. The cross-sectional data were collected between 1 April and 19 April, 2011. Nigerian students in twelve Malaysian public and private higher learning institutions within the Klang Valley area form the population of the study. With a sampling frame consisting 2,228 students a sample of 350 respondents, adequate enough to maintain 95% confidence level, was chosen.

Respondents were selected using a systematic random sampling technique. The self-administered questionnaires used to elicit data from the respondents contain variables that measure the patterns of online newspapers use (number of the days read online newspapers a week, online newspaper read the most, content read the most, and attention paid to online newspapers news); perceived salient election issues (consisting of eight salient issues measured on a five-point Likert scale- 1= strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) , perceived salient issues in the candidates' campaigns (consisting of eight salient issues measured on a five-point Likert scale- 1= strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) , perceived salient candidates' attributes (consisting of six salient attributes measured on a five-point Likert scale- 1= strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree), and perceived influence of online newspapers on salient of election issues and candidates' attributes , consisting of six items measured on a five-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficients of all the scale items exceed $\alpha=0.70$ benchmark.

FINDINGS:

Demographic Profile

More than half of the respondents (52.2%) are within the age group 21-30 years old while more than seven in ten (72.9%) of the respondent were male. There is a different between the number of Muslims (55.4%) compared to

Christian respondents (44.6%). Only a slight difference exists between respondents of northern Nigerian origin (52.6%) as compared to those from southern Nigeria (46%) as compared to those from southern Nigeria (47.4%).

Online Newspapers Use

Out of three Nigerian national dailies on the online selected for this study, the *Daily Trust* commands the highest readership (40.4%) while the *Vanguard* attracted the lowest patronage among Nigerian students sampled in this study. In terms of the number of the days the respondents read Nigerian online newspapers per week, one third of the respondents (33.2%) claimed they read daily. Only 6.4% of the respondents avoid reading Nigerian online newspapers for at least a day in a week. Politics (50.3%) is most frequently read content while finance issues merited the attention of only 4.7% of the respondents the most. Only one in ten of the respondents (10.4%) paid no attention to the content read in the online newspapers. Others paid some, moderate and high attention to the news content.

Salience of the Main Election Issues

Based on the research question number one, respondents' perceptions of the main election issues are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Election Issues Salience among Nigerian Students in Malaysia

Perceived Main Issue Salience	Level of Agreement* (%)					M	SD	Over all (%)
	1	2	3	4	5			
Corruption	3.3	4.3	11.1	20.3	61.0	4.31	1.04	86.2
Credible election	4.6	3.0	26.8	24.8	40.7	3.94	1.10	78.8
Economy	3.3	3.7	29.4	20.1	43.5	3.97	1.11	79.4
Infrastructure	3.3	5.0	26.7	19.0	46.0	3.99	1.11	79.8
Power supply	6.5	4.2	12.1	19.6	57.5	4.17	1.20	83.4
Security	7.0	4.3	16.2	20.5	52.0	4.06	1.22	81.2
Social welfare	4.3	5.0	26.3	23.3	41.0	3.92	1.12	78.4
Unemployment & poverty alleviation	4.3	6.0	25.6	18.3	45.8	3.95	1.16	79.0
Total						4.04	1.13	80.7

*Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree (1-20%), 2=Disagree (21-40%), 3=Slightly Agree (41-60%), 4=Agree (61-80%), 5=Strongly Agree (81-100%)

The results revealed that respondents generally perceived the eight issues as salient in the 2011 Nigerian presidential election (80.7%). Specifically, they perceived corruption (86.2%) as the most salient. This is followed by power supply (83.4%) and security (81.2%). They also agreed that all other issues are important and thus warrant the attention of whoever is elected president in the 2011 Nigerian presidential election, mean ranging from 3.92 to 3.99. This means that the eight prominent issues dominating the nation's political discourse during the 2011 are considered important but in different hierarchy.

Perceived Candidates' Issues and Attributes Salience

RQ2 measures respondents' perceptions of dominant issues and attributes associated with the three top candidates in the 2011 Nigerian presidential election. Tables 2a and 2b respectively present respondents' perception of candidates' salient issues and candidates' salient attributes.

For Goodluck Jonathan, the incumbent president and candidate of People Democratic Party (PDP), respondents agreed that seven out of the eight issues are salient in his campaigns ($M=3.22$, $SD=1.11$). They agreed that credible election ($M=3.38$, $SD=1.00$) is the most salient issue in his campaign. Other issues perceived as salient in Jonathan's campaigns are unemployment and poverty alleviation ($M=3.31$, $SD=1.06$) and economy ($M=3.30$, $SD=1.14$). However, they only agreed slightly that corruption ($M=2.98$, $SD=1.16$) is salient in his campaigns.

Table 2a: Perceived Candidates' Issues Salience

Perceived Candidates' Issue Salience	Level of Agreement ^a (%)					M	SD	Over all (%)
	1	2	3	4	5			
Goodluck Jonathan								
Corruption	16.2	9.3	45.7	18.2	10.6	2.98	1.16	59.6
Credible election	7.3	4.0	45.2	30.9	12.6	3.38	1.00	67.6
Economy	10.6	7.0	39.2	27.9	15.3	3.30	1.14	66.0
Infrastructure	11.4	7.4	42.1	26.8	12.4	3.21	1.12	64.2
Power supply	12.9	9.9	39.1	23.2	14.9	3.17	1.19	63.4
Security	13.7	7.4	45.5	22.1	11.4	3.10	1.14	62.0
Social welfare	11.0	4.7	41.2	31.6	11.6	3.28	1.09	65.6
Unemployment & poverty alleviation	10.3	2.7	44.2	31.3	11.3	3.31	1.06	66.2
Total						3.22	1.11	64.3
Muhammadu Buhari								
Corruption	4.6	10.1	49.0	23.2	13.1	3.30	0.98	66.0
Credible election	2.3	7.2	62.3	23.0	5.2	3.22	0.75	64.4
Economy	9.2	4.0	59.4	17.5	9.9	3.15	0.98	63.0
Infrastructure	6.3	14.8	41.1	25.7	12.2	3.23	1.05	64.6
Power supply	2.0	5.0	51.2	21.8	20.1	3.53	0.93	70.6
Security	1.6	3.9	45.4	26.6	22.4	3.64	0.93	72.8
Social welfare	3.3	15.5	38.5	29.3	13.5	3.34	1.00	66.8
Unemployment & poverty alleviation	5.6	11.2	41.4	27.0	14.8	3.34	1.04	66.8
Total						3.34	0.96	66.9
Nuhu Ribadu								
Corruption	4.7	4.4	32.9	30.2	27.9	3.72	1.06	74.4
Credible election	3.4	4.4	45.9	27.7	18.6	3.54	0.96	70.8
Economy	3.7	5.1	42.4	28.8	20.0	3.56	0.99	71.2
Infrastructure	3.1	6.5	55.1	23.3	12.0	3.35	0.89	67.0
Power supply	5.4	4.4	53.0	21.3	15.9	3.38	0.98	67.6
Security	3.7	6.8	48.6	25.0	15.9	3.43	0.96	68.6
Social welfare	3.4	7.1	53.9	22.0	13.6	3.35	0.92	67.0
Unemployment & poverty alleviation	5.4	7.5	51.5	21.7	13.9	3.31	0.99	66.2
Total						3.46	0.97	69.1

^aScale: 1=Strongly Disagree (1-20%), 2=Disagree (21-40%), 3=Slightly Agree (41-60%), 4=Agree (61-80%) 5=Strongly Agree (81-100%)

Generally, respondents perceived all the eight issues as salient in the campaigns of Congress for Progressive Change's (CPC) candidate,

Muhammadu Buhari, ($M=3.34$, $SD=0.93$). Security ($M=3.64$, $SD=0.93$) is perceived as the most salient issue in this candidate's campaigns. This is followed by power supply ($M=3.53$, $SD=0.93$), social welfare ($M=3.34$, $SD=1.00$) as well as unemployment and poverty alleviation ($M=3.34$, $SD=1.04$). Economy ($M=3.15$, $SD=0.98$) is the least perceived salient issue in Buhari's campaigns.

All the eight election issues in the campaigns of Action Congress of Nigeria's (ACN) candidate, Nuhu Ribadu, are perceived as salient by the respondents ($M=3.46$, $SD=0.97$). Corruption is considered as the most salient issues in this candidate's campaigns ($M=3.72$, $SD=1.06$). Besides corruption, economy ($M=3.56$, $SD=0.99$) and credible election ($M=3.54$, $SD=0.96$) are also considered as having high salience in Ribadu's campaigns. Meanwhile, unemployment and poverty alleviation ($M=3.31$, $SD=0.99$) is perceived as the least salient issue in this candidate's campaigns.

Table 2b: Perceived Candidates' Attributes Salience

Perceived Candidates' Attributes Salience	Level of Agreement* (%)					M	SD	Over all (%)
	1	2	3	4	5			
Goodluck Jonathan								
Credibility	19.1	9.9	42.2	15.2	13.5	2.94	1.25	58.8
Discipline	17.2	10.9	43.4	15.2	13.2	2.96	1.22	59.2
Experience	15.8	10.9	35.0	25.1	13.2	3.09	1.23	61.8
Patriotism	12.9	10.3	36.1	28.1	12.6	3.17	1.17	63.4
Political will	16.9	11.6	47.0	15.2	9.3	2.88	1.14	57.6
Vision	19.5	9.9	34.7	23.1	12.9	3.00	1.28	60.0
Total						3.01	1.22	60.1
Muhammadu Buhari								
Credibility	2.3	0.6	44.7	34.0	18.4	3.66	0.86	73.2
Discipline	1.3	6.1	33.7	43.0	15.9	3.66	0.86	73.2
Experience	1.9	3.2	31.1	40.8	23.0	3.80	0.90	76.0
Patriotism	2.3	4.2	50.5	30.0	13.0	3.47	0.86	69.4
Political will	2.0	1.6	48.5	35.2	12.7	3.55	0.81	71.0
Vision	2.3	4.2	48.4	28.9	16.2	3.53	0.89	70.6
Total						3.61	0.86	72.2
Nuhu Ribadu								
Credibility	3.3	4.3	42.2	25.9	24.3	3.63	1.00	72.6
Discipline	4.0	6.0	45.5	24.9	19.6	3.50	1.00	70.0
Experience	6.3	7.3	58.8	15.3	12.3	3.20	0.97	64.0
Patriotism	2.7	5.0	56.3	21.3	14.7	3.40	0.89	68.0
Political will	4.0	6.6	59.8	16.3	13.3	3.28	0.92	65.6
Vision	3.0	5.0	49.2	25.2	17.6	3.50	0.94	70.0
Total						3.42	0.95	68.4

*Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree (1-20%), 2=Disagree (21-40%), 3=Slightly Agree (41-60%), 4=Agree (61-80%), 5=Strongly Agree (81-100%)

Respondents generally agreed that the six attributes being examined are salient in Jonathan's campaign (60.1%). Specifically, they agreed the candidate is patriotic (63.4), experienced (61.8%) and visionary (60.0%). Respondents, however, slightly agreed on his attributes of credibility (58.8%), discipline (59.2%) and political will (57.6%). This shows that respondents only consider

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the candidate as standing out in some attributes while they do not perceive others as salient attributes of the candidate.

The level of agreement on the perceived salience of the six attributes is high and consistent for Buhari (72.2%). Respondents generally agreed that Buhari is an experienced (76.0%), credible (73.2%) and a disciplined (73.2%) candidate. Other attributes are also perceived as salient in the candidate's campaign. The attribute with the least salience for this candidate is patriotism (69.4%).

There is also a general agreement among the respondents concerning the salient of the six attributes in Ribadu's campaign (68.4%). Specifically, the candidate is perceived best as being credible (72.6%), disciplined (70.0%) and visionary (70.0%). Meanwhile, the candidate's experience is perceived as the least salient among his attributes (64.0%).

Comparing Perceptions of Candidates' Issues and Attributes Salience

Ideally candidates' campaigns are usually based on individual strengths. Candidates thus promote issues that are not only resonating with the political climate but also with their competences. Similarly, candidates' attributes are usually promoted in relation to strategic strength. Hence RQ3 asks perceived difference in candidates' issues and attributes. Table 3a and 3b respectively present the results.

Table 3a: Perceived Differences in Candidates' Issues salience

Issues	Candidates									t	df	p
	Jonathan			Buhari			Ribadu					
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD			
Corruption	296	2.95	1.15	296	3.30	0.98				-3.863	295	0.000
	295	2.95	1.16				295	3.71	1.06	-9.011	294	0.000
				296	3.30	0.98	296	3.71	1.06	-5.762	295	0.000
Credible Election	295	3.36	1.00	295	3.20	0.74				2.121	294	0.035
	293	3.36	1.00				293	3.51	0.95	-2.265	292	0.024
				294	3.20	0.74	294	3.53	0.95	-4.717	293	0.000
Economy	292	3.28	1.13	292	3.14	0.97				1.523	291	0.129
	291	3.28	1.12				291	3.56	0.97	-3.768	290	0.000
				291	3.13	0.97	291	3.56	0.97	-5.541	290	0.000
Infrastructure	292	3.19	1.11	292	3.22	1.03				-0.277	291	0.782
	287	3.28	1.10				287	3.35	1.03	-1.550	286	0.065
				289	3.22	1.03	289	3.34	0.88	-1.610	288	0.108
Power Supply	293	3.13	1.18	293	3.52	0.93				-4.194	292	0.000
	293	3.15	1.18				293	3.38	0.98	-2.612	291	0.009
				291	3.53	0.92	291	3.37	0.97	2.310	290	0.022
Security	291	3.08	1.13	291	3.63	0.93				-6.285	290	0.000
	290	3.09	1.12				290	3.41	0.96	-3.898	289	0.000
				292	3.63	0.92	292	3.41	0.96	3.340	291	0.001
Social welfare	294	3.28	1.08	294	3.32	1.00				-0.441	293	0.659
	292	3.27	1.08				292	3.35	0.92	-0.916	291	0.360
				292	3.32	1.00	292	3.35	0.92	-0.292	291	0.771
Unemployment & poverty alleviation	294	3.30	1.06	294	3.31	1.04				-0.185	293	0.853
	291	3.30	1.05				291	3.31	0.98	-0.167	290	0.867
				292	3.32	1.04	292	3.31	0.98	0.141	291	0.888

A paired sample t-test was conducted to find out whether there is significant difference in perceived salience of issues of Jonathan and Buhari; Jonathan and Ribadu; and Buhari and Ribadu. The results revealed a significant difference between Jonathan and Buhari in terms of corruption salience ($t=-3.863$, $df=295$, $p=0.000$). Significant difference also exist between the perceived salience of corruption in Jonathan and Ribadu's campaigns ($t=-17.9011$, $df=294$, $p=0.000$). Buhari and Ribadu also differed in terms of salience of corruption ($t=-5.762$, $df=295$, $p=0.000$).

Same patterns of perceived differences were found in the salience of credible election, power supply and security. In the case economy, only Ribadu differs with Jonathan and Buhari significantly in the perceptions of the respondents. The salience of economy in the campaigns of Jonathan and Buhari are perceived in the same manner. The three candidates' are not perceived differently in their handling of issues of infrastructure, social welfare as well as unemployment and poverty alleviation. The patterns in the result however

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showed that candidates are perceived differently in the key issues during the campaigns.

Table 3b: Perceived Differences in candidates' Attributes

Attributes	Candidates									t	df	p
	Jonathan			Buhari			Ribadu					
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD			
Credibility	298	1.92	1.24	298	3.65	0.86				-8.723	297	0.000
	296	1.91	1.24				296	3.62	1.00	-8.727	295	0.000
				298	3.65	0.86	298	3.62	0.99	0.521	297	0.603
Discipline	297	2.95	1.22	297	3.65	0.87				-8.235	296	0.000
	296	2.94	1.22				296	3.49	1.00	-6.900	295	0.000
				298	3.65	0.87	298	3.49	1.00	2.367	297	0.019
Experience	298	3.07	1.23	298	3.79	0.90				-8.096	297	0.000
	297	3.07	1.24				297	3.19	0.96	-1528	296	0.128
				298	3.80	0.90	298	3.18	0.96	8.386	297	0.000
Patriotism	297	3.16	1.18	297	3.45	0.86				-3.377	296	0.001
	296	3.16	1.18				296	3.39	0.89	-3.135	295	0.002
				297	3.45	0.86	297	3.39	0.89	0.968	296	0.334
Political will	296	2.86	1.14	296	3.55	0.80				-8.490	295	0.000
	296	2.86	1.14				296	3.26	0.90	-5.204	295	0.000
				297	3.55	0.81	297	3.26	0.91	4.370	296	0.000
Vision	297	2.98	1.28	297	3.52	0.90				-5.579	296	0.000
	296	2.98	1.28				296	3.48	0.94	-6.176	295	0.000
				298	3.52	0.90	298	3.48	0.94	0.586	297	0.558

Respondents perceived Jonathan and Buhari differently in terms of their credibility ($t=-8.723$, $df=297$, $p=0.000$). Perceived credibility of Jonathan and Ribadu also differs among the respondents ($t=-8.727$, $df=295$, $p=0.000$). Buhari and Ribadu's credibility remains constant in the respondents' perceptions.

Perceived salience of discipline and political will among the three candidates revealed significant differences. Experience, patriotism and vision, however, differ for only two candidates as shown in Table 3b. This means that the salience of these attributes is closer for the results that are not statistically significant.

Relationships between Perceived Influence of Online Newspapers and Perceived Candidates' Issues and Attributes

Before presenting the relationship between perceived influence of online newspapers news on the salience of candidates' issues and attributes, summary responses on perceived influence on the online newspaper are presented in Table 4a.

Emerging Issues In The New Media Landscape

The findings showed that the respondents agreed that online newspapers coverage of the 2011 election influenced their knowledge on election issues and candidates' attributes, as well as their feelings towards the issues and the candidates (68.4%).

Influence of online newspapers on knowledge of the main election issues (70.4%) received the highest score. This was followed by influence of the online newspapers on knowledge about candidates' issues position and influence of online newspapers on feelings about the main election issues, each with a score of 69.2%. The respondents also agreed that the online newspapers influenced their knowledge about candidates' attributes (68.2%).

Perceived Influence of Online Newspapers	Level of agreement* (%)					M	SD	Overall (%)
	1	2	3	4	5			
Influence of online newspapers on knowledge of main election issues	11.0	9.4	19.4	37.1	23.2	3.52	1.25	70.4
Influence of online newspapers on feelings about main election issues	7.7	10.6	28.1	34.8	18.7	3.46	1.14	69.2
Influence of online newspapers on knowledge about candidates' issues position	9.4	10.7	23.6	37.2	19.1	3.46	1.19	69.2
Influence of online newspapers on knowledge of candidates' attributes	9.4	10.0	30.0	31.9	18.7	3.41	1.17	68.2
Influence of online newspapers on feelings about candidates' attributes	8.4	14.8	26.5	33.2	17.1	3.36	1.17	67.2
Influence of online newspapers on candidates' preference	10.7	13.9	27.8	29.4	18.1	3.30	1.22	66.0
Total						3.42	1.19	68.4

*Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree (1-20%), 2=Disagree (21-40%), 3=Slightly Agree (41-60%), 4=Agree (61-80%), 5=Strongly Agree (81-100%)

The two statements that recorded low scores are influence of online newspapers on feelings about candidates' attributes (67.2%) and influence of online newspapers on the candidates' preference (66.0%). This may be due to little emphasis of the online newspapers on evaluation of candidates' attributes along unfavourable, neutral, and favourable dimensions. Similarly, online newspapers news and reports did not support any candidate explicitly by way of endorsement. These may have been responsible for the little influence the feelings the respondents hold about the candidates' attributes and preference for the candidates.

Table 4b: Relationship between Perceived Online Newspapers News and Perceived Issues and Candidates' Attributes.

Perceived Influence of Online Newspapers	Overall	G. Jonathan	M. Buhari	N. Ribadu
Election Issues	.215**	.213**	.184*	.224**
Candidates' Attributes	-	.238**	.281**	.291**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

The results on perceived influence of online newspapers news revealed positive and significant correlation across all measures. These showed that respondents' perceptions of the overall election issues, perceived salience of the issues in the candidates' campaigns as well as perceived salience of candidates' attributes are, to some degree, a function of online newspapers coverage.

DISCUSSION

The present study explores uses and effects of homeland media on transnational migrants. Specifically, perceptions of homeland political trajectories among Nigerian students in Malaysia at the election period, which is considered as a moment for increased need for orientation, was examined in line with the thesis of long-distance nationalism in migrant studies and agenda-setting in media effects paradigm. Findings support the notion that homeland online news media frame and set agenda of important homeland issues for the diasporic community as documented by Yin's (2013) study of homeland media use of Chinese migrants in New Zealand.

The study also found that Nigerian students in Malaysia use homeland newspapers on the online to monitor the political moment in their country. Issues of national importance in Nigeria during the 2011 presidential election are salient in the perceptions of Nigerian students in Malaysia who followed the election via the homeland online newspapers. The respondents also displayed their knowledge of differential emphases that characterized candidates' stands on issues and candidates' attributes during this time of rigorous political marketing.

Differences in perceptions of issues and attributes that are salient in the candidates' campaigns relate to the nature of election marketing that requires candidates' to leverage on their unique issues competence and attributes strength. Scholars have posited that candidates deployed their advantageous know-hows and attributes when approaching the electorate during the election (Golan & Wanta, 2001; Hayes, 2008). The mediatization of candidates' campaigns thus primes the audience to *think about* the candidates in the directions offered by the media (Kiousis & McCombs, 2004; McCombs, 2004; McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

We also found support for the agenda-setting potential of online newspapers, which has become a debatable issue among scholars (see Althaus & Tewksbury, 2002; Schoenbach, de Waal & Lauf, 2005; Roberts, Wanta & Dzwo, 2002). Although this study is limited by a numbers of contingencies not controlled, it offers promises on interdisciplinary exploration of

transnational migrants' media use that lies at the juncture of diaspora, transnational, migrant, and media studies. The application of tested mass communication theories to scholarship in transnationalism thus respond to the clarion calls on the expansion of mass communication theories. Future studies should consider a mix-method, consisting of media content and audience response data in order to establish a full-fledge agenda-setting effects of Web version of homeland traditional media on homeland public opinion foreign resident citizens.

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