Media Consumption and Civic Engagement: The Reasoned Action Theory as a Way Forward to Determine The Relationship

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ABSTRACT

Communication is important to enable ideas to be transformed into informed actions. As such, the media used for such communication is crucial and play an important role in broadcasting the information. The proliferation of the Internet has greatly enhanced the important role of the media and changed the landscape of the media industry. In addition to conventional media, consumers are now able to access a variety of social media applications. Both types of media are important and needs to be considered as it continues to be consumed across demographics and play important roles in communicating information. Further, both types of media are capable of informing and shaping the views of consumers in a variety of areas from the political to the social. The important question remains as to whether increased availability, access, and connectivity to the various types of media and the information provided have enabled opportunities to media consumers to engage in discussions to stimulate civic engagement leading to activism. Research investigating users' media consumption and civic engagement with issues explored is largely not well theorised and often offer inconclusive or conflicting results. As such, the ensuing discussion proposes a way forward utilising the Reasoned Action Theory to determine the relationship between media consumption and civic engagement.

Keywords: *Communication, media consumption, civic engagement, reasoned action theory, behaviour.*

INTRODUCTION

Communication plays an important role in society. It is capable of creating ideas and actions that can mobilise thinking and movements. One impactful form of communication is writing. The establishment of the printing press resulted in written ideas being shared and distributed widely. These developments have contributed to the existence of the print newspapers and much later radio, telephone, and television.

The advent of the Internet technology has advanced communication to bridge time and space. Social media has increasingly become an indispensable platform for communication given its rapidity in delivering information within record time. Online news portals and applications have not only enabled vital news and information to be disseminated within minutes but have also connected to a wider audience and created consumers who can feedback views and news, and even create their own media communication platforms.

The proliferation of the communication media advanced by the rapid growth of Internet technology has thus not only changed the landscape of the media industry but has also increased connectivity. Media communication remains a relevant tool to broadcast information and also provide entertainment capable of persuading and influencing consumers. The important question remains as to whether increased connectivity has provided opportunities for media users to engage in discussions to stimulate greater engagement in civic life (Skoric, Zhu, Goh, & Pang, 2016; Wilnatt & Aw, 2014).

This paper proposes the way forward to examine the impact of users' media consumption on their civic engagement by revisiting Reasoned Action Theory. This proposed work begins with establishing the research on media consumption to include conventional and social media followed by civic engagement. It then highlights the issues arising from research into these two main areas and proposes how Reasoned Action Theory could be applied to examine the effect of users' media consumption on their civic engagement.

MEDIA CONSUMPTION

The media plays an important role in providing information in the form of news, entertainment, information, and education to the public. The consumption of these outputs by users could influence the way they perceive concepts and issues, and persuade them to change their views. As such the media plays an important role in organising public opinion, street rallies and demonstrations, written petitions and boycott campaigns. The Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street to the on-going protests in the streets of Hong Kong do point to the influence of media on users. The media as a form of communication is divided into two main forms – conventional and social media. Understanding how these two main forms are consumed is crucial in discussing media consumption.

Conventional Media

In general, conventional media can be referred to as types of mass communication that are in existence before the advent of social media. The forms of conventional media consist of newspapers, which are categorised as print media (Yu, Duan, & Cao, 2013), and radio and television which are categorised as electronic media. As such, conventional media consists of both print and electronic forms of mass communication as opposed to digital forms of media.

Newspapers are perhaps the earliest form of printed mass media communication. The first print newspaper was reportedly in Germany in the early 17th century (Weber, 2006). Since then, newspapers have become an important tool for mass communication across the world. Newspapers in the printed format continue to dominate the communication scene in many regions around the world for nearly over three centuries. Reading particular newspapers was even considered a status symbol in the UK (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2007).

However, current trends suggest a decrease in newspaper readership (Barthel, 2019) given the popularity of online news and applications. Print circulation of newspapers in 2018 was reported to be on the decline by one percent worldwide (World Association of News Publishers, 2019). Despite this downward trend, print newspapers are still significant as certain segments of populations continue to subscribe and read them (Bakker, 2011). In the US, community newspapers that are mostly published on a weekly basis account for 62percent of the overall print circulation (Reader, 2018). Print newspapers continue to be read particularly in certain rural areas in countries such as India (Kaushik, 2018; Ramakrishnan, 2017), Africa (Amadu, Mohammed, Alhassan, & Mohammed, 2018; Cilliers, & Bloch, 2018), and Malaysia (Samsuddin, Shaffril, Bolong, & Mohamed, 2020; Zahari, Ariffin, Asmawi, & Ibrahim, 2018). These trends suggest that print newspapers are still regarded as an important form of media communication.

Since its inception, print newspapers have played a crucial role in influencing and shaping the views of its consumers in various areas. Newspapers have also played a role in shaping political views among its readers (De Waal, & Schoenbach, 2008; Jeffrey, 2009; Mondak, 1995; Salman, Yusoff, Salleh, & Abdullah, 2018), as well as social issues such as the

environment (Ahchong, & Dodds, 2012; Atwater, Salwen & Anderson, 1985; Schmidt, Ivanova, & Schäfer, 2013; Stamm, Clark, & Eblacas, 2000). Consumers of print newspapers have also been affected by issues related to health and drugs (Devitt, & O'Neill, 2017; Gollust, & Lantz, 2009; Thorson, 2006; Hang, Hong, Husain, Harris, & Ho, 2017), food security (Collins, Gaucher, Power, & Little, 2016; Wells, & Caraher, 2014) and suicide resulting in subsequent self-injurious behavior (Fekete & Macsai, 1990; Gould, 2001; Motto, 1970; Schmidtke & Schaller, 1998).

The radio began to be used for commercial broadcast at the start of the 20th century (Bryson, 2003; Gazi, Starkey, & Jedrzejewski, 2011). Since then it became the centre piece of many homes as families gathered around it to listen to news and information without boundaries and it soon quickly became "an ideal symbol for national togetherness" (Hilmes & Loviglio, 2003, p. xi). Post World War One, many small stations in the US began operating to produce programmes for radio which included religious sermons, news, and sports (White, 2003). During the Great Depression, four national radio networks were established in the US (Cashman, 1989) and by the late 1930s onwards radio news broadcasts became more popular than the newspapers. As the technology for radio progressed, Frequency Modulation (FM) radio entered the scene and attracted millions of listeners (Douglas, 2004). Radio has become a popular form of communication media in many homes with at least 75% of households in developing countries having access to a radio and with 44,000 radio stations worldwide (UNESCO, 2012).

The presence of the radio has impacted listeners, shaping and influencing their perspectives in various areas. In the area of agriculture, the radio has presented itself as a powerful communication tool to enhance rural farmers' agricultural knowledge and awareness in Nigeria (Okwu, Kuku, & Aba, 2007; Ango, Illo, Abdullahi, Maikasuwaand, & Amina, 2013), Iran (Nazari & Hasbullah, 2010), Nepal (Khanal, 2011), and India (Kumari, Choudhary, Jha, & Singh, 2014). Also, as the radio is an inexpensive tool and is widely available across demographics from the urban to the most remote areas, it is considered an important communication medium to enhance educational quality in Asia, Africa, and Latin America since the early 1970s (Potashnik & Capper, 1998). Educational radio in Canada made distance education a reality in the provinces and included opportunities for disabled students (Buck, 2006), while in India the use of the radio for basic, primary, higher, and extension education learners revealed its potential in complementing more traditional forms of educational delivery across the general population (Chandar & Sharma, 2003). The presence of the radio in a Ghanian community has enhanced their awareness and knowledge to address community issues such as education, hygiene, sanitation, and local governance, and supported small and medium enterprise through the creation of market opportunities to improve sales and incomes (Al-hassan, Andani, & Abdul-Malik, 2011) as well as supporting sustainable behaviour in Bangladesh (Shahzalal & Hassan, 2019). Similarly, the impact of the radio has been felt in areas of women empowerment in Malawi (Mhagamaa, 2015) and in South Africa (Fombad & Jiyane, 2019). The radio has also influenced communities in areas of health such as advancing family planning in Nepal (Sood, Sengupta, Mishra, & Jacoby, 2004), promoting overall quality of life and well-being in Indonesia (Waters, James, & Darby 2011), and supporting the awareness, perception attitude to maternal health health in Nigeria (Chidinma, 2019).

The television can be considered a late comer in the conventional media communication landscape. The TV became popular after world war two as the main medium for influencing public opinion (Diggs-Brown, 2011). When the television debuted in many

homes in the US and subsequently elsewhere its ubiquity was regarded as rivalling other traditional socialisation platforms of the time such as the church, school and parents (Allen, 1992). It was considered a "powerful agent of socialization" (O'Guinn, & Shrum, 1997, p. 278) supplying viewers with images, accounts, and stories that are distanced from viewers' daily experience and social contexts (Altheide & Snow 1979; O'Guinn & Faber 1991; Richins 1995). The television is a unique tool of media communication as it delivers messages which are homogenous (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1986). The television has evolved from the black and white to colour sets which used analogue technology to current coloured sets utilising digital technology. Worldwide, statistics of television ownership (2010-2018) indicate 1.67 billion households which are largely pay television (Watson, 2019). These statistics suggest the pervasive nature of television which functions as an important media communication tool.

Television broadcasts continue to play a role in influencing viewers' perceptions on issues related to crime (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000; Romer, Jamieson, & Aday, 2003; Stroebe, Leander, & Kruglanski, 2017), health (Gollust, Fowler, & Niederdeppe, 2019; Terglav, Selak, Vrdelja, Kaučič, & Gabrovec, 2019), and politics (Keller, 2018; Lang & Lang, 2018). It also provides a platform that influences viewers on body image (Ferguson, 2013; Ferguson, Munoz, Contreras, & Velasquez, 2011; Tiggemann, 2005) and environmental concerns (Boykoff, 2008; Djerf-Pierre, 2012; Wilson, 2002).

With the development of internet technology, the conventional forms of communication media are now also available digitally and can be access through social media which is addressed next.

Social Media
Social media provides interactive platforms for communities and individuals to share, jointly create, discuss, discuss and adapt user-generated content (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Social media usage is considered as one of the most popular online activities and consumers worldwide are estimated at 2.65 billion in 2018 (Clement, 2019). In general, social media consists of web 2.0 applications (Obar & Widman, 2015) and includes applications such as Facebook, QQ, WhatApp, QZone, WeChat, LinkedIn, Skype, Google+, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat (Kapoor et al., 2018; Mallick & Bajpai, 2019). The top six most popular social media tools worldwide include Facebook, YouTube, Whatsapp, Facebook messenger, WeChat, and Instagram (Clement, 2019). These applications and tools enable users to create and generate content resulting in social media being highly influential in various contexts (Greenwood & Gopal, 2015). The interactive potential and popularity of social media among most users thus have resulted in them becoming increasingly dependent on the various associated tools and applications as resources for the latest news and updates on critical events, products and services recommendations, fashion, and communication (Kapoor et al., 2018)

The influence of social media in marketing is particularly prominent in studies on influencing consumers' intention to purchase products and services. One meta-analysis of studies reported that source expertise, reliability and homophily were important aspects in determining the credibility of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) communications from social media that would influence intention to purchase and adopt information (Ismagilova, Slade, Rana, & Dwivedi, 2019). Another study investigating purchase intention for products promoted via social media in Jordan found that habit, perception of relevance, amount of

information provided, expectation of product performance, interactivity, and hedonic motivation were the main features influencing customer's purchase intention (Alalwan, 2018). Facebook which is the most popular social media tool, is not only effective in advertising due to its interactive and integrative features in joining the social space of consumers without the sense of invasion (Wiese, Martínez-Climent, & Botella-Carrubi, 2020), but also through its recommending and sharing pages features followed by advertisements, reviews, and likes (Groothuis, Spil, & Effing, 2020).

Another effect of social media can be seen in the area of health. Facebook was described as an effective platform that encouraged users to share information, respond to posts, check facts, update information, disclose data, and enable access to create awareness and promote uptake of on preventive health care guideline and practices (Merchant, 2020). Another health-based study investigating the use of social media to reach and engage the female public on cervical cancer prevention revealed that information disseminated through tweets by health organisations were influential on users and were more effective compared to individual's posts (Zhang et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the influence of social media in health-related issues can also result in misinformation to flourish (Wang, McKee, Torbica, & Stuckler, 2019; Wilson & Keelan, 2013) as evident in the case of the Vaccine-Autism Controversy in the US, Canada, and the UK (Jang, Mckeever, Mckeever & Kim, 2019), childhood vaccination in Malaysia (Rumetta, Abdul-Hadi, & Lee, 2019), urological health (Loeb et al., 2019), and measles outbreak in California (Meadows, Tang, & Liu, 2019).

Politics is another area much influenced by social media. In context of Asian countries, engagement in social media news was evident among individuals with similar political views as well as views that cut across (Chan, Chen & Lee, 2018). In one study, social media was found to have the potential to channel political information and enhance the image of political candidates and their political parties in Malaysia (Salman, Salleh, Yusoff & Abdullah, 2018) while the use of two social media tools - Facebook and WhatsApp was described as important tools of political discourse tools which were extensively used to bypass discourse in the conventional media, and circulate anti-establishment messages in the lead up to and the aftermath of the Malaysian general election 2018 (Tapsell, 2018). Elsewhere, the use of social media not only supported the Russian government but also affected the rate and size of protest demonstrations, and was able to support the public's ability to address the challenge of collective action (Enikolopov, Makarin & Petrova, 2019). A study examining six countries' political parties' populist messages and stylistic elements revealed their tendency to use social media particularly Facebook and Twitter for populism-related communication particularly when "still fighting for their place" and when "positioning themselves at the polar ends of the political spectrum" (Ernst, Blassnig, Engesser, Büchel & Esser, 2019, p. 12).

The utility of social media in is also evident in other areas such as environment conservation. Increasing exposure to social media on the need to conserve the environment was reported to result in a "positive impact on the eco-friendly products adoption" (Delcea, Cotfas, Trică, Crăciun & Molanescu, p. 22) while the use of Twitter facilitates engagement between science researchers and the general public to advance environmental science communication and ocean literacy (Kopke, Black & Dozier, 2019; Wright et al., 2015).

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Defining civic engagement is arguably difficult given the range of definitions provided in the literature (Adler & Goggin, 2005; Ekman & Amnå, 2012; Gibson, 2000). Across the literature time line, civic engagement is defined by political scientists Ramakrishnan and Baldassare (2004) as ''both political participation and civic volunteerism'' (p. v) while Alder and Goggin (2005) proposed the term "the interactions of citizens with their society and their government" (p. 241) with reference to people of all ages, and Matinson with Minkler (2006) described it as volunteering activity in relation to older adults. Other later definitions such a by Ekman and Amnå (2012) consider civic engagement as part of a latent form of civil participation such as recycling, volunteering, donating money to charity, doing community work, and discussing political and social issues online or with friends, whereas for Sam, Wanjohi and Akotia (2019) it encompasses both political and civic participation. These descriptions underscore one key feature of civic engagement which is participation. This participation is intentional and motivated for the benefit of the community. Therefore, civic engagement can be described as individuals' voluntarily participation in movements which are stimulated by a goal of advancing a particular cause(s) that could enhance conditions or help shape the future of society.

Civic engagement movements have perhaps never been more intense than in the 21st century. The start of the 21st century was greeted with several civic movements that influenced the global political, social, and economic developments (Botchway, 2019; Simiti, 2017). The 21st century is characterised as a period of rapid change worldwide that places knowledge as an important commodity which has become democratised thanks to Internet technology (Ausman, 2010; Lemke & Coughlin, 2009). Internet technology has made possible for knowledge to be transmitted across space and time (Inefuku, 2017), breaking down communication barriers between cultures resulting in globalisation. Knowledge in the hands of the masses in a globalised world provides fertile soil for civic engagement (Cohen & Chaffee, 2010; Delli Carpini, 2005; Nyhan, & Reifler, 2009). Research into civic engagement can be viewed from the perspective of politics, economy, and social.

One area of research in civic engagement concerns political participation. One study involving a multinational research project on civic engagement and political participation described the relationship as being affected by the interaction of distal macro contextual, demographic, proximal social, and endogenous psychological factors at different levels with political interest and internal efficacy as having a consistent effect (Barrett & Brunton-Smith, 2014). Another study investigating the relationship between Social Movements, Brexit, and Social Policy observed that the diverse individuals involved in civic engagement were motivated by their experience of neoliberal austerity and effects of globalisation (Ishkanian, 2019). Civic engagement with regards to political participation is also evident through the use of social media. In the case of Malaysia, WhatsApp and Telegram motivated civic engagement due to the end-to-end encryption feature, resulting in active political participation given the increased state surveillance on online activities (Johns & Cheong, 2019; Tapsell, 2018). WhatsApp in particular was the most popular application which motivated civic engagement among individuals who participated in the umbrella movement in Hong Kong (Lee & Ting, 2015).

Another area of research into civic engagement concerns the economy. The global economy accelerated at the turn of the 21st century largely due to China's unprecedented economic growth (Dollar, Huang, & Yao, 2020; Lin, 2011; Shambaugh, 2013) and much later

Russia (Dabrowski, 2019; Kulik, Maslennikov, & Yurgens, 2019). This acceleration has impacted the world economy resulting in an open market that appears to affect many countries either positively or negatively. These developments have also contributed to civic engagement among the global populace depending on their socio economic status (SES). Studies have demonstrated how levels of civic engagement differ due to SES of neighbourhoods and the corresponding organisational infrastructure (Sampson, 2012; Sampson, McAdam, MacIndoe, & Weffer-Elizondo, 2005; Small, 2009; Wilson, 1987, 1996). Studies have reported more urgent civic engagement in low SES neighbourhoods where issues of community safety, litter, and crime abound (Gilster 2014; Perkins, Florin, Rich, Wandersman & Chavis, 1990; Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018; Swaroop & Morenoff, 2006). Conversely, neighbourhoods with high SES, tend to invest in existing infrastructure which motivates others towards civic engagement (Clifford, 2018; Galster, 2012; Stoll, 2001). In a more recent study investigating the 2008–9 recession in the context of a Dutch city, civic engagement was reported as experiencing a decline in high SES neighbourhoods but a slight increase in low SES contexts, and the need to consider organizational infrastructure and local policy formulations (Custers, Engbersen & Snel, 2019). During the Greek economic crisis, awareness of its effects on the population's SES was heightened and affected civic engagement with street protests in the face of austerity measures (Simiti, 2017).

Civic engagement and its ensuing activism can also be seen in advancing social issues. These issues concern poverty such as in Africa where civil organisations have been in the forefront in advocating civic engagement by promoting action and formulation of policies to address poverty (du Toit, 2017; Mercer & Green, 2013; Monyake, 2018; Myroniuk, Prell & Kohler, 2017). Another social concern that drives civic engagement concerns climate change. A study investigating civic engagement to advance climate change mitigation in Norway described how 101 diverse organisations pushed for that agenda to be key in the election campaign resulting in the agreement to adopt demands related to climate improvement (Nilsen, Strømsnes & Schmidt, 2018). Similarly, a study documenting civic engagement for environment conservation in Canada reported that forming a coalition of diverse organisations enabled them to be more effective to pursue the cause to influence the government (Burton, 2019). However, one study investigating the Malaysian youths' awareness, intention, and opinion on green travel for tourism sustainability revealed that while there was a causal effect between the three variables investigated, there was no "association between the selected sociodemographic variables (gender and race) with green travel" (Kasim, & Wickens, 2018, p. 11). Other social issues investigated by the research into civic engagement include efforts by groups and individuals to advance the agenda of gender (Chaney, 2016; Marcelo, Lopez & Kirby, 2007; Nwangwu & Ezeibe, 2019), and ethnicity (Clark, 2011; Giersdorf & Croissant, 2011; Robinson, 2019) imbalance for greater justice and balance of representation.

The selection of studies suggests that civic engagement does translate to some form of activism through the participation of individuals. However, this is not often the case. Nevertheless, a bigger question remains as to the sources and medium of information that stimulate individuals' voluntarily participation in activism and the relationship with one another. Research investigating such associations however, is largely not well theorised (Dimitrova & Matthes, 2018; Wojcieszak, 2012). While there are studies that have researched this aspect using social capital theory (Boulianne, 2015; Warren, Sulaiman & Jaafar, 2015), the civic voluntarism model (Barkan, 2004; Nygård & Jakobsson, 2013) and uses and gratification

theory (Leung, 2009; Rosales, 2013), results have been conflicting. There is a need therefore, to adopt a suitable theory to investigate such phenomenon given the importance of the role of context in such research (Dimitrova & Matthes, 2018; Lee, Chen & Chan, 2017).

THEORY OF REASONED ACTION

Examining the effect of users' media consumption on their civic engagement in cyber and physical spaces require an analysis of the relationship between attitude and behaviour. Researching the relationship between both aspects could provide valuable insights into the purpose, frequency, and types of media consumed by users and whether any one or all of these characteristics could galvanise them towards public activism.

Insights into such a relationship can be explored through the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). This theory was first developed by Fishbein (1967) and later revised and expanded by Fishbein and Azjen (1975, 1980) in the following decades. Fishbein observed that researchers must distinguish between attitude toward an object and attitude toward behaviour in relation to the object. Fishbein and Ajzen further argued that attitude toward the behaviour is a better predictor of the behaviour, than merely linking attitude with an object. The TRA reflects this argument as it explains human behaviour as a reason for them to behave in a certain manner. Fishbein and Ajzen also measured a high degree of relationship between attitude, norm, perceived control, intention, and behaviour in terms of action. These variables could be tested for context and time. Any changes to any of these factors will thus directly result in different behaviour. These constructs were further developed based on studies by Rotter (1954), Rosenberg (1956) and Edwards (1954) in the field of social psychology, including learning theories, attitude theories, and decision-making theories.

Based on this theory, individuals behave rationally to achieve favourable outcomes and to avoid disappointing others by confounding their expectations (Macovei, 2015, p. 17). Therefore, people's intention to adopt certain behaviour is an antecedent variable of their real behaviour. Hale, Householder and Greene (2003) pointed out that this intended behaviour is determined by the attitude toward that behaviour and by the subjective norms. This attitude component is characterised by the beliefs of people in terms of their behaviour's probability in generating the outcomes desired which can be regarded as either positive or negative (Hale et al., 2003). As for subjective norms, this component concerns normative beliefs of the individual with regards to whether important referent individuals such as family members, friends, and colleagues, agree or disagree (normative beliefs) to the individual performing the behaviour which weighs the individual's motivation to comply with those referents (Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2008). This component provides insights into the individual's perception of the relationship between a particular behaviour and what important referent individuals are thinking about the behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). As such, intention is influenced by both the personal factor (Attitude) and the social factor (Subjective Norms). This relationship between behaviour and behavioural intention determined by attitude toward behaviour and subjective norms is illustrated in Figure 1.
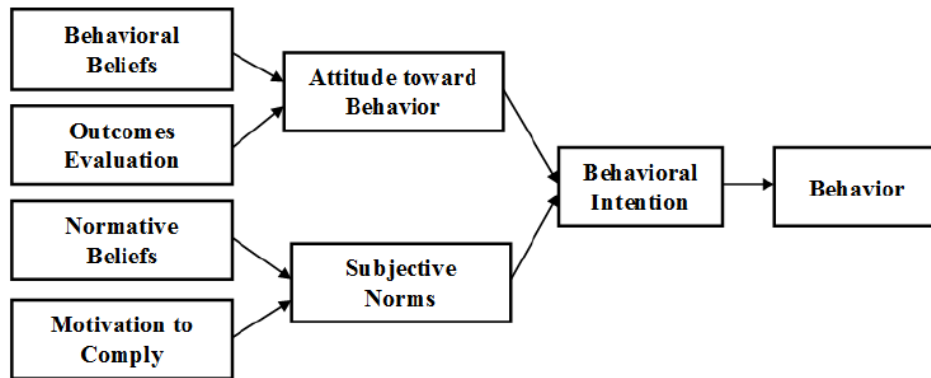
Figure 1: Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

As a formula, TRA can be represented with the following mathematical equation:

$$BI = (A_B)W_1 + (SN)W_2 \text{ (Hale et al., 2003, p. 260).}$$

Since its inception, the TRA has been used to research a variety of areas such as health, agriculture, food and media with important implications. The use of the TRA enabled researchers to analyse the relationship between intentions and actual behaviour of health practices which revealed the need for persuasive communication aimed at changing feeding practices in the UK among primiparous and multiparous mothers (Manstead, Proffitt, & Smart, 1983), explained the intention to perform and actual Breast Self-Examination (BSE) behaviour against decreasing rates of adherence to BSE among older women in the United States (Lierman, Young, Kasprzyk, & Benoliel, 1990), and contributed to the development of AIDS programmes for safer sex practices among US gay males (Cochran, Mays, Clarletta, Caruso, & Mallon, 1992). Research analysing the interactions between farming systems, farmers, and the indigenous ecosystems through the TRA provided a basis for policy intervention to encourage behavioural change among New Zealand farmers to implement recommended biodiversity practices (Parminter, & Wilson, 2003), while the use of TRA to study dairy farmers' adoption of technology in England underscored the importance of examining their beliefs to identify the obstacles that constrain their uptake of it not only for their own benefit but also that of society (Rehman et al., 2007).

Further, TRA has also shown its applicability in research into food where investigation into chips consumption highlighted the role of attitude in determining intention and revealing habit as an added important predictor of behaviour (Towler & Shepherd, 1991). The use of TRA is considered a valid model to predict Malaysian customers' intention to select *halal* produce as it revealed attitude and subjective norm as important predictors that could inform marketing and promotion policies (Lada, Tanakinjal, & Amin, 2009). As for research into media, the adoption of TRA to elaborate on cultivation theory was reported to be of value in researching the cultivating effects of television viewing on behavioural intentions to take protective measures against crime among undergraduates at a large southwestern US university (Nabi & Sullivan, 2001). Similarly, the use of TRA was of significance in explaining the third-person effect with regards to media influence consisting of brand advertisements, public service announcements, and controversial content on self and others where "intentions to act are predicated on rational thought and the social expectations of others" (Golan & Banning, 2008, p. 221).

The adoption of the TRA in these studies highlighted not only how behaviour was shaped by intention but also how attitude and norms contributed to such intention. It provided insights into understanding how persuasive information can result in changes in behaviour (Yzer, 2012). One key assumption of TRA is that people are mainly rational and made efficient use of the information accessible to them (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Another important assumption was volitional control which determined most actions of social relevance (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). These assumptions have nevertheless, exposed TRA to criticisms of ignoring the relationship between the interpersonal and the social (Hale et al., 2003; Kippax & Crawford, 1993), drawing conclusions which are only true by definition as opposed to exploration and testing thus rendering the model as unfalsifiable (Ogden, 2003; Trafimow, 2009), disregarding the differences in cultures of people in their intention and behaviour (Park, 2000; Bagozzi, Wong, Abe, & Bergami, 2000) and limiting its scope to volitional behaviours (Hale et al., 2003).

These criticisms provided the impetus for further expansion on the range of behaviours embraced by the TRA resulting in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985). While TRA predicted and explained volitional behaviour, Ajzen (1985) presented TPB as being able to predict and explain non-volitional behaviour. A new component - *Perceived Behavioural Control* (PBC) was added to TPB to better explain aspects of behaviour which are not within the control of the individual in particular situations (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1991). This new component considered the perception of individuals of the levels of control, the ease or difficulty, and the confidence they experienced when performing the behaviour.

Since its inception, studies have reviewed TPB in comparison with TRA or on its own right in various areas. A meta-analysis review to statistically examine the efficacy between TRA and TPB to explain and predict exercise behaviour reported the latter as being more effective and that expectations as opposed to intention were a better predictor of the behaviour (Hausenblas, Carron & Mack, 1997). One review of TPB to support its extension in research provided evidence to support its potential to expand work related to habits, moral norms, construct, self-identity, and affective beliefs (Connor & Armitage, 1998). Another meta-analytic review of 161 published works consisting of journal articles and book chapters testing the TBP revealed the value in adopting it to predict intentions which had a larger influence on self-reporting as opposed to behaviour measured objectively (Armitage & Conner, 2001). This review "showed that PBC independently predicted intentions and behaviour in a wide number of domains" (Armitage & Conner, 2001, p. 489). A meta-analysis review of studies on health-related behaviours reported the value of TPB in predicting behaviour assessed in the short-term and through self-reports (McEachan, Conner, Taylor & Lawton, 2011).The efficacy of TPB was also highlighted in one systematic review and meta-analysis of 40 studies researching alcohol consumption indicating that attitudes, subjective norms, and self-efficacy were related to intentions which in turn affected behaviour (Cooke, Dahdah, Norman & French, 2016). This indication suggested the need for interventions to focus on attitudes, subjective norms, and self-efficacy in efforts to decrease consumption of alcohol (Cooke et al., 2016).

Although TPB addressed the gaps in the TRA, it was not without criticism. TPB was criticised not only for failing to consider negatively valanced behaviours but also providing insufficient evidence to explain behaviour related to habit, past behaviour, moral obligations, and self-identity (Eagly & Chaiiken, 1993; Hale et al., 2003), and disregarding planning aspects such as formulation, evaluation, and action (Eagly & Chaiiken, 1993; Dillard, 1990; Hale et al.,

2003). Other criticisms of TPB were related to its falsifiability given its risky predictions (Ogden, 2003; Trafimow, 2009), absolute emphasis on rational reasoning at the expense of unconscious influences on behaviour (Sheeran, Gollwitzer & Bargh, 2013), validity and reliability of its application (Sniehotta, Presseau & Araújo-Soares, 2014), and inadequate support to predict and develop interventions that can modify adherence (Rich, Brandes, Mullan, & Hagger, 2015).

Nevertheless, despite these criticisms, most scholars do recognise the valuable contribution TPB has provided to explore intentions and behaviour (Armitage, 2015; Conner, 2014; Hagger, 2015; Hall, Turner & Kilpatrick, 2019; Macovei, 2015; Steinmetz, Knappstein, Schmidt, & Kabst, 2016), and as a foundation for research into persuasion (Chen & Feeley, 2015; Yzer, 2012). These criticisms have provided an impetus for the TPB to be further advanced in the light of new and emerging approaches in studying behaviour (Hagger, 2015; Steinmetz et al., 2016, Yzer, 2012).

Subsequently, further expansions were made to develop the TPB more comprehensively. This comprehensive formulation was described as Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). As an approach to explaining and changing behavior, RAA retained all components of TRA and TPB. Following Yzer's (2012) observations, RAA was described using the term Reasoned Action Theory (RAT) to "refer to the current formulation of the theory and to propositions that apply to all formulations of the theory" (p. 120).

One added component in the RAT is Background Factors. This component accounts for individuals' beliefs as being derived from their interaction and engagement with numerous sources such as other individuals, media messages, cultural background, religious orientation, gender, and personality which can all function to form and shape beliefs of a certain behaviour although may not necessarily be related with beliefs (Yzer, 2012). For instance, in attempting to determine the beliefs to target in different gender segments, findings that relate to gender being empirically connected with intention or behaviour should demonstrate correlation with beliefs as men and women do have different beliefs (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Such insights could be useful when making decisions on which beliefs need to be targeted across gender segments (Yzer, 2012). As such, background factors that are conceptualised are relevant and adequate to describe intention and \behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). An illustration of the components retained in the RAT and the addition of the Background Factors components is illustrated in Figure 2.
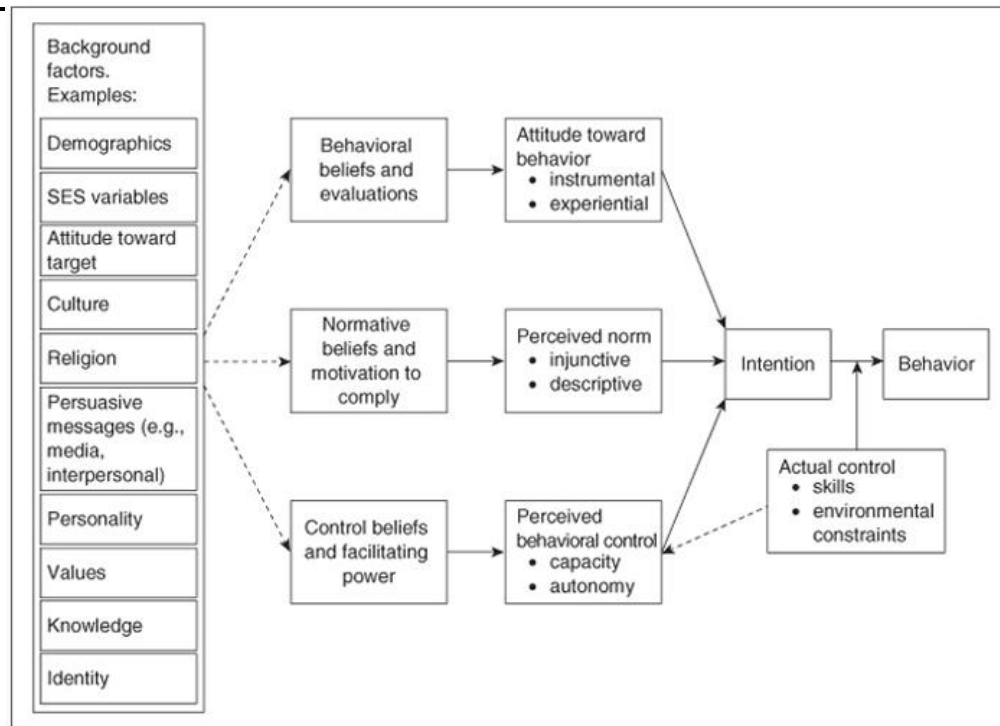
Figure 2: Components of Reasoned Action Theory and their Relations
(Source: Yzer, 2012, p. 121)

The RAT is relevant to the discussion proposing a way forward to examine the effect of users' media consumption on their civic engagement in cyber and physical spaces by analysing the relationship between attitude and behaviour. The background factors can provide insights into how behavioural beliefs and evaluations, normative beliefs and motivation to comply, and control beliefs and facilitating power are shaped to inform intentions resulting in particular behaviour which are volitional or non-volitional. Considering background factors in examining the relationship between intention and behaviour is important particularly when exploring individuals' media consumption. In this context, the background factors component could provide valuable data based on the two main forms of media – conventional and social. Analysing how the type of conventional and/or social media consumed by individuals' factors shape their behavioural beliefs and evaluations, normative beliefs and motivation to comply, and control beliefs and facilitating power, is crucial to yield findings that could provide insights into determining intentions that could translate into certain volitional or non-volitional behaviour. For example, consuming social media is empirically associated with intention or behavior, this social media consumption also should be correlated with beliefs, that is, consuming one or another type of social media should result in different beliefs. Such findings can usefully inform decisions about which beliefs to target in different social media segments to recognise the intention to engage in certain behaviour, to predict the actual behaviour.

CONCLUSION

Communication media in both conventional and social forms offers users many choices to consumers for the channelling of information and entertainment. However, consumers are selective as not all available media is consumed and tend to go for their preferred choices which are naturally limited in number as a way to cope with the abundance of variety (Taneja, Webster, Malthouse & Ksiazek, 2012). It is these preferred media types that research needs to explore to determine whether the consumption affects civic engagement. Such research needs to encompass both the conventional and social media which are still consumed despite the pervasiveness of Internet technology (Schrøder, 2015; Taneja et al., 2012). Exploring the relationship between media consumption and civic engagement, and at a deeper level based on the RAT could determine not only the impact of the role of media but also the level of civic awareness and maturity of these users in informing their actions for purposes of activism either online or offline (Lee et al., 2017; Skoric, Zhu, Goh, & Pang, 2016). The RAT offers a suitable framework to determine not only consumers' preferred media types as part of demographics, but also reveal the sources that informs their beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions that stimulate their intention to behave in particular ways to participate or otherwise to advance an identified cause. The framework is therefore suitable in that it recognises the various factors that determine the relationship between media consumption and civic engagement. Such insights offer potential towards developing a profiling index.

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