

Paper US-China Education

by Inge Hutagalung

Submission date: 26-Jul-2018 02:25PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 985354605

File name: Paper_-_US-China_Education_Review_2017_11B.pdf (641.78K)

Word count: 4667

Character count: 25592

Dynamics of Selective Exposure for New Voters in Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017

Inge Hutagalung

Universitas Mercu Buana, Jakarta, Indonesia

Understanding that selecting information process as a form of behavior is likely to be influenced by psychological aspects, utility of information, and support from the group, it is interesting to see the dynamics shown by the new voters who vote in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017 for governor in 2017, based on the theory of selective exposure. This research is a qualitative research using the interpretative paradigm. The method applied in the study is the interpretative phenomenological analyses (IPA). The results of the study indicate that the aspect of one's belief plays a decisive role in selecting information regarding the information of Greater Jakarta Province general election 2017. What is more, information only has limited roles in adding knowledge to strengthen the belief of the informants of the candidates to be elected. Belief has decisive roles in selecting information and reflects the strengthening of one's belief for his/her political choice. In this case, belief is used to support the choice already possessed. Within the scope of political communication, it is often times confirmed that the vote for a candidate will lead a person to a process of information selection to support his/her choice and not to weaken it.

Keywords: belief, utility of information, support from the group, selective exposure, political communication

Introduction

The General Election Committee of Greater Jakarta Province records that there are approximately 400,000 new voters to vote in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017. This figure reflects temporary data gained from the Civil Registry Office of Jakarta. Two different characteristics are associated with these new voters: the non-permanent (swing voters) and the rational (rational voters). These two types of voters have made the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017 extremely difficult to be predicted.

The political strategies, specifically those with the context of electoral campaigns, cannot be separated from communication. Politics requires communication strategies, so that the public may understand and support a certain political party, in particular during the electoral campaigns. The media is one of the communication instruments that usually plays significant roles, such as providing information to the common public with regard to important issues, serving itself to be the forum for public debates, and acting as the channel to articulate aspirations.

Moreover, Littlejohn (2009) stated that in providing the understanding of how humans process information the psycho-social traditions and cybernetics jointly explain the individual processing of information. That is, information is a result of social interactions and behavior is part of the cognitive system. What individuals would do in communicative situations does not only depend on the information the individuals receive, but also

Inge Hutagalung, Dr., lecturer, Postgraduate Communication Programme, Universitas Mercu Buana.

depends on the mental operation used to process the information (Littlejohn, 2009, pp. 64-65).

Based on the study probing, it is understood that during the selective processes of information that individual make there are three aspects that may influence communication processes in respect of accepting or rejecting informatin: (a) psychological aspects; (b) use of information; and (c) support from the group. To a certain extent, a piece of information will influence a rational person if the information presented is logical and beneficial. As for those irrational individuals, psychological aspects (belief and commitment) and support from the group, such as internal reference with the group, serves as a factor that determines selection to certain information.

Understanding that selection of information as a behavior tends to be influenced by psychological aspects, use of information, and support from the group, it is enticing to observe the dynamics of the new voters voting in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017, based on the theory of selective exposure.

The formula of the issues addressed may be described as the following:

1. How the aspect of belief sets the grounds for the process of selecting information in the Greater Jakarta Province for Governor in 2017?
2. How does the use of information set the backgrounds for the process of selecting information in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017?
3. How does support from the group set the backgrounds for the process of selecting information in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017?
4. Which aspect plays the greatest roles in set the backgrounds for the process of selecting information in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election 2017?

This study is case-based in relation to the dynamics of selective exposure among new voters/beginners in the Greater Jakarta Province General Election for governor in 2017. The informants employed in the study are new voters, individuals who vote for the first time in a general election.²⁴ What is more, the researcher's argument in selecting belief as the psychological aspect because belief, based on the results of the study conducted, constitutes the most determining aspect in selecting and refusing information.

Literature Review

In the communication theories, the cognitive theories are primarily used in relation to production and interpretation of messages. The cognitive theories focus on individual characters connected to various message behaviors and are concentrated on the actual production, process, and assessment of the message.

The exposure of cognitive theories starts with researches on persuasion and change of behavior by Hovland (Rogers, 1997, pp. 364-373). It was later continued with the preview of classic theories on persuasion (Miller, 2005, p. 125), which, in turn, initiates the emergence of the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) theory in 1982. One of the theories addressing the organization of attitude based on the principles of consistence, and more specifically related to the influence of behavior on attitude, is the cognitive dissonance theory.

The cognitive dissonance theory is a theory that places individuals as the active agents in the communication processes. It holds that whenever dissonance arises individuals tend to avoid information in contradiction to their belief and attitude and tend to select information consistent with their belief and attitude. In other words, people select/accept⁴¹ and refuse information, a process known as the selective exposure.

The study conducted by Leon Festinger (1957)²³ resulting in the cognitive dissonance theory is said to be the pioneering agent of the explanations about selective exposure. Beyond the cognitive dissonance theory, there are various theories elaborating the reasons for persons to select and refuse certain information.

The Selective Exposure Theory

Since its formulation in 1957 by Festinger, selective exposure has been repeatedly reviewed by a number of scholars. Various researches have been conducted in order to explore selective exposure more deeply. Many experts present their alternative opinions with regard to selective exposure, and conduct tests for such alternative opinions. The tests conducted by specialists may be classified into two phases:

1. The testing of the hypothesis of the refusal of dissonance-triggering information.
2. The testing of how selective exposure actually occur.

Based on the findings of the researches conducted by the experts in 1950s and 1960s, it can be concluded that individuals do not always refuse dissonant information and choose consonant information. Meanwhile, the development of study concerning the causes of selective exposure having been conducted since 1957 until 2010 can be classified into three aspects: psychological aspects, use of information, and support from the group. The psychological aspect is related to the psychological influences upon behavior of selective exposure, including the following variables: belief, self-confidence, commitment, and mood. Use of information, as an aspect, is related to the characteristics of the messages, which influence the selection or refusal of a piece of information. Individual choices are described as the results of the characteristics of the message itself, such as the use, certainly and relevance of the information. Next is the social aspect, which is related to the characteristics of individual as social beings. A person is not merely an individual but is also a part of the social milieu (Hutagalung, 2012).

From the exposure of the findings resulted by specialists as described above, from the so many studies conducted it becomes evident that the selecting and refusing of information (also known as selective exposure) is not only related to the psychological aspect (belief), but also may be influenced by aspects outside the psychological aspect. In other words, selecting and refusing information conducted by individuals may be underlined by other intentions, and not limited to the intention to create consonance between the attitude and the belief or between the attitude and the behavior.

Research Results

Five informants with initials MN, NH, FW, NA, and AK are engaged in this study. In the presentation of this study, the five informants use their initials instead of their names, as agreed upon by and with them. These five informants are new voters who have not voted in any general election before.

To Choose Non-Selected Information

Within the context of this study, four informants (MN, NH, NA, and AK) declare that they would read and seek for information of the governor candidate whom they do not vote for (who is not of their choice). The argument beyond for doing this is that they would like to strengthen their choice. Following are the statements of the two informants,

I am going to continuously read information concerning the candidate of governor who is not my choice. I am doing this to find the good and bad sides of that governor candidate whom I do not vote. ... As a comparing instrument against the candidate of my choice, seeking for and understanding the information of the other governor candidate (the one who is not my choice) will confirm my vote that I have in so far determined. (Informant MN)

I will read and find, apart from the news, the information from the candidate for governor of my choice. I am doing this just to seek for the information to be used as my considerations to settle my choice. Finding information of the candidate of my choice is important, before the election we still have time to reconsider what our choices will be. (Informant NH)

One informant (FW), however, says that he/she is not going to select any information from the candidate who is not of his/her choice. The reason is that this informant is fully determined with the choice and is even afraid that, if he/she reads the information of the other candidate his/her choice would probaly swing from the original choice. Here is the informant's statement,

I am not going to seek or otherwise read any information or news from the candidate for governor who is not my choice. I have a choice already. I am afraid if I get too much information I may change my choice I have now. I do not want to change it. (Informan FW)

The Role of Belief in the Process of Selecting Information

Within the context of this study, the five informants (MN, NH, FW, NA, and AK) all say that the aspect of belief plays an important role in selecting and refusing information. The premise stated is that belief will be the guideline for an individual to behave in the process of selecting information. One of the informants gives the following statement,

Honestly, I am surrounded by friends of a different choice for the governor candidate from mine. Personally, I am not affected by what they say. I do believe that mine is the best choice. With my belief in this candidate, I have often engaged myself in debates with my friends when discussing a piece of information or news. Although my milieu is as such, with solid self-confidence I can properly select information without being afraid to be influenced by friends (otnes). I fully believe in the candidate for governor I am going to vote for. (Informant MN)

The Role of the Use of Information in Selecting Information

Responding to the questions regarding the role of the use of information in the process of selecting information, four informants (MN, NH, NA, and AK) say that the use of information plays a role in adding the knowledge and to settle the choice for the candidate being voted for. Following is the statement of one of the informants,

I personally opine that the benefit of information will play arole when a person is selecting or refusing information. Although the information is not concernd with the candidate of my choice, if such information is beneficial or useful to enhance my knowledge of the candidate of governor who is not my choice. ... It is ok for me to read and listen to. It will all be useful for me when I have talks with friends, discussing the issues of the election for the governor. In addition, the news discussing the candidates for governor will certainly enhance my knowledge. (Informant NA)

Another informant (FW) says that the use of information (as an aspect), does not play any roles in the process of selecting information. The reason for this statement is that informants will generally select information containing the news related to their own choice and tend to ignore any information outside their choice. Following is the statement,

As I have said before, I only select and read the information disclosing news of the candidate for governor of my choice. To me personally, the use of information does not play any roles when a person selects information. I have my own choice for the existing pair of candidates. In my opinion, the abundance of information is not useful to influence my judgment. (Informan FW)

The Role of Support From the Group in the Process of Selecting Information

In response to the questions regarding the role of support from the group in selecting information, the five informants (MN, NH, FW, NA, and AK) say that support from the group does not play any roles when a person selects or refuses information. The argument for this statement is that the selection of information regarding the candidates for governor of the Greater Jakarta Province is a very personal choice. In this case, individuals have

their own choice according to their own belief. Following is the statement of one of the informants,

When I do the selecting of information, support from the group does not really play a role. I have my own principle either to select (accept) or refuse information of the pair of candidates (governor and deputy governor). Apart from that, members of my group are neutral and they have nothing to do with politics or the general election. In our group, we do not want to interfere in others' affairs, especially when it comes to the group members' personal choice. Choices are up to ourselves. It is up to everyone to read the news about candidate pair A or candidate pair B. In this matter, the group does not interfere. (Informant NH)

21

Aspects Having Greatest Roles in the Process of Selecting Information

In response to the question, "Which aspect has the most important roles in the process of selecting information?" the informants unanimously confirm that belief is the aspect having the greatest role in deciding whether to select or to refuse a piece of information. One of the informants gives the following statement,

When I select information that I think is worth reading or hearing the use of information will normally play a role in guiding me in the process of selecting information. Apart from the use of information, I think that the aspect of belief in the candidate for governor is also determining. For individuals with strong belief, reading information outside their choice shall not become problems. ... Information outside the pair of candidates of their own choice will simply add knowledge. (Informant NA)

Analysis of Findings

Overview

Selective exposure can simply be defined as the efforts made by individuals to select information that they desire and refuse information that they dislike. Information is available in abundance and individuals should select and choose which information to be accessed or not to be accessed.

In Festinger's (1957) initial reasoning, he had placed belief as a variable leading to selective exposure. Several studies support the premise of Festinger, include the study conducted by Erlich, Guttman, Schonbach, and Mills (1957). The research result of Ehrlich and associates, which strengthen the reasoning of Festinger stating that people will select consonant information, that is, information that support their belief. The finding of the study conducted by Mills, Aronson, and Robinson (1959) also indicated that individuals tend to select and seek for information that support their belief and to avoid any information contradictory to their belief. Further, researcher Adams (1961) showed that individuals tend to choose information supporting their belief. The findings resulted from the studies conducted by Mills (1965), Chaffee et al. (2001), Redlawsk (2002), and Taber and Lodge (2006). They also indicated that individuals tend to avoid information contradictory to their belief and to choose consonant information.

With the course of time, various studies regarding the behavior in selecting and refusing information (selective exposure) have proven that individuals do not always select congenial information and refuse uncongenial information to their belief. A number of studies show that many individuals will specifically pay detailed parts of a message (a piece of information) although it is contradictory to their attitude, belief, or behavior that they confess in order to confirm their arguments (Rosen, 1961; Feather, 1962; Freedman, 1965; Brock & Balloun, 1967; Lowe & Steiner, 1968; Frey, 1981, as cited in Zillmann, 1988; Knobloch-Westernwick, Francesca, & Dolf, 2003; Knobloch-Westernwick, Carpentier, Blumhoff, & Nickel, 2005).

By tracing the findings generated by the aforesaid experts, it is apparent that, from the reviews conducted by them, a number of studies have indicated that the behavior in selecting and refusing information (selective

exposure) is not only related to the psychological aspect (belief), but also is influenced by others aspects outside the psychological aspect (belief). In other words, selecting and refusing information conducted by individuals may be underlined by other intentions, and are not restricted to the intentions to create consonance between their attitude and belief or between their attitude and their behavior.

Discussion

Based on the findings of the study of selective exposure in so far conducted, the results can be classified into three aspects capable of influencing the selection and refusal of information (selective exposure). These are psychological aspects, messages, and social aspects. The psychological aspect is related to the psychological influences upon behavior in elective exposure, such as belief, self-confidence, commitment, and mood. The messages, as an aspect, are related to the characteristics of the messages influencing the selection and refusal of information. It is explained here that an individual's choice is the result of the characteristics of the messages, including, among other things, the use, certainty, and relevance of the information. The social aspect is related to the characteristics of individuals as social beings. A person does not only hold a position as an individual, he/she also is a part of the social environment.

In relation to the further analysis of the previous review, the findings generated from this study indicate that belief (as an psychological aspect) has played a role in determining in the process of selecting information with regard to the regional general election of Greater Jakarta Province. Moreover, according to the informants, support from the group does not play any meaningful roles in the process of selecting and refusing information related to the regional general election in Greater Jakarta Province. In the opinion of the informants, the aspect of the use of information has a limited role in the process of selecting and refusing information, that is, to enhance their knowledge in order to confirm their belief in their candidate of their choice (whom they vote for).

The researcher argues that belief has a role in the process of selecting and refusing information, as an effort to strengthen an individual's political choice. In this case, information is used to settle the already possessed choice. Within the scope of political communication, it has often confirmed that a choice for a candidate will lead an individual to select information supporting his/her choice and not the information weakening their choice. In other words, people only pay attention to information that support their respective choice (Inoue, 2001).

On one hand, strengthening information selection is done in order to create a consonant situation. Principally, humans always want to create consistence. Consistence does always take place nevertheless people want and undertake to create consistence. When a person experiences inconsistency, psychological inconvenience (dissonance) will arise and people tend to lessen such inconvenience. In principle, people will not ignore when inconsistency occurs between their attitude and behavior or between their attitude and others' attitudes.

From the responses related to which aspects have the most significant roles in the process of selecting information given by the five informants, it is shown that the five informants have already had their own choices with regard to the regional general election in Greater Jakarta Province. With their own choices, the informants are not shaken by when receiving information various and abundant political information, often generated from the inter-contradictory sources. Amidst the availability of plentiful political information and based on the responses given by the informants, it is apparent that the informants are rational and consistent with their choices with regard to the election of the candidate for governor of Greater Jakarta Province. In relation to the

rationality among these voters. The researcher opines that arising belief in the candidate has become the reference in selecting information. The belief held by the informants constitutes the faith that reflects their values and ideals (value-expressive belief). This belief reflecting their values and ideals is the foundation for individuals to select information regarding the regional general election in Greater Jakarta Province (Smith & Esses, 2012).

On the other hand, interpreting that the results of the study show that support from the group does not have any roles in the process of selecting information of the regional general election in Greater Jakarta Province, the researcher that this is attributable to the process, in which the selection of information with regard to the general election if Greater Jakarta Province concerning the decisions of individuals is personal (not open) and when a person has his/her own choice which is different from that of his/her peers then this personal choice should be kept secret and not to be known by the other peers of the group. With the votes (choices) being personal (closed), different, or even opposing votes of the peers in the same group will not cause any social/moral sanctions.

Conclusions

The research findings indicate that belief has a decisive role in the process of selecting information with regard to the general election for governor and deputy governor in Greater Jakarta Province. Support from the group does not have any meaningful roles in the process of selecting information. It simply adds knowledge in order to strengthen the informants' individual belief in the candidate of their choice.

That belief has a significant role in the process of selecting information is the representation of strengthening an individual's political choice. In this case, information is used to settle the choice already owned. Within the scope of political communication, it is often attested that the choice for a certain candidate will lead individuals to select information strengthening their choice, and not the information that may weaken their choice.

Communication, at the inter-personal level and group level, within the context of selecting and refusing information of the regional general election of Greater Jakarta Province refers to belief they people have when they select information. At the level of the mass communication, individuals will select information based on the use of the information for the needs to suffice information in order to confirm the choices that they have.

Recommendations

From the foregoing, the following recommendations have been made:

1. This study can be retested by using a different technique of data-collecting theories. For example, we may use the experiment technique, in which the researcher may be able to create situations and conditions in accordance with the purpose of the research done, via a specific treatment.
2. Being aware that not all information will be selected and have influences upon voters, publication should then become the source of information buffering the benefits relevant with the interest and needs of the voters, and does not become the means of propaganda of a political party or the contestants.

3

References

- Adams, J. S. (1961). Reduction of cognitive dissonance by seeking consonant information. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 6(1), 74-78.
- Brock, T. C., & Balloun, J. L. (1967). Behavioral receptivity to dissonant information. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 6(4), 413-428.

- 1 Chaffee, S. H., Saphir, M. N., Graf, J., Sandvig, C., & Hahn, K. S. (2001). Attention to counter-attitudinal messages in a state election campaign. *Political Communication*, 18(3), 247-272.
- 4 Erlich, D., Guttman, I., Schonbach, P., & Mills, J. (1957). Postdecision exposure to relevant information. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 54(1), 98-102.
- Feather, N. T. (1962). Cigarette smoking and lung cancer: A study of cognitive dissonance. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 14(1), 55-64.
- 7 Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Stanford, C.A.: Stanford University Press.
- Freedman, J. (1965). Confidence, utility, and selective exposure: A partial replication. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2(5), 778-780.
- Hutagalung, I. (2012). *Analisis faktor penyebab selective exposure* (Selective Exposure Cause Factor Analysis) (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Indonesia).
- Hutagalung, I. (2016). The utility of information in selective exposure of pornography among teenagers in Indonesia. *International Journal of Social Relevance & Concern*, 5(5), 19.
- 13 Inoue, Y. (2001). *Selective exposure, uses and gratification of a cyber election campaign: Presidential election 2000* (Doctoral dissertation, College of Communication Arts and Science, Michigan State University).
- 2 Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Francesca, D. C., & Dolf, Z. (2003). Effects of salience dimensions of informational utility on selective exposure to online news. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 80(1), 91-108.
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Carpentier, F. D., Blumhoff, A., & Nickel, N. (2005). Selective exposure effects for positive and negative news: Testing the robustness of the informational utility model. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 82(1), 181-195.
- 16 5 Hiejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. (2009). *Theories of human communication* (9th ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Lowe, R. H., & Steiner, I. D. (1968). Some effects of the reversibility and consequences of decisions on postdecision information preferences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 8(2), 172-179.
- 15 3 Miller, K. (2005). *Communication theories: Perspectives, processes, and contexts*. New York, N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Edition.
- Mills, J. (1965). Avoidance of dissonant information. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2(4), 589-593.
- Mills, J., Aronson, E., & Robinson, H. (1959). Selectivity in exposure to information. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 59(2), 250-253.
- 12 11 Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4th ed.). Belmont: Allyn and Bacon.
- 10 10 Olawski, D. P. (2002). Hot cognition or cool consideration? *Journal of Politics*, 64(4), 1021-1044.
- 8 Rogers, E. M. (1997). *A history of communication study: A biographical approach*. New York, N.Y.: The Free Press.
- Rosen, S. (1961). Postdecision affinity for incompatible information. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 63(1), 188-190.
- 18 Smith, J. A., & Mike, O. (2009). *Psikologi kualitatif: Petunjuk praktis untuk metode penelitian* (Qualitative psychology: Practice instruction for research methods). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- 6 Smith, M. A., & Esses, V. (2012). Assessing individual differences in the degree to which people are committed to following their belief. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 46(2), 195-209.
- 1 Taber, C. S., & Lodge, M. (2006). Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(3), 755-769.
- Zillmann, D. (1988). Mood management through communication choices. *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 31(3), 327-340.

Paper US-China Education

ORIGINALITY REPORT

12%

SIMILARITY INDEX

10%

INTERNET SOURCES

10%

PUBLICATIONS

9%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

link.springer.com

Internet Source

1%

2

www.allbusiness.com

Internet Source

1%

3

www.informationr.net

Internet Source

1%

4

Submitted to University of Hull

Student Paper

1%

5

Submitted to EDMC

Student Paper

1%

6

Submitted to Laureate Higher Education Group

Student Paper

1%

7

Submitted to University of Western Ontario

Student Paper

1%

8

citation.allacademic.com

Internet Source

<1%

9

Knobloch-Westerwick, Silvia, Benjamin K. Johnson, and Axel Westerwick. "To Your

<1%

Health: Self-Regulation of Health Behavior Through Selective Exposure to Online Health Messages : Selective Exposure to Health Messages", Journal of Communication, 2013.

Publication

10

drum.lib.umd.edu

Internet Source

<1 %

11

arizona.openrepository.com

Internet Source

<1 %

12

www.ccsenet.org

Internet Source

<1 %

13

BALCI, Şükrü, AKAR, Hüsamettin and AYHAN, Bünyamin. "Televizyon ve seçmen ilişkisini yeniden düşünmek: Bünyamin ayhan 2009 yerel seçimleri'nde izleyici motivasyonları", Selçuk Üniversitesi, 2011.

Publication

<1 %

14

Submitted to City University of Hong Kong

Student Paper

<1 %

15

open.uct.ac.za

Internet Source

<1 %

16

Pia Ulvenblad. "From Communicative Practices to Communication Strategies: A Model of Entrepreneurs' Communication Strategies in the Start-Up Process", Emerald, 2015

Publication

<1 %

17

Eva Katharina Hammes. "Glorifying the Simple Life", Springer Nature, 2016

Publication

<1 %

18

www.jurnal-iski.or.id

Internet Source

<1 %

19

butler.research.yale.edu

Internet Source

<1 %

20

S. M. Smith. "The Role of Information-Processing Capacity and Goals in Attitude-Congruent Selective Exposure Effects", Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 06/05/2007

Publication

<1 %

21

hrsonline.isr.umich.edu

Internet Source

<1 %

22

Nicholas A. Valentino. "Selective Exposure in the Internet Age: The Interaction between Anxiety and Information Utility", Political Psychology, 08/2009

Publication

<1 %

23

Steven M. Smith. "Reflecting on Six Decades of Selective Exposure Research: Progress, Challenges, and Opportunities", Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 1/2008

Publication

<1 %

24

dspace.lboro.ac.uk



Exclude quotes Off

Exclude bibliography Off

Exclude matches Off