THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON POLITICAL PERCEPTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN STATE OF KUWAIT: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL

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Abstract - Political perception is considered an important role to the individual's changes in political behaviors, beliefs and attitudes. In addition, it is closely related to individual's political participation intention. Inspiring an individual to be fulfilled with political engagement should be started from the early stage especially in the university level. It is strongly believed that social media plays an important role to political perceptions. However, in the context of Kuwait, the body of knowledge has been in the limited scope. Therefore, the main objective of this research focused on the effect of social media mechanism towards political perceptions among undergraduate students in the State of Kuwait. Data collection was conducted with a total of 972 undergraduate students from both public and private universities in the State of Kuwait. The finding based on the structural equation model showed that social media (via WhatsApp and Facebook, for example) directly affected students' political perceptions. In addition, social medial had an indirect effect on political perception through political interests and political attitudes about the current politics in the State of Kuwait.

Keywords - Social Media, Political Perception, Kuwait