

**Seminar on
"The Influence of Political Cynicism
and Political Efficacy on Media Use:
Further findings from the IPS Survey"**

**14 September 2011
Conference Room, Level 1
Oei Tiong Ham Building**

IPS Survey of Political Traits and Media Use

Funded by Institute of Policy Studies

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14 September 2011

Aim of Study

- Little known about attitudes towards politics and political traits.
 - Political engagement
 - Strong government versus freedom
 - Say in political affairs
 - Trust in political leaders
 - Political knowledge
- Little known about use of media (especially Internet) for political purposes
 - Use of the Internet and traditional media for political information,
 - Trust towards and importance of media
 - View on bias and control of media
- Method: National survey on these two sets of questions

Methodology

- Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview
- Interview about 25 minutes long
- 1,092 Singaporeans aged 21 and above
 - Main batch of 1,000 in July & August 2010
 - Booster in October 2010
- Representative sample: Stratified sampling
 - (by Age, Gender, Race, Education Level, Dwelling type, Income)

Demographics

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Race
4. Education Level
5. Dwelling types
6. Monthly Household Income

First set of findings

1. Political (online and offline) participation is very low
2. Offline media still much more important than online
3. Mainstream online media more important than alternative online media
4. Media consumption (online vs offline, mainstream vs alternative) is complementary rather than competitive for “onliners”
5. Youth are different from rest of population
6. The better-off, better-educated are different
7. One quarter refused to say how they voted

(More : http://www.spp.nus.edu.sg/ips/ACM_Survey_on_Political_Traits_and_Media_Use_2011.aspx)

The “Onternauts”: Who consumes alternative political media?

Special thanks to

**Dr Leong Chan Hoong,
Research Fellow,
IPS**

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Mass Media matrix

Centrality/ Fringeness Type of Channel	Mainstream media (purveys 'mainstream' views)	Alternative media (purveys 'non- mainstream' views)
Traditional or old media	1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST, Today, TNP, ZB Print • CNA broadcast • Radio via air 	3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hammer, • The Democrat • Catholic Informer • (Rainbow Times)
New media	2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ST online •Razor TV •Stomp •CNA website 	4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TOC •Yawning Bread •Temasek Review • Public House

Mass media matrix: Which box?

- BBC online? NYT online?
- Yahoo News' Fit to Post/Singapore Scene?
 - Andrew Loh (TOC, Public House), Alicia Wong (Today)
 - New media - but are they mainstream or alternative
 - Perhaps: Mainstream elsewhere, but alternative here because not (so) government-controlled and content not so ST-ish?
- Facebook/Twitter?? Is it even mass media?

Regulatory implications??

Ways of analysing

- a) **Box 1 alone**
(mainstream, traditional media consumption)
- b) **Box 2 alone**
(mainstream, new media consumption)
- c) **Box 4 alone**
(alternative, new media consumption)
- d) **Boxes 1 plus 2**
(mainstream media consumption, whether online or offline)
- e) **Boxes 2 plus 4**
(online media consumption, whether mainstream or alternative)

Centrality/ Fringeness Type of Channel	Mainstream media (purveys 'mainstream' views)	Alternative media (purveys 'non-mainstream' views)
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Survey questions

Minutes a day finding out about politics, public issues and government policy...

- a) Reading print newspapers
- b) Watching television
- c) Reading online websites of Singapore mass media (ST, Today, The New Paper, Zaobao or CNA)
- d) Reading foreign news websites (the BBC, CNN or the NYT)
- e) Reading Internet-only Singapore websites (TOC, Yawning Bread, TR, mrbrown, other blogs)

Group (e) = consumers of online, alternative political media (the “On-ter-nauts”)

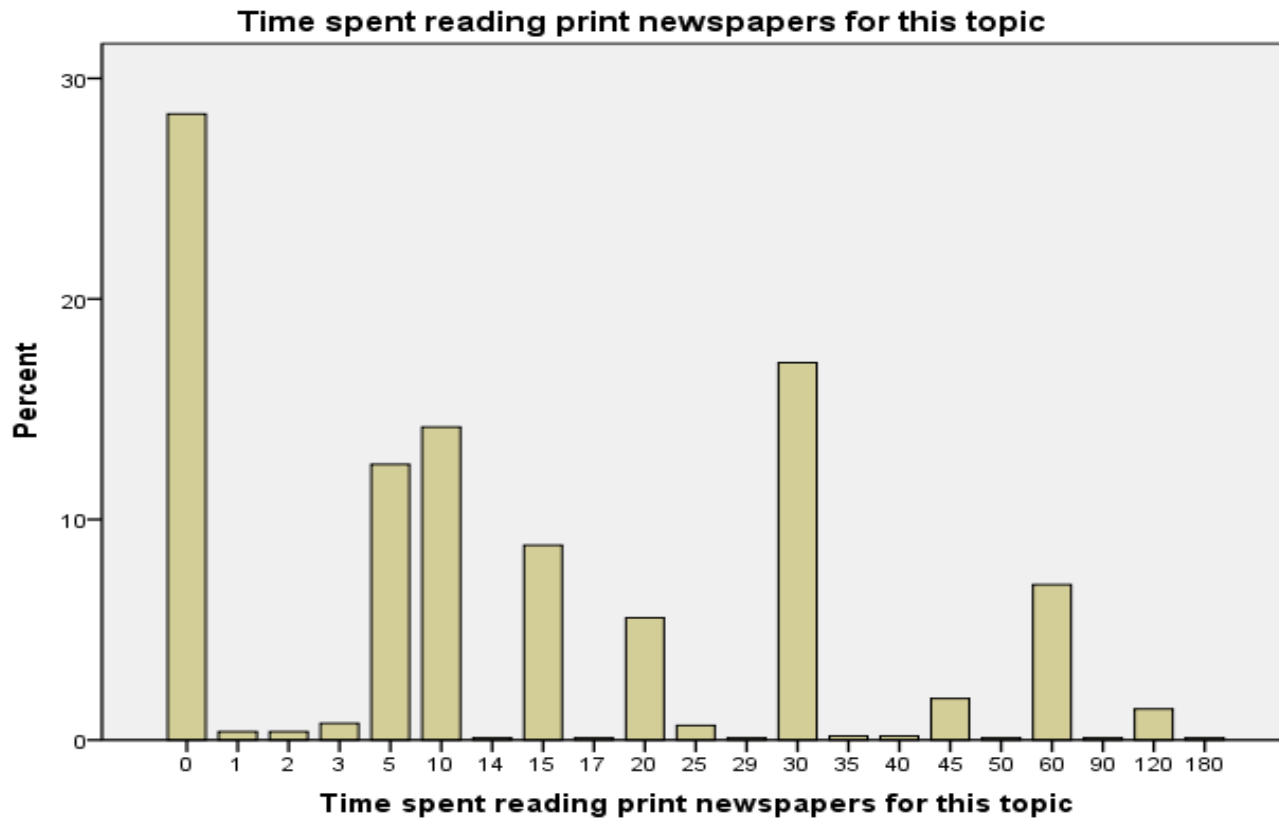
Total political media consumption

Media consumption mean, calculated using the sum of values reported for the five questions is 53.1 minutes.

The median value is 35.0 minutes (half the people consume at least 35 minutes of media a day for political news.)

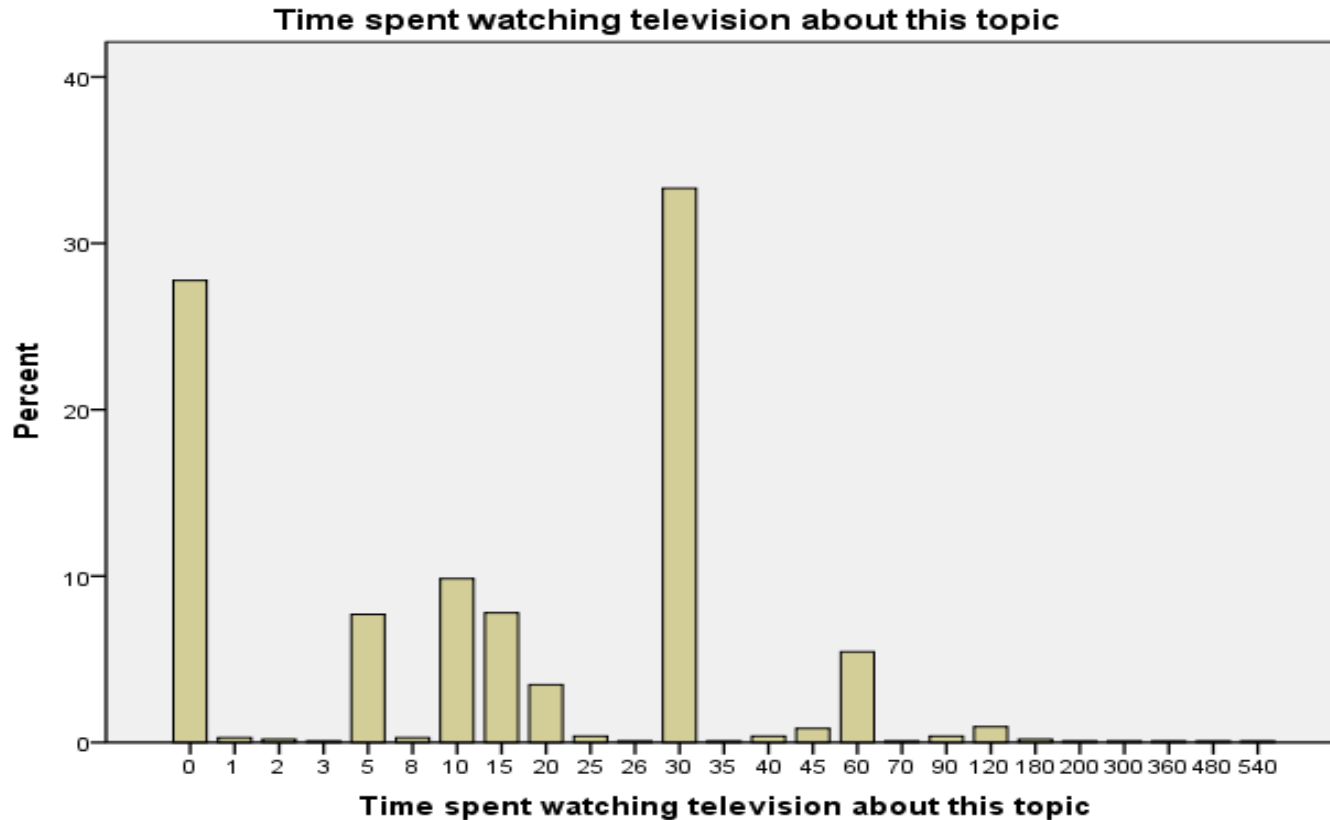
Political Media Consumption: Print Papers

Non-readers 28.4 %



Political Media Consumption: Television

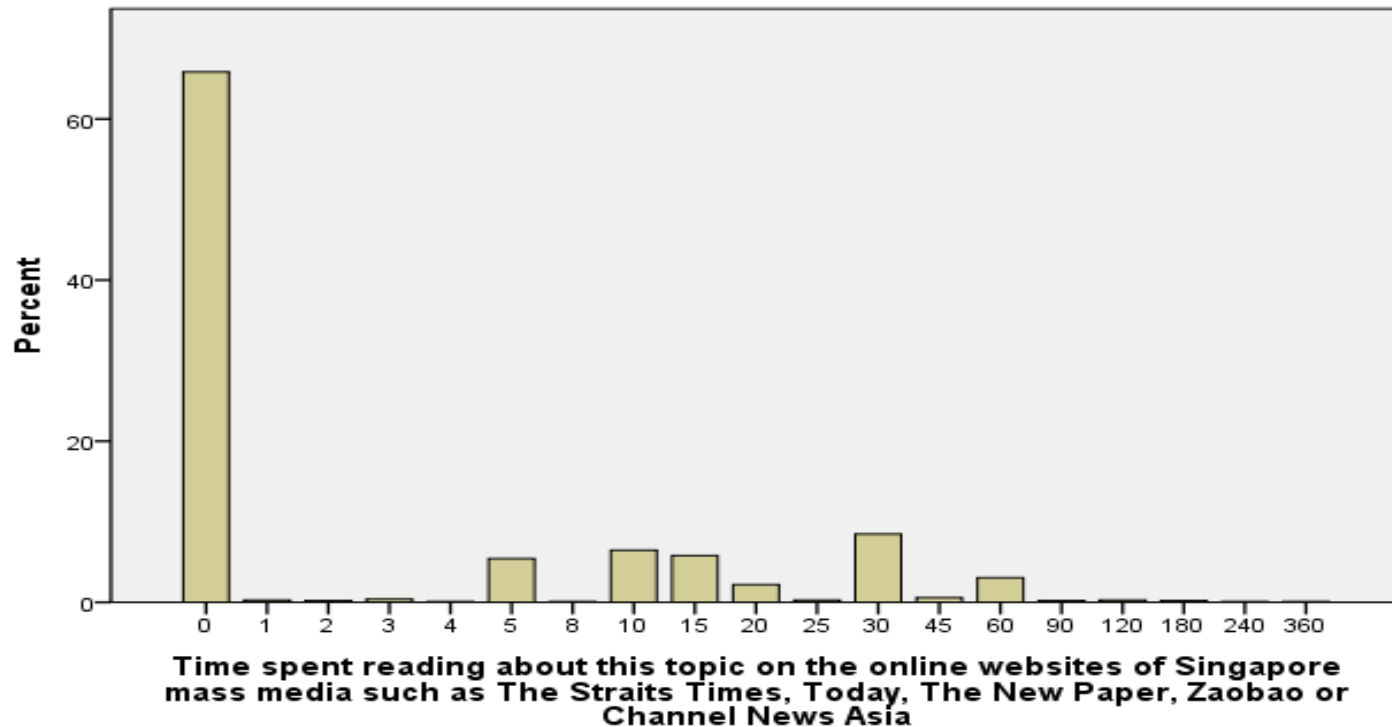
Non-viewers 27.8 %



Political Media Consumption: Online, mainstream media

Non-readers 65.8 %

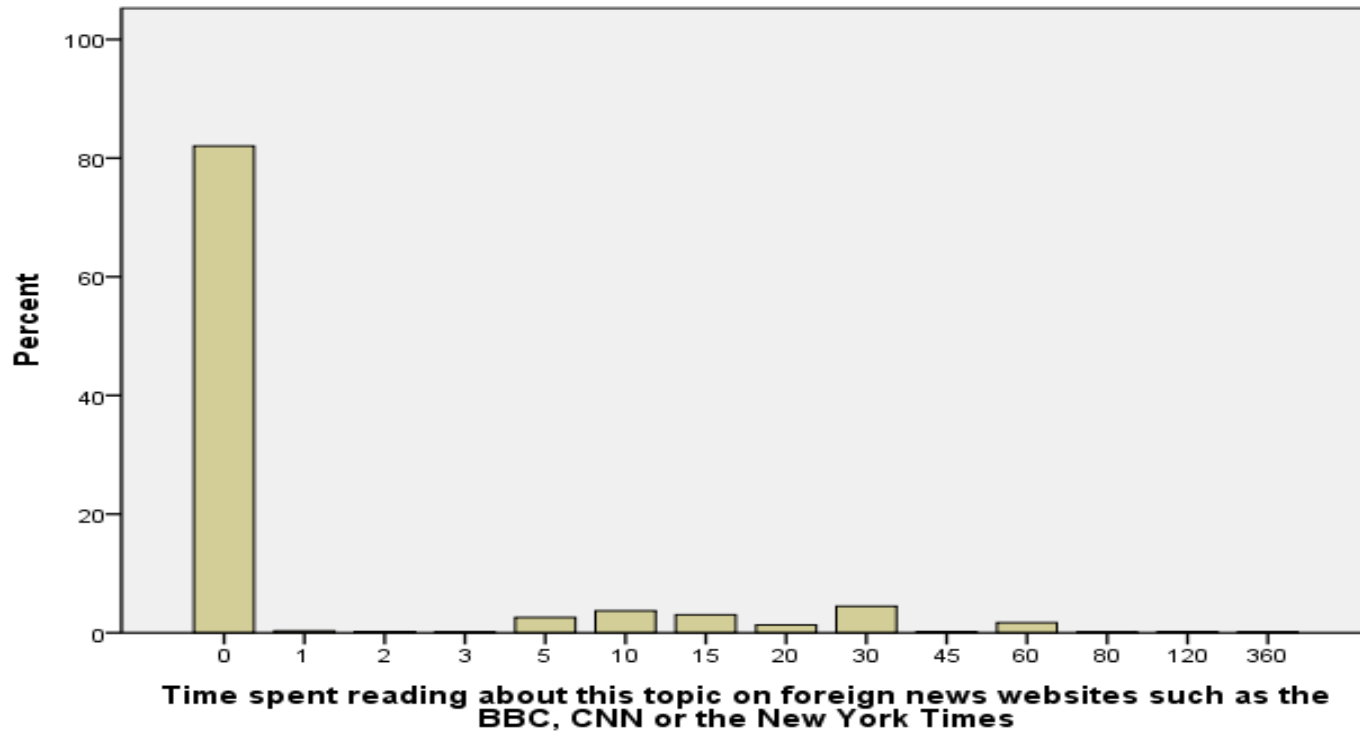
Time spent reading about this topic on the online websites of Singapore mass media such as The Straits Times, Today, The New Paper, Zaobao or Channel News Asia



Political Media Consumption: Online, foreign media

Non-readers 82.0 %

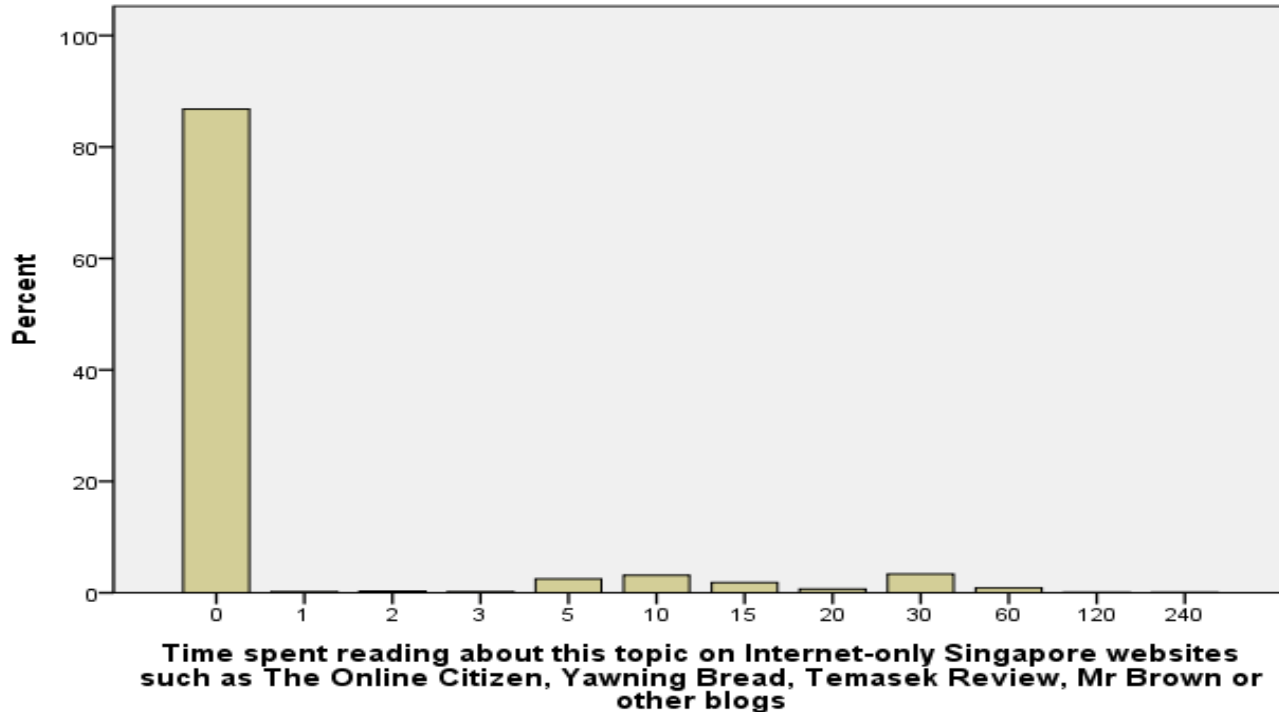
Time spent reading about this topic on foreign news websites such as the BBC, CNN or the New York Times



Political Media Consumption: Online, alternative (Onternauts)

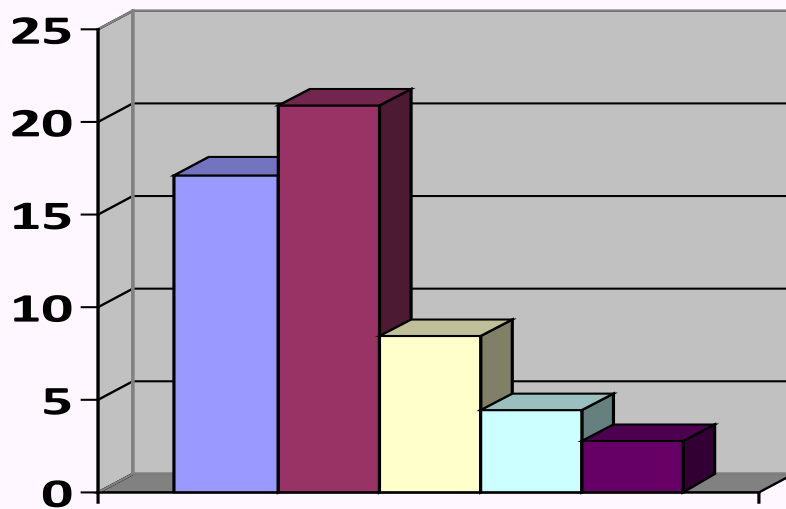
Non-readers 86.8%

Time spent reading about this topic on Internet-only Singapore websites such as The Online Citizen, Yawning Bread, Temasek Review, Mr Brown or other blogs



Political Media Consumption

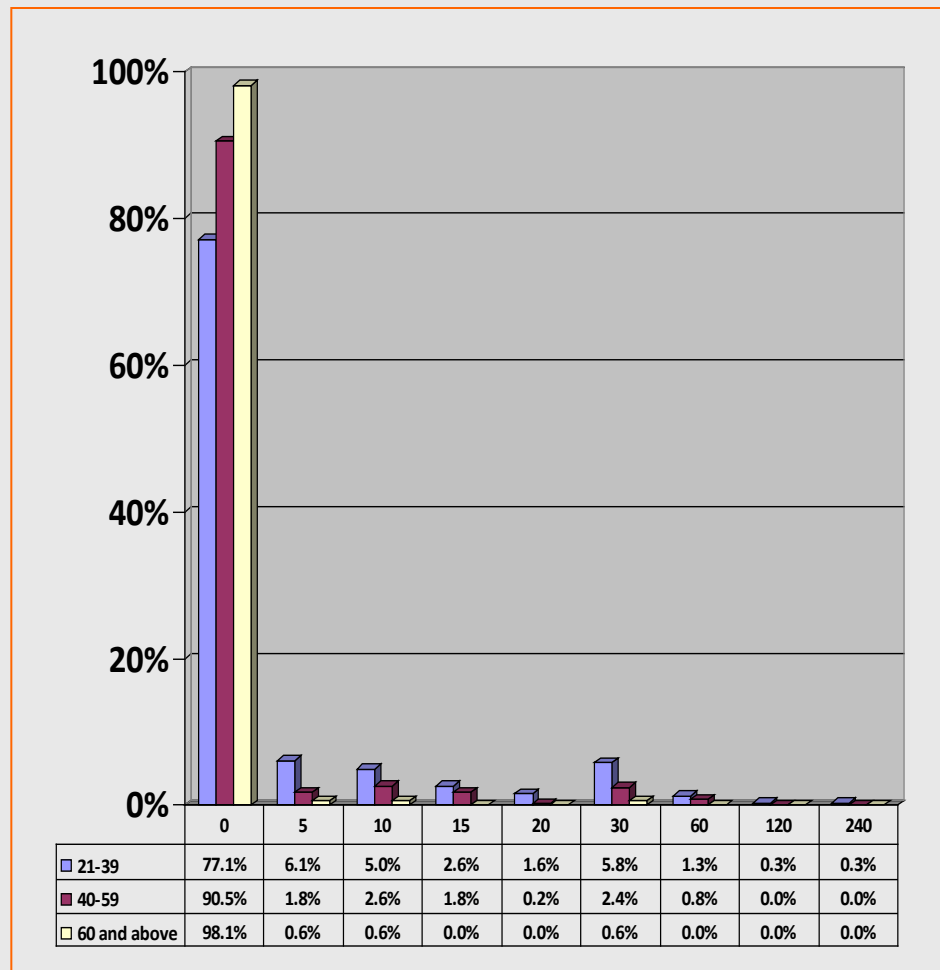
Minutes spent on political news a day



■ Newspaper Consumption	17.1194
■ Television Consumption	20.8583
■ Mainstream Media (Online) Consumption	8.4063
■ Foreign Mainstream Media Consumption	4.353
■ Singapore Online-only Consumption	2.7438

Alternative, online political media consumption

1. Only 12.8% are Onternauts (Fewer than 40% who voted Opposition)
2. Average spent a day: 2.7 minutes (21 mins among consumers)
3. 17.1 mins for print media
4. **8.4 mins for mainstream online media**



Percentages in mass media matrix

<p>Centrality/ Fringeness</p> <p>Type of Channel</p>	<p>Mainstream media (purveys 'mainstream views)</p>	<p>Alternative media (purveys non-mainstream views)</p>
<p>Traditional or old media</p>	<p>1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST, Today, TNP, ZB Print • CNA broadcast • Radio via air 	<p>3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hammer, • The Democrat • Catholic Informer • (Rainbow Times)
<p>New media</p>	<p>2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ST online •Razor TV •Stomp •CNA website 	<p>4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TOC •Yawning Bread •Temasek Review • Public House

Few “Isolated Onternauts”

1. Of the 12.8% Onternauts
 1. 93% also read print newspapers
 2. 84% also watch TV
 3. 89% also read mainstream media online
 4. 60% also read foreign online media

*Hence, Onternauts are also exposed to mainstream views: **Complementary rather than competitive media use***

>> Implication for political communication (It's not that they consume, but they consume it differently?)

“Onternauts”: Demographics

1. The higher-educated spend more time using this media
2. Younger people spend more time using this type of media for political information

“Onternauts” and political traits

- a) Politically more knowledgeable
 - b) Politically more interested
 - c) Politically more liberal
 - d) Political engagement online and offline
 - e) Politically more talkative
 - f) Politically more like to disagree when talking
- (Political Cynicism, political efficacy: akan datang)

“Onternauts” are more politicised and liberal

“Onternauts”: Age and education effects controlled

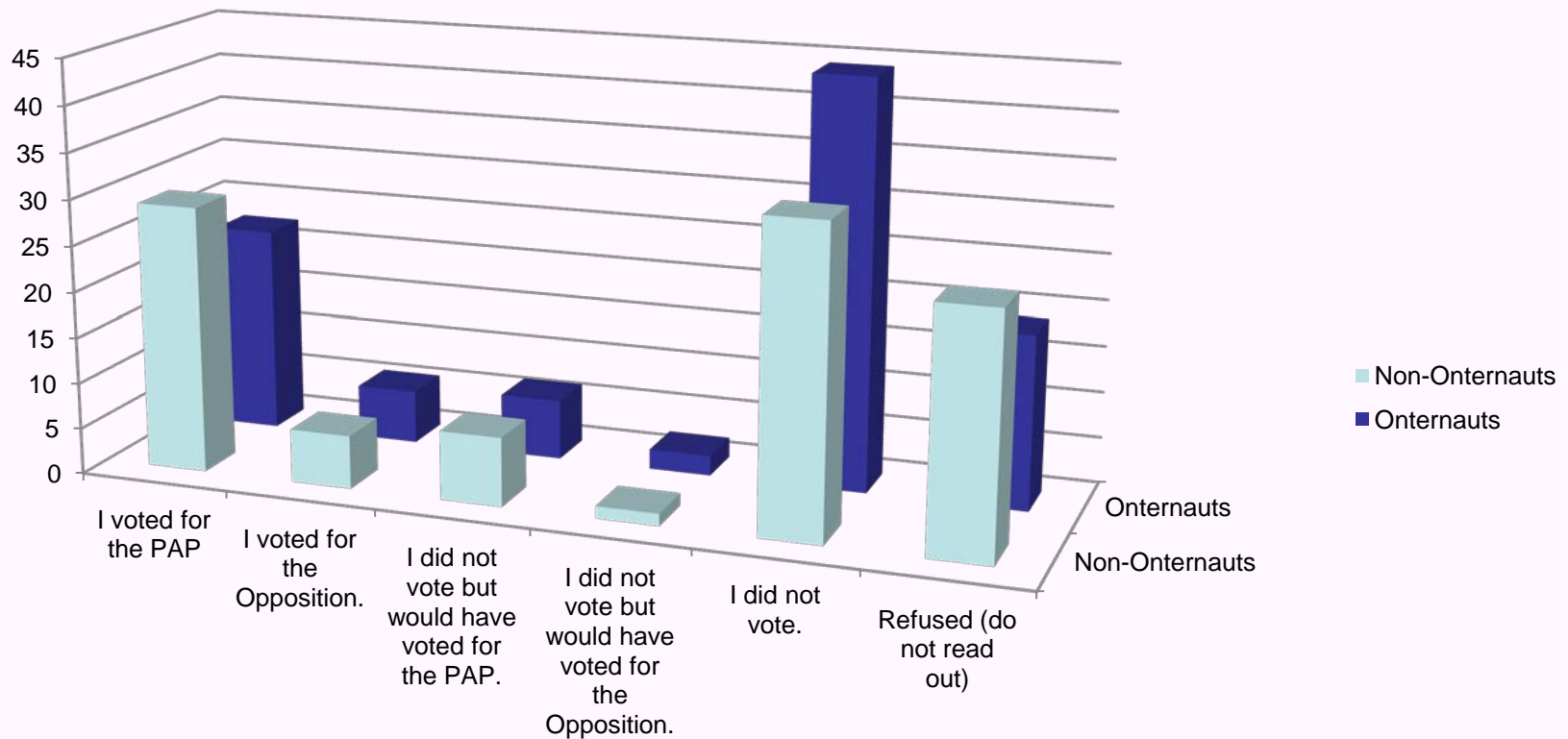
Even when controlled for age and education ...
The same relationships remain

→ General desire for alternative (oppositional?) views that is not just generational/life cycle dependent or a result of better education that comes out of being politicised and liberal?

How Onternauts answered voting question

	Voting in the last election in 2006?						Total (Frequency)
	I voted for the PAP	I voted for the Opposition	I did not vote but would have voted for the PAP.	I did not vote but would have voted for the Opposition.	I did not vote.	Refused (do not read out)	
Non-Onternauts %	29	6	7	1	33	26	908
Onternauts %	22	6	7	2	44	19	138
Total							1046

How Onternauts answered voting question



Implications

- 1) More of the “same old simple” arguments may hold less water (either in MSM or new “here’s the facts” websites)
- 2) Mainstream media reflects the alternative views (possible?)
- 3) Their higher engagement opens a door to talking to them unless
- 4) Are they looking for alternatives or authenticity?
- 5) Power of the Fringe
- 6) 14%/21%: Switched Off, Turned Off
-- Who are they? Just as important?

end