

Political Participation of the Youths Through Social Media in Ifugao

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the electoral participation of the youth through social media in Ifugao during the 2019 local and national elections, focusing on Generation Y and Generation Z. The research aimed to assess the extent of social media utilization in obtaining information about electoral candidates and issues, as well as the respondents' practices in validating and sharing information obtained online. The study was conducted in response to the increasing influence of social media, particularly Facebook, on youth political participation and the growing concern regarding the spread of fake news during elections.

Using a descriptive research design, the study found that the youth in Ifugao highly utilized social media in accessing information related to national and local electoral issues, but showed low utilization in gathering information regarding electoral candidates. Results also revealed that respondents had low levels of validating and sharing information from social media platforms. Furthermore, the findings indicated that there was no significant difference between Generation Y and Generation Z in terms of social media usage and responses to electoral information and issues.

The study concluded that Facebook plays a significant role in shaping youth awareness of electoral issues; however, the lack of information validation practices exposes the youth to misinformation and fake news. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended the establishment of legitimate social media platforms, the formation of youth voter education programs, partnerships between the Municipality of Lamut and Ifugao State University, and the creation of initiatives to monitor and combat the spread of fake news in the province. The study emphasized the importance of promoting responsible social media usage and strengthening media literacy among the youth to encourage informed political participation.

THE PROBLEM

Background of the Study

“Laws alone cannot secure freedom of expression; in order that every man presents his views without penalty there must be the spirit of tolerance in the entire population.”

-Albert Einstein

Political participation is an important part of democracy that allows citizens to go out and vote. It is commonly understood as a set of activities that citizens perform to influence the government structure, policies, or officials (Weiss, 2020). It is an activity by which an individual can show his interest in the activities of his leaders. Similarly, it is defined by several authors as actions of private citizens by which they seek to influence or to support government and politics (Milbrath & Goel, 1977). Second, it refers to activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or actions they take (Verba & Nie, 1972). Third, this is a set of voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various

levels of the political system (Kaase & Marsh, 1979). Fourth, it is the knowledge and behavior involved in political activities (Sairambay, 2020). Fifth, any dimensions of activity that are either designed directly to influence government agencies and policy process, or indirectly to impact civil society, or which attempt to alter systematic patterns of social behavior (Alelaimat, 2019). Lastly, political participation is defined by Towner (2013) as the ability to express political opinions and assert political influence in both online and offline world.

These definitions are mainly referring to all the actions of an individual that can either make or break governmental policies. Political participation can be done in different ways like voting or casting a vote during an election period (Weiss, 2020). But voting is limited to those who are registered voters only. In some cases, it can also be seen when an individual failed to cast his vote to any government candidate because it shows the dissatisfaction of platforms or previous performance (Symonds, 2020). It can also be identified by actively supporting government programs or activities like attending a barangay assembly or buying tickets that are linked to any government activities for a cause (Longley, 2021). People can also engage themselves in politics by merely respecting the national heroes, singing the national anthem or respecting the national flag.

Race, education, age, among others are factors that can influence political participation as (Fountain, 2017). Another factor that influences political participation is social media. Gainous and Wagner (2014) defined social media as a broad and growing portion of the internet designed as a platform that allows users, and groups of users, to create and exchange content, often interactively or collaboratively. This includes the ability to collaborate on the creation of content and the ability to interact with others (Carr & Hayes, 2015). According to the study of Effing et al (2011), politicians with higher social media engagement got relatively more votes during the 2010 national election.

Online political participation is a digital mode of participation as a non-conventional form of political participation (Abdul, Hamid & Ishak, (2016). As a result, social media users promote political interest and make people in their network likely to participate in politics (Hamid, Ishak & Salau 2015).

Online political participation can be done through the use of the social networking sites (Noyes, 2019). These social networking sites (SNS) comes in the form of Facebook, Instagram, twitter, YouTube and tiktok (Wong, 2021). Among these SNS, Facebook is the most formal sites for political participation (Thom, 2022). There are three most important features of Facebook in order to communicate and participate. These are the like, comments and share button that allows information exchange among the Facebook users (Kim & Yang, 2017). Facebook provides users the right to own their information, to share it freely, and to access information that others provide to them. Information exchange on Facebook fosters civic participation, trust, political and life contentment among youth (Bene, 2017). These activities provide more ways to be active in political affairs than what was not possible in the past generations (Bolton-Solnet et. al, 2013).

However, when we look at the voter's turnout, we can see that the number of citizens that vote has decreased over the last one hundred years. It is reported that there is a steady rise in youth's participation in politics through social media (Chun, 2012 & Potgieter, 2013). While some researchers like Seongyi and Woo-Young (2011) and Whiteley (2011) have found that there is a decrease in youth political participation through social media. Youth is defined by African Youth Charter as an individual who is aging 15 to 35 years old (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2022). These youth belongs to the Gen Z and generation Y. Gen Z is defined as newest generation to be named and was born between 1995 and 2015 who are currently aging between 4-24 years old while generation Y or millennials were born between 1980 and 1994 who are currently aging between 25 -39 years old (Kasasa, 2019).

Millennials or the so-called Generation Y and post millennials or Generation Z were also influenced by social media. Early and frequent exposure to technology is a key formative characteristic for Gen Y, which has advantages and disadvantages in terms of cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes (Yang, 2012). For example, they rely heavily on technology for entertainment, to interact with others and even for emotion regulation. Both generations have experienced long periods of economic prosperity and a rapid advance in instant communication technologies, social networking, and globalization (Park & Gursoy, 2012)

The Gen Z are comfortable with technologies that are fairly recent for older generations, and Gen Z has grown up in the current environment of ubiquitous mobile communications (Rouse, 2017).

Today, several features of social media can be used for various forms of online political participation both in direct like instant messaging, messages and wall postings and indirect ways like posting notes, status update (Warren, Sulaiman & Jafar, 2014).

Social media proposes that young generations are most likely affected causing them to politically participate. According to Rosenstone and Wolfinger (2014), 18-24 years old had one of the lowest voter turnouts out of all the different age groups except for the 79+ age group, but social media might have affected this particular age group political participation. Looking at the data can show us how much social media use can change, given different factors that are important to who participates in the political process.

Accordingly, age 25 to 34, is 29.7% of users, which is the most common age demographic. This rapid growth of FB resulted to an increase in its use of social media buttons such as the “like” and “share” features (Noyes, 2019).

The following were various Facebooks activities according to Abdu, Mohammad and Muda (2018) that could be participated in by users, these are online debates, posting politics-related topics and articles, and sharing a politician’s posts or page which are considered to be influential on voters’ decision making and political choice. Vivar (2017) said that these were not highly believed to be influential by the key informants, these remained vital since these were the common practices found online.

Since social media is part of youth political culture (Olabamiji, 2014). Youth plays a crucial role in terms of political participation. They are active and mostly engaged in social media activities that influence them to participate in politics (Keating & Melis, 2017). The Youth get political information through an online network of friends which may lead to political interest (Masiha, Habiba, Abbas, Saud, & Ariadi (2018).

As a result, social media users promote political interest and make people in their network likely to participate in politics, (Salau et al., 2015). Information exchange on Facebook fosters civic participation, trust, political and life contentment among youth. These activities provide youth more ways to be active in political affairs than what was not possible in the past generations (Conroy, 2012).

The book, Voice and Equality by Verba, Schlozman & Brady (1995) highlights that political information is one of the factors that can predict political participation, which is one of the many ways that social media, in general, can help increase political participation because citizens have access to news and information easily. According to Tang (2013) this can then have a larger effect on the outcome of election, because if social media can influence political participation this could have an impact on voter participation. However, the veracity of the information they gain is still in question.

Farthing (2010) concluded that most of the young people in 1977 had inadequate knowledge on local, national, and international issues. However, due to improvement of technology and presence of virtual information, there is vast political information that can be acquired online.

Today’s conditions and opportunities to reach the information is much more developed than those days basing on their statements. At present, young people are expected to obtain information about participation in various ways (Settle-Jones, 2016). For example, schools are regarded as places where individuals are prepared for life and provided with theoretical knowledge about participation, human rights, and democracy (Hizmet, Gençlik, Katılım & Katılımı, 2017).

However, the proliferation of political information created misconceptions among users. The information gained from Facebook is not always trusted (Tarai, 2019). A decision strategy is a set of mental and physical operations that an individual use to reach a decision (Redlawsk & Lau, 2013). At the very least, decision strategies involve plans for gathering relevant information from the external environment or by search through memory, evaluating

that information, and choosing among alternative courses of action (Zafarani & Zhou, 2018). This will avoid fake news to continue to spread that will affect negatively the electoral decision of the voters.

Fake news was originally applied to political satire, it now seems to stand for all things ‘inaccurate’ (Lazeretal & Tambini, 2017) and is even applied in contexts that are completely unrelated to mediated communication. What fake news stands for is something larger than the term itself. A fundamental shift in political and public attitudes to what journalism and news represent and how facts and information may be obtained in a digitalized world (Damian,2018). Public awareness of fake news has risen in recent years. This can be seen, for example, in an official warning by the World Economic Forum which describes fake news as a digital wildfire and global risk for our hyper-connected world (Howell, 2013).

To avoid misinformation that will lead to fake news, Garreth (2016) suggest that we should turn more of our attention to other explanation. The practice of scrutinizing especially claims that run counter existing beliefs does produce bias, undermining individuals’ ability to update their beliefs in light of new evidence (Marwick,2018). Garreth (2016) also added that frequent use by Facebook users promote accuracy than use by those who only interacted with other social media platforms during election sessions.

Several kinds of literatures can support this phenomenon, according to Cook, Ecker and Lewandowsky (2015), misinformation by definition does not accurately reflect the true state of the world. The term refers to misinformation to information that is initially presented as true but later found to be false. For example, one might initially believe a news report that a causal link has been found between the use of deodorants and breast cancer but find out later that this is most likely just a myth (Lee ,2019). Rumors and urban myths are further significant sources of misinformation that tend to produce sticky memes that resist subsequent correction (Tarai,2019). Social media websites and blogs, which allow the bypassing of traditional gatekeepers such as professional editors or peer reviewers, have contributed to the increased dissemination of such misinformation (Hern,2019).

In the same way, Cook et al (2015), explained that the lingering effects of misinformation invoke the notion that people build mental models of unfolding events. If a central piece of the model is invalidated, people are left with a gap in their model, while the invalidated piece of information remains accessible in memory. When questioned about the event, people often use the still readily available misinformation rather than acknowledge the gap in their understanding (Dhir, Salo, Singh, Talwar & Virk, 2020).

Fake news often uses sensationalist language and is regularly presented with the help of clickbait characteristics (Chen, Conroy & Rubin 2015). One known method to efficiently manipulate emotion in observers is the strategic use of images, as well as directing perceptions through the proximity of the images to the headline (Lee, 2019).

Ecker, Lewandowsky, Chang, and Pillar (2014) hypothesized that like headlines, images can serve to attract attention and are usually processed before the full article is read. It is found that clickbait often integrates the use of images as a way to interest users through misinformation. Readers spontaneously integrated information from a headline with a photo in the associated article (Palau, 2019). The congruence of headline and photo therefore affected subsequent valence ratings like headlines that were incongruent with the photo led people to make judgments that were more in line with the headline. Techniques to locate not only the existence of certain images as part of the headline should, therefore, be part of an automatic assessment process (Reputation X, 2021).

Although the intention of the outlets and individuals who are spreading fake news is more difficult to investigate, than the content of fake news or the user perception (Zafarani & Zhou,2018). Researchers agree that the dissemination of fake news is often linked to politicalintentions or financial benefits expected by the sender (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

After the phenomenon of fake news has been described, we can consider how users act to detect it online, and how they act, more generally, to determine the credibility of a message (Guess, Nagler & Tucker,2019). When users need to evaluate if a message is credible, they draw their conclusion based on the sender, the medium, and the content of the message (Hu & Sundar, 2010).

The global situation that can be linked to the preceding literature can be associated with the recent 2016 election in the United States where issues on the usage of Facebook between Trump and Clinton are very prevalent (Macafee, McLaughlin & Rodriguez, 2019). In the study of Guess, Nyhan and Reifler (2018), they revealed that 27.4% of Americans age 18 or older visited an article on a pro-Trump or pro-Clinton fake news website during the study period, which covered the final weeks of the 2016 election campaign. The pro-Trump or pro-Clinton fake news that people read was heavily skewed toward Donald Trump people saw an average mean of 5.45 articles from fake news websites during the study period of October 7–November 14, 2016. Nearly all of these were pro-Trump (Davis, 2017).

Data from Facebook indicated that these factually dubious for-profit articles were shared by millions of people (Silverman, 2016). Many people also reported believing claims of fake news sites promoted in post-election surveys (Silverman & Singervine, 2016).

Their data indicated that fake news website production and consumption was overwhelmingly pro-Trump in its orientation. Specifically, Kwon, Sahly and Shao, (2019) revealed that Facebook played an important role in directing people to fake news websites. Heavy Facebook users were deferentially likely to consume fake news, which was often immediately preceded by a visit to Facebook (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

Evon (2016) reported that false reports included Pope Francis endorsing Donald Trump for President, or the case of companies in China that disseminated fake news about their competitors. This is faced with public criticism. On December 15 2016, Facebook announced that it would flag posts of questionable credibility “fake news” as disputed, after third-party fact-checkers had manually checked their quality (Mosseri, 2016). A warning message was displayed alongside the original post. On December 20, 2017, Facebook declared that this practice would be discontinued (Lyons, 2017). The warning messages had not had their intended effects.

In a similar situation, junk news and traffic manipulation are commonly used to influence public life before the election among the countries of Europe. Less than 4% of sources circulating on Twitter during the data collection were junk news or known Russian sources, with users sharing far more links to mainstream news outlets overall (34%), except in the Polish sphere, where junk news made up 21% of traffic. On Facebook, junk news outlets tended to receive more engagement per story, but are seen, shared, and liked by far fewer people overall, and most viral junk news stories revolved around controversial political issues such as immigration and security rather than focusing directly on European politics, (Marchal, Howard, Kolanyi & Neudert (2019).

Taken together, Weiss (2020) indicate that individuals discussing politics on social media before the European parliamentary elections shared links to high-quality news content including high volumes of content produced by independent citizens compared to other elections in France, Sweden, and Germany.

In 2018, they found that junk news and traffic manipulation played critical roles in shaping national conversation around issues of migration and security during electoral campaigns in France and Sweden (Colliver, Pomerantsev, Applebaum & Birdwell, 2018). Similar tactics were deployed to erode faith in public institutions and encourage discord during the independence vote in Catalonia and yellow vests protests in France (Bossetta, Segesten & Trenz, 2017). Most recently, it provided evidence of the use of sophisticated digital tools, including amplifier accounts and targeted ads to exert influence on British politics ahead of 2016 Brexit referendum (Marchal et. al, 2019).

Facebook and Twitter provided political information in Europe before the election and it helps the constituents to choose their leaders however most of it is misinformation that misleads the decision of the voters.

In Mexico, misinformation is becoming more nuanced. Polarizing and conspiracy content takes on a variety of multi-media formats, including text, video and audio, memes and highly shareable short text snippets. The leading candidate André Manuel López Obrador dominates the Twitter conversation, with almost four times as much daily content about him than any of the other candidates and at least four times the volume of high-frequency tweeting (Glowacki et al (2018).

The dominating conversation can be explained by the statistics of the Reuters Digital News Report (2018), the report found in their survey that only 49% of Mexicans had trust in media most of the time. Additionally, according to World Association of News Publishers (2018) survey data confirmed that the proliferation of junk content has shaped audience attitudes, with 63% of Mexican survey respondents saying that they are “very” or “extremely” concerned about the veracity of online news content.

Of those surveyed by the Reuters Institute, 90% responded that they receive their news from online sources, including social media, compared to only 45% from print media, and 74% answered that their smartphone is the primary device for news consumption over computers. Of survey respondents, 61% use Facebook to get their news, with YouTube and WhatsApp accounting for 37% and 35% respectively, and Twitter for 23% (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2018).

In some cases, gathering information through Facebook does not always mean that people could trust them. Redlawsk and Lau (2013) said that people need to decide first, decision strategies involve plans for gathering relevant information, evaluating that information, and choosing among alternative courses of action.

In Brazil, it is also said that the proliferation of fake news or junk news is rampant. People are considered as one of the most enthusiastic users of social networks and messaging apps in the world, and social media networks have become a key platform for citizens to share news and political information (Palau, 2021).

There is increasing debate about the impact of misinformation on polarization and the spread of violence, both online and offline (Santos, 2020). For the first time in the country’s electoral history, Brazil witnessed the hacking of popular political Facebook groups, and the physical persecution, threat and harm to social media political leaders as well as celebrities (Brooks, 2018).

Barash, et al (2018) found out that Brazil’s political discourse on social media is highly partisan, with leading presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro dominating the conversation on Twitter. Accounts associated with Lula da Silva and Fernando Haddad hashtags show the highest level of high frequency-tweeting. While Bolsonaro supporters spread the widest range of known fake news sources, Lula da Silva and Haddad supporters accounted for the highest volume of shares of fake news sources (Palau, 2021). The supporters still are not swayed by the misinformation.

Fernando Haddad is a co-party of Lula da Silva under the Worker’s Party who ruled Brazil for 13 consecutive years. While Jair Bolsonaro is the right-wing candidate from the Social Liberal Party (Tardáguila, Benevenuto, Ortellado, 2019). Jair Bolsonaro won as president during the election on October 28, 2018 (Watson, 2019).

There were legal actions taken by techno-savvy known countries due to the abovementioned situation adverse reactions against Facebook concerning its effect on politics and political participation of the constituents, (Long, 2018). The parliament of Germany adopted a law in June 2017 against the posting on social media of hate speech, child pornography, terror-related items and false information (Stolz, 2019). Under the law, social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter can be punished with fines of up to 50 million euros if they fail to remove such illegal content (Gesley, 2019).

In Ireland, Facebook shut down tens of thousands of fake accounts ahead of the German federal election held on September 24, 2017 (Wired, 2016). This is a response to the backlash on Facebook over its role in the 2016 U.S. election where it sold 150,000 worth of political ads during the campaign that was linked to Russian accounts (Lapowsky, 2017).

Recently, Facebook vice president of integrity, Guy Goysen as cited by Saddiqi (2019) removed a record of 2.2 billion fake accounts in its first quarter of 2019. He said that the larger quantities of fake accounts are driven by spammers who are constantly trying to evade their system. The action taken is for the benefit of the people to participate actively in politics. Legit political information is very important for voters not to be misled in deciding who to vote (Bene, 2017).

Towner (2013) defined political participation as the ability to express political opinions and assert political influence in both online and offline world. This will eventually lead to political participation. Therefore, social media should not hinder this to happen.

The ability to express one's opinion can be done through social media however some can also cause tensions or even can lead to unexpected tensions. Acquiring information from Facebook does not always guarantee a positive or negative reaction (Inocian, De Vera III & Rosaroso (2017).

Just like the issue in Myanmar in the past few years before and after the election wherein Facebook played a key role as extremists sought to escalate the conflict in Myanmar (Choudhury, 2020). The world was disturbed because of the crimes irresponsibly proliferated by Facebook. Facebook's performance during Myanmar's Rakhine state crisis highlighted the seriousness of groups being able to spread discriminative propaganda using the social network's platform (Williams, 2019).

In this case, Myanmar military leaders utilized Facebook to distribute anti-Rohingya content to show legitimacy in their actions (Mozur, 2018). This had significant effects on opinions both within the country but also internationally, and ultimately, induced more violence (Milmo, 2021).

During the decades of military rule, the Myanmar lacked a free press and the junta operated largely in secret. The military changed the country's flag and moved the capital without warnings to its people (Choudhury, 2020). They had spent decades reliant on state-run propaganda newspapers, parsing opaque military announcements for what was happening (The Irrawaddy, 2021). The arrival of Facebook provided a country with severely limited digital literacy a hyper-connected version of the country's ubiquitous tea shops where people gathered to swap stories, news and gossip (Zeya, 2019).

According to Derek Mitchell, who served as US Ambassador to Myanmar from 2012 to 2016 as cited in McLaughlinback (2019), Myanmar is a country run by rumors, where people fill in the blanks. There is great insecurity and fear among people in Myanmar that unseen powers are working in the shadows to control the levers of power. The arrival of Facebook provided a platform for these rumors to spread at an alarming rate (Milmo, 2021).

Data analyst Raymond Serrato looked at posts from Myanmar citizens throughout 2017, determining that there was a massive spike in hate-speech posts following an August military campaign in the country's western Rakhine state, home to the majority of the country's Rohingya (Choudhury, 2020). The combination of ethnic tensions and a booming social media market was toxic. Since the beginning of mass internet use in Myanmar, inflammatory posts against Rohingya have regularly appeared on Facebook (Mozur, 2018).

As hate speech and dubious articles quickly began to surface in volume on Facebook in 2012 and 2013, many targeting Muslims and Rohingya in particular, the government raised concerns that the site could be used to incite unrest (McLaughlinback, 2019). Some activists and rights groups, however, were not totally convinced of the threat of online hate speech (Ortiz & Rafanan, 2019).

In 2013 an official from Human Rights Watch was largely dismissive that Facebook could play a major role in the spread of hate speech (Tun, 2018). He pointed to pamphlets distributed by monks and ultra-nationalist organizations in rural areas before the 2012 violence in Rakhine as a more pernicious vehicle for spreading disinformation (McKirdy, 2018).

Belford (2018) shared that people and Buddhist monks protest the arrival of a Malaysian NGO's aid ship carrying food and emergency supplies for Rohingya Muslims.

In addition to posts, researchers found that "crude and dehumanizing anti-Muslim imagery and language is regularly woven into 'memes'" including widely shared ones portraying bestiality aimed at Muslims and the "Prophet Muhammed being orally penetrated" (Tun, 2018). In August, a Reuters investigation found more than

1, 000 Burmese posts, comments and pornographic images attacking the Rohingya and other Muslims (Subedar, 2018).

Misleading Facebook posts continue to trigger confusion, threats of violence, and government overreach in Myanmar (Ortiz & Rafanan, 2019). Consider the case of journalist and translator Aung Naing Soe, who in November 2016 was targeted online after users began circulating a picture they claimed showed him standing with members of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (Yangon, 2017). The militant group attacked police posts in October 2016 and again in August 2017, sparking the massive campaign against Rohingya that drove hundreds of thousands to neighboring Bangladesh.

In an interview with Mark Zuckerberg by British Broadcasting Corporation news [BBC] (2018), he said that Facebook messenger conversations, screenshotted and included with an open letter were sent to him. They said that they spread in an unprecedented way that widespread fear.

The effect of this violence forced more than 700,000 people to flee their homes in northwestern Myanmar to settle in refugee camps in neighboring Bangladesh (Subedar, 2018). With this, the United Nations has called for Myanmar's military leaders to be investigated and prosecuted for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes following a campaign of persecution and killing of Rohingya (McKirdy, 2018).

Facebook was blamed and admitted that it failed to prevent its platform from being used to fuel political division and bloodshed in Myanmar (Belford, 2018). Chief executive officer Mark Zuckerberg promised to do more to help tackle hate speech in the country after activists accused him of turning a blind eye (Cable News Network, 2018).

Another Asian country that makes use of social media during election period is Indonesia.

It was reported that out of a population close to 260 million, approximately 88.1 million had access to internet at the beginning of 2016. Out of these, an astounding 79 million people or close to 90 percent were active social media users. This represented a 10 percent increase from the year before. The average use of social media on any type of device is close to three (We Are Social, 2016).

During the election on July 9, 2014, General Election Commission (KPU) finally officially announced the results of real count. Commission (KPU) decided that the couple Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla is the winner of the 2014 presidential election (Cook, 2018). Jokowi (President) represents the voters of the most populous island, Java. Meanwhile, Jusuf Kalla (Vice President) represents the voters of eastern Indonesia (Mietzner, 2014).

Social media like Facebook and Twitter create a new virtual world with the same interest (Bene, 2017). In the virtual campaign, it reveals that Prabowo, presidential candidate number one, is the most popular presidential candidate on Facebook not only in Indonesia but also from International fans (Abraham, Aditya, Dorminodo & Servando, 2019). While Joko Widodo, president candidate number 2, is the most followed president candidate on Twitter (Abdilla, 2014). Facebook users in Indonesia are dominated by young adult people (18-24), then adult people (25-34) (Abdillah, 2014).

The result will only signify the power of social media. It can promote online campaigns. It will allow political information to be transmitted to every Facebook user however the veracity of the information is still under scrutiny (Zafarani & Zhou, (2018).

In the case of Philippine politics when linked to social media specifically Facebook, a lot of premonitions are saying that social media is very influential in terms of voters' decisions. Facebook becomes a significant aspect of politics within the country (Bajar, 2017).

Today, the 76 million active users of Facebook in the Philippines are close to half of the population of the country (Statista, 2020). During the 2016 National election, social media was extensively used by electoral candidates as

their machinery to report their activities whether directly linked to being political or those activities they intend to politicize (Occenola, 2016).

The recent 2016 presidential election in the Philippines has elevated President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to victory even with less political machinery because of massive use of Facebook among techno-savvy voters and millennials (Arugay, Guerguiey & Sinpeng, 2020).

This made Facebook Philippines named Duterte as the "Undisputed King of Facebook Conversations" after he garnered 64% of conversations talking about him. (Malig, 2016). However, we could not deny the issues that came out after his victory.

According to Gleicher (2019), Facebook's head of cybersecurity policy, there are 67 pages, 68 accounts, 40 groups and 25 Instagram accounts associated with Nic Gabunda, the manager social media campaign of president Duterte in 2016. These pages have used a mix of real and fake accounts to drive messaging on behalf of political candidates. He said that they used this fake account to represent a real person that will eventually be used in campaigning (Gavilian, 2016).

The landslide victory of President Duterte shows that social media is really in effect since he is not widely known in the country (Masiha et al., 2018). The study of Inocian, De Vera III and Rosaroso (2018) reveals that Facebook created a personal choice during the actual casting of votes inside the respective precincts. Although Facebook was actively used compared to Twitter and other forms of social media, demographic limitations and level of education affected the voter's opinions on whom to vote during the election (Marchal et., 2019).

In the course of local issues concerning the use of Facebook as the source of information and on how people react to it, Inquirer (2019) reveals that the Fact Check Philippines (FCP) headed by Tiffany Jungco had navigated in Baguio to educate the millennial voters on how to identify fake news from true news from the internet. She had her talk at the University of the Cordilleras explaining the statistics of the fake news for the past 2016 election (Catajan, 2018). The election officer of Baguio, John Paul Martin said that social media had been used to attack candidates. Therefore, he said that the commission on election need to be equipped to track down the source of fake news (The Free Library, 2014).

The killer slide in Itogon Benguet is widely known throughout the country throughout the media outlets like newsletter and the social networking sites like Facebook (Cimatu, 2018). Users were able to access information on the rescue operation activities through social media. They used it to connect with their families and friends who are near the area.

Social media also arouses conversation, negative and positive that include relief operations from different private and public agencies. However, through social media, most of anti-yellow camp or liberal party as stated by Cupin (2017) criticized the absence of Ifugao Congressman at the onset of the landslide since most of the victims are from Ifugao. It ignited critiques and conversation on Facebook. In response to this issue, a loyalist of Congressman Teddy on his very long post in FB explained the reasons for his absence but netizens still criticized him (Pugong, 2018). This made Facebook a source of misconceptions and commotion among the constituents.

Another issue that circulated in Baguio city was the issue to stop tourists from entering the city. This was circulated through social media and some of the Korean groups in the city got worried and started also asking around (Catajan, 2018). Former mayor Mauricio Domogan clarified that this is a fake news stressing the city has not yet received any directives from the President for the closure (Comanda, 2018).

Baguio city was experiencing some issues at that time. But they were able to settle it without preventing tourist to visit the city (Refuerzo, 2018). This is how social media can be powerful if the readers do not know how to verify.

The research stemmed down to local issues of this study (Ifugao). Facebook is not new to younger generation in the province especially in Lamut, Ifugao. These younger generations are categorized as millennials and Gen Z.

Issues in Ifugao are being discussed and participated by these generations offline or online through Facebook as was observed in the community. An example is the construction of the Ifugao general hospital in Lagawe, Ifugao. The failure of this project is always linked to the incumbent LGU officials and the congressman of the Province which youth and netizens also criticize (Cabreza, 2013). They even made a Facebook page in order to disseminate the situation.

Another is the issue that former Congressman of Ifugao is allegedly linked to a drug activity. This issue circulated throughout the social media. The Bacolod Altvista Org Blog (2018) disseminated and captioned it as “Baguilat’s Hongkong trip canceled after the Aide nabbed with 6 capsules of Ecstasy at NAIA”. They also emphasized that Baguilat refused to comment on this matter. This issue became a talk to social media users in Ifugao especially the youth who are actively engaging themselves in online activities. This was circulated and has generated a lot of negative comments. But later, a post from the legitimate Facebook page and Twitter of former Congressman Teddy Baguilat condemned the narrative against the former politician being spread on social media. The page claimed that these are lies. The post explained that it was fake news, that he did not have a scheduled trip to Hongkong and even does not know the person mentioned as his staff (Baguilat, 2018). This was also verified by Meme Buster (2020) one of the local fact-checkers in the Philippines. This is one of the issues that was linked to a former Ifugao Congressman who was also vying for Governor that greatly influenced the youth of Lamut in their voting decisions.

Unhealthy exchange of conversation on Facebook about LGU officials especially the congressman escalated. The netizens believe that corruption was committed under his administration. It is noteworthy that netizens discussed this political issue. But they should also be able to check the accuracy of information to come up with sound judgement (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

The research is conducted because of the observation of researcher that the municipality of Lamut does not have any related studies that shows usage of social media to political participation. Also, the researcher observed that fake news from Facebook is affecting the youth in choosing their preferred candidates. These are answered in this research.

The research has the objective of assessing utilization of social media in the 2019 local and national elections in Ifugao by Generation Y and Z. It hopes to raise awareness on how the youth examine fake news for the upcoming Philippine national election. It is believed that political education is the key to combat fake news. Fraile (2011) discovered that the relationship between education and political knowledge is weak among individuals more exposed to media for political information. Also, Shaker (2009) and Valenzuela (2013) found that frequent access to information is positively related to political participation because it increases users’ political knowledge which motivates participation.

Furthermore, it is an objective of this study to know how the youth used Facebook to access information and how they validate and react to the information they get that also affects their decision-making during the election.

Moreover, the study will determine if Millennials and Generation Z are same in terms of Facebook utilization and information validation. The researcher wanted to know if they could easily be influenced by information from social media.

The study also aims to benefit the youth, educators, political leaders, legislators, political candidates, and future researchers. The youth remain the primary focus of this research. Specifically, the study will help the youth of Lamut and other municipalities in Ifugao become politically aware, socially responsible, and critical thinkers when dealing with information obtained from social media platforms. It seeks to guide them in properly utilizing social media as a source of information while avoiding deception from fake news and misinformation. Moreover,

the study encourages the youth to become responsible social media users by discouraging the spread of false or misleading information that may negatively affect society.

Likewise, political leaders and legislators of the Municipality of Lamut, together with educators from Ifugao State University, may use the findings of this study in developing programs, policies, seminars, and educational initiatives that promote media literacy, critical thinking, and responsible social media engagement among the youth. The legislators of Lamut may also benefit from this research by gaining insights into the influence of social media on the political awareness and decision-making of young people. These findings may serve as a basis for crafting local ordinances, youth development programs, and information campaigns that combat misinformation and encourage informed civic participation within the municipality.

Furthermore, educators may integrate discussions on media literacy, political awareness, and fact-checking into their teaching strategies to better equip students in identifying credible information from false or misleading content online.

For future researchers from Ifugao State University may use the results of this study as a reference and foundation for conducting related studies in the future.

Finally, the study envisions the development of a community that cannot easily be manipulated or swayed by misinformation spread through social media, especially in this era of globalization and rapid technological advancement. The research also contributes to strengthening the critical thinking skills of individuals, which may eventually help in producing competent, informed, and responsible leaders who can contribute to the progress and development of the country and help address poverty and social challenges.

THEORETICAL / CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher was anchored to the theories and concepts about the usage of social media in getting information of political candidates and electoral issues and responses of respondents in terms of validating and sharing information of candidates and electoral issues.

Usage of social media in getting information

Uses and gratifications theory is the basic theoretical framework in mass communication, which can be used in different types of media. It investigates people's motivation for information seeking and acquisition (Weaver Lariscy, Tinkham & Sweetser, 2011). In other words, this theory concentrates on how users seek media and to what extent they are satisfied with its type, content, and method of use (Amiri, Noori & Basatian, 2012). By answering the two mentioned questions in "Use and Gratification" the positive and negative outcomes of using specific media will be ultimately determined (Balakrishnan & Loo, 2012).

When considering a definition of social media, it is helpful to look at the key characteristics of these kinds of sites. These include the opportunity for individuals to create their profile, connect with others on the site, and create, share and access content and information (Goff 2013). This includes the ability to collaborate on the creation of content and the ability to interact with others (Carr & Hayes 2015).

Social Media exposes youths to political information hence providing a tool for participation (De Zuniga, Molyneux & Zheng, 2014). Accordingly, a major attribute of social media is the choice which it offers individuals to access political information they like bypassing the gatekeeper role of traditional media (Policy and Legal Advocacy Center, 2011). Supporting this, Bae (2014) noted that, given the high level of penetration of political information on social media and the limited control over the flow of information on it, youths can encounter politically engaging information while carrying out various apolitical activities on social media.

Likewise, studies of Olabamiji (2014) have shown over time that political participation can stem from access to political information. Therefore, the more exposed youths are to news and information about politics, the more they will participate in politics (Bae, 2014).

Nevertheless, this relationship could also be vice versa when youths are disappointed with the information gathered. For instance, the possibility that a large amount of political information available on social media may not even propel individuals to participate in politics actively. Olabamiji (2014) believes that an abundant amount of political information on social media may even make youths apathetic to politics.

Acquiring information can be based on the Uses and Gratification theory (UGT) (Vinney, 2022). This theorist explains how the audience or social media users acquire information from social networking sites.

Using Facebook as an electoral tool, Sprierings, Niels and Jacobs (2014) discuss that the number of preference votes a candidate receives and the number of followers or actual media usage help electoral candidate to access Facebook as an electoral device.

The usage of social media networking websites for informational purposes can increase online political participation (Bick & Bühler, 2013). Furthermore, it has been stressed that usage of social media makes information available at a low cost hence increasing online political participation. Increased accessibility of information on the internet specifically social networking websites increases level of online political participation (Khan et al., 2019). Some theorists believe that the ability to make these broad connections is an important part of social media (Carr & Hayes 2015).

Knowledge-based resource social networking sites such as Facebook allows user to discuss various concerns such as policy issues by simply updating their status on their timeline (Levinson, 2009). Users are given increasing control over the selection of news media sources. Hence, users tend to expose themselves to information that is more compatible with their viewpoints (Chadwick & Howard, 2010).

Furthermore, Bene (2017) suggest that the exposure of individuals to information prevalent on traditional media outlets could lead them to viably attend that information online, in as much as they could be more exhaustive about it.

According to Joinson as cited by Agustin, Apolinar, Payod and Sacliwan (2018), the factors to characterize reasons for Facebook utilization include social connection, shared identities, sharing photographs, user content, social investigation, social network surfing and status update. This explanatory factor analysis is clearly manifested on users' news feed and could be seen by other users depending on the chosen privacy option to whether it will be available to the public or not (Rhamawati, 2014).

The study of Keating and Melis (2017) have suggested that youth are now using Facebook to seek political information, mobilize like minds, create user-generated content and share political views. Increasingly, Facebook has been used to mobilize individuals to participate in politics and protest around the world. This, however, suggests that Facebook can help convert or mobilize the people that have been disengaged from offline politics to now participate in an online political activity (Abdu et al., 2017).

This statement has synergy with the work of Theocharis and Quintelier (2014). They believe that Facebook provides suitability and accessibility for a sufficient number of people as well as improves access to information, online opportunities for political expression and political action. Nevertheless, studies have indicated that Facebook is more powerful than traditional media.

In addition, Abdu et al (2017) concluded that Facebook provides a similar and advanced feature in terms of exposure to information but has the additional benefits and advantages of global reach, better quality and greater speed and also an interactive medium of online political discussion.

Facebook increased the number of reaction options to online content in 2015, which allowed users to express online emotions through the use of emoji reactions. These now include Like, Love, Haha, Yay, Wow, Sad, and Angry (Noriega, 2015). These are the reactions that the reader can do after reading the electoral issues that sometimes predict electoral participation (Mc Alone, 2015).

The concept of Uses and Gratification Theory or need seeking is one of the theories of communications that focuses on social communication (Spencer, Sweetser & Tinkham, 2011). Origin and Development of Uses and Gratification Theory is rooted in traditional mass communication research on how a specific media is sought and selected in order to provide their needs (Chiang, 2013). Such research, especially by De'Armond (2015) changed the direction of research from traditional approaches evaluating "What media does to individuals?" to newer approaches assessing "What individuals do to media?". The Use and Gratifications Theory (UGT) has been widely used to understand how and why users select media to address their personal needs and meet their goals (Ahmad, Ehsani, Khodabandelou & Karimi, 2014). Researchers like Chan and Chen (2016) have made a clear distinction between what media consumers seek in order to satisfy their needs and what gratification they actually receive. Concretely, this is a distinction between "expectations about content formed in the advance of exposure and satisfactions subsequently secured from consumption of it".

According to Chowdhury and Saha (2015) their search for political information leads youth to use Facebook. Rivera, Scherman and Valenzuela (2021) also found that youth fulfill the need for expression of their opinions on politics. The motivation from online political discussions leads FB users to offline participation.

Researchers found that youth are among the active users of Facebook and they are using it for political purposes (Burford, 2012). Mittelstadt, Ternes and Towers (2014) said that young adults are increasingly using the internet, also for political matters, and using traditional media less. In a report produced by Statista as cited by Clement (2019) the Facebook users are distributed by age. Age 13-17 comprises 5.9 %, Age 18-24 comprises 26%, Age 25-34 comprises 32 % and the other users' percentage is distributed to other age brackets. We can see that young adults have the greatest number of users followed by young generations.

Responses in terms of Validating and Sharing Information

The concept of social judgement theory can be used to explain the attitude of FB users on Facebook. It explains that people tend to compare their perception and evaluation of an idea whether they see it as reasonable or unreasonable. It also defines how crucial an issue is in their lives that they are to project and represent their point of view on that issue (Griffin, 2012). This explains why FB users tend to spend their time browsing and sharing information and most especially commenting negatively and positively on social issues posted on Facebook (Asano, 2017). The survey of Alujevic (2012) among citizens using the European parliament Facebook pages found that online political participation correlated strongly with political interest. Likewise, Conroy, Feezell and Guerrero (2012) found a strong correlation between online and offline political engagement in their study of political Facebook groups. Moreover, Abdu et al (2018) found strong correlations between online political engagement, offline political participation, civic engagement, and the use of social networking sites for news. An experimental study by Friess and Eilders (2015) showed that online deliberation may increase the participants' sense of political efficacy and willingness to participate in politics. Motivated by the promise that online political debate adhering to the principles of deliberative democracy may strengthen the public sphere, several studies have analyzed the quality of such debate.

Such multiple sources of information as the net are harmful as their level of credibility cannot be ascertained. Hence, it is believed that the more users trust source and motives of political information, the more likely they would engage in politics (Bae, 2014). People are accustomed that all information they obtain from various sources is certified factual (Clark, 2016). It is the nature of the people to easily trust without checking its truthfulness.

The concept of cognitive engagement is the extent to which individuals are willing and able to learn about politics which eventually leads to participation (Abdulrauf, Hamid & Ishak, 2017). The cognitive engagement model is somewhat similar to rational choice in which the voters require some information and knowledge about a proposal to a voting decision. On an issue such as electoral reform, engaged and politically knowledgeable citizens are likely to have sufficient information (LeDuc, 2015).

This information eventually helps them decide basing on the pieces of evidence in identifying the validity of the issues (Dimitrova & Bystrom, 2013). This concept involves the amount of effort that youths are willing to invest in seeking to participate in politics and also how long they persist in doing so (Charles, 2010).

The cognitive engagement theory states that political participation through social media depends on education, availability of information, knowledge about the political happenings and satisfaction with the government policies and agendas (Ahmad, Alvi & Itteq, 2019). It is proposed in the theory that the knowledge level and usage of social media depends on education level of the citizens. (Halpern, Valenzuela, & Katz, 2017).

To validate the information from the internet, youth must always scrutinize the information gathered. Zhou and Zafarani (2018) posit that validation can be done in many processes. The types on how to validate news according to Lim (2018) are manual fact-checking and expert-based fact-checking websites. Manual fact-checking also is considered as the expert-based or crowd sourced. Meanwhile, expert-based fact-checking websites are a list of websites that emerged to allow expert-based fact-checking better serve the public (Brodsky-Caulfield et al., 2021).

In most researches, the process of scrutinizing validity of information falls into the criteria in which it needs to check. Douglas, Maruyama, Semaan and Robertson (2014) found that users looked through the candidate posts, non-candidate posts, replies and images and evaluated them on three main criteria: issue, personality, and community-related information.

In a similar research, Besmano et al (2017) made a list in their research that will help social media users to identify fake news. They introduced the following tips to identify fake news. First, consider the source by double-checking author's sources to know if information is accurate. Lack of evidence or sources from experts may indicate a false story. Second, check the DateCheck when the news/story was published. The date and time that the news was posted can be found on credible news figure sources. Additionally, fake news may contain a date that makes no sense or has been altered. Third, pay attention to unusual formatting. Many false news websites, blogs, articles have mis-spellings, awkward layouts or wrong formats. You better read carefully and look for these signs to know if it is real or fake. Lastly, pay attention to URL and Domain. The URL or domain of a fake news site may be a warning sign. Many false news sites' domains are made up or altered. For example, ABCNEWS.COM (real) ACBNEWS.COM (fake) or ABCNEWS.COM (real) ABCNEWS.COM.CO (fake). The criteria would help to control the spread of fake news even if memes and propaganda want to spread it to the public. It will help the FB users to be scientific in their reactions after their exposure to the vast social media information.

A tool that can identify fake news is the Facebook graph, a social search engine that is integrated with Facebook and provides a streamlined method in locating individuals (Hartley & Khuong, 2020). Users do not need to know the name of the person they are searching for, instead, they can search based on other known criteria such as location, occupation and age to find suspicious individuals using this tool (Porumbescu, 2018). Lastly, in verifying the identity of the person behind a blog and in turn, checking if that person has the authority to disseminate such information, one just has to enter the domain name. The whole background of the site, including how long it has been around and who pays for it will appear (Julie, 2016; Agustin et al., 2018).

Another tool is the Google reverse image. Google reverse image is a breeze on a desktop computer (Griffith, 2019). This tool can verify information coming from social media. This is done by simply dragging the image in the search box. It will show where else on the web the photo is being used (McCamy, 2022). The tool helps the users to know whether the photo is true or not.

The process of scrutinizing the information is quite difficult but this is needed in order not to be misled by false information (Zafarani & Zhou, 2018). After validating the information, the user must share them or post them on their timeline.

Lazeretal (2018) has emphasized the importance of business models adopted by social media sites to address fake news, which suggests shifting the emphasis from maximizing the use of re-engagement to that on increasing information quality using self-or government regulations.

In addition to formulating policies and regulations, efficiently blocking and mitigating the spread of fake news also requires technical innovations and developments. Technically, a fake news intervention strategy can be based on network structure, which has been discussed in Shuetal (2018), or based on users. When intervening based on network structure, one aims to stop fake news from spreading by blocking its propagation paths, which relies on analyzing the network structure of its propagations and predicting how fake news is going to further spread (West, 2017). Naive users should be assisted to improve their ability to distinguish fake news.

Youths are motivated to use Facebook because they can interact with friends and share quality and accurate information with people. Correa, Hinsley, and de Zúñiga (2017), emphasized that the higher the speed and quality of information is, the higher possibility to be politically engaged with other issues and people. On the other hand, Bene (2017) discussed that political posting and sharing are strongly influenced by the dissatisfaction with democracy, and, accordingly, those who are regularly informed about politics from Facebook also perceive the working of democracy negatively. According to BBC (2021)satisfaction with democracy was negatively affected by no other media, only Facebook. Correa, Hinsley and Zúñiga (2018) also added that the content of information speed and its authenticity will determine its acceptability and applicability to people who are already active and could eventually influence people's opinions and views. Similarly, Young and Quan-Haase (2017) argued that the nature and quality of information are positively related to the large amount of information an individual receives which may satisfy his communication need and propel the person to act or react.

Social political issues are very rampant in social media. Reactions of the viewers do not only depend on their own opinions but are also affected by other people's opinions whether positive or negative (Dehart & Yang, 2016). Some respond to others' posts by commenting corrections while others comment in moderation (Apolinar 2018). Some also share a post about a socio-political issue that he agrees or disagrees on he thinks has an impact on society (Masiha et al., 2018). In these ways, they are responding to the socio-political issues posted.

Mondal (2014) identified nine factors influencing political participation such as: psychological or cognitive traits, modernization and urbanization, modes of participation, modes of participation, voting, campaign activities, and cooperative activity.

In Facebook, voters' participation is influenced in any of these identified nine factors (De Vera III, Inocian, Salvador & Viyar, 2017). Voters in urban areas likely cast their votes on political candidates whose political parties have more online advertisements in a democratic social and political environment (Bowyer & Kayne, 2018).

During campaign activities such as in presidential debates, voters follow the candidates' political convictions, arguments, and political plans (Dehart & Yang, 2016). These voters can click their likes, dislikes, and comments; they can upload their videos and photos during the actual campaigns, which influence their friends either to support or not to support their respective candidates (Keating & Melis, 2017).

The social environment includes the elements like education, occupation, income, age, sex, race, and ethnicity. The more educated are better able to transmit their political interest and knowledge to others (Persson, 2013). In this respect, educational institutions serve as the basic ground in the development of articulateness and skills of political participation through schools (Habibi & Kusdarini, 2021). The common responses we get from these people are often neutral because they dissect the pros and cons of socio-political issues (Persson, 2013). Since their environment affects them, both their insights and others meet at the middle point.

Difference between Generation Y and Z in terms of their Access and Responses to Electoral Issues and Electoral Profiles

The concept of Uses and Gratification theory can best explain this part. It helps in identifying why people of

different ages use media as a source of information. In this study, the researcher would like to determine the extent of usage, access and response of the youth involving Gen Z and Generation Y about electoral profiles and issues.

Gen Z. Gen Z is defined as newest generation to be named and was born between 1995 and 2015 who are currently aging between 4-24 years old or millennials were born between 1980 and 1994 currently aging between 25 -39 years old (Kasasa, 2019).

Igielnik, Graf and Parker (2019) found Generation Z overall looks very like millennials that is, more liberal than previous generations when it comes to many political and social issues. They are both more likely to agree that humans cause climate change, blacks are treated less fairly than whites and government should be more activist and work harder to solve problems (Biswas, 2021).

Generation Z is moving toward adulthood with a liberal set of attitudes and an openness to emerging social trends. Generation Z and millennial respondents were more apt than their elders to support interracial and same-sex marriage (Dimock, 2019). About a third of Gen Z said they personally know someone who uses gender-neutral pronouns, compared to a fourth of millennials. Gen Z respondents were also the most likely to think information forms should offer more choices than "man" or "woman" to designate (Norwood,2020).

Generation Z are determined to be highly connected, living in an era of high-tech communication, technology-driven lifestyles and prolific use of social media (Arora,2019).

According to the Institute for Emerging Issues (2012), Gen Z is the most ethnically diverse and technologically sophisticated generation. Gen Z has an informal, individual and very straight way of communicating and social media is a vital part of their lives. They are a Do-it-yourself generation. In the study conducted by Dan Schawbel (2014), Gen Z tend to be more entrepreneurial, trustworthy, tolerant and less motivated by money than Gen Y.

They are more realistic about their work expectation and more positive about the future. Based on the findings of Generational White Paper (2011), Gen Z tends to be more impatient, instant minded, lacking the ambitions of previous generations, have acquired attention deficit disorder with a high dependency on the technology and a very less attention span, individualistic, self-directed, more demanding acquisitive and materialistic.

Mihelich (2013) describes that the Gen Z are very much concerned with environmental issues, very conscious of looming shortages and water shortages which indicates that they have a high sense of responsibility towards the natural resources. In addition, Slavin (2015) finds the Gen Z wants to be heard irrespective of their young age. Technology is a part of their identity and they are techno savvy but lack problem-solving skills and have not demonstrated the ability to look at a situation, put it in context, analyze it and decide (Cooms,2013). They also appear to be less inclined toward voting and to participating in their communities than earlier generations (Institute for emerging issues, 2015).

Gen Zers are slightly more likely to favor government activism than Millennials, and significantly more likely than older generations (Dan Schawbel,2014).

Generation Y. Generation Y or millennials were born between 1980 and 1994 who are currently aging between 25 -39 years old (Kasasa, 2019).

As to the sources of their information, Facebook is far and away from the most common source for news about government and politics among millennials. They got the information from news outlets like Local TV and social networking sites (Mitchell, Gottfried and Matsa,2015). While generation Z generally relies on the internet and social media to get news but their ability to critically evaluate information on digital platforms is critical in how they view socio-political issues (Malasig, 2019).

When it comes to how the two-generation responded to social issues Parker, Graf and Igielnik (2019) reveal that 70% of the gen z and 67 % of the millennials participated. This means that the Gen Z is more active when it

comes to responding to social issues. It also revealed that Gen Z is more aware on the some of the existing issues in the community than the Millennials. But the gap is slight. The concept used in identifying youth age bracket is the definition of African youth charter that youth are those aging 15 to 35 years old (UNESCO,2022). This definition is accepted by the United Nations Secretariat council.

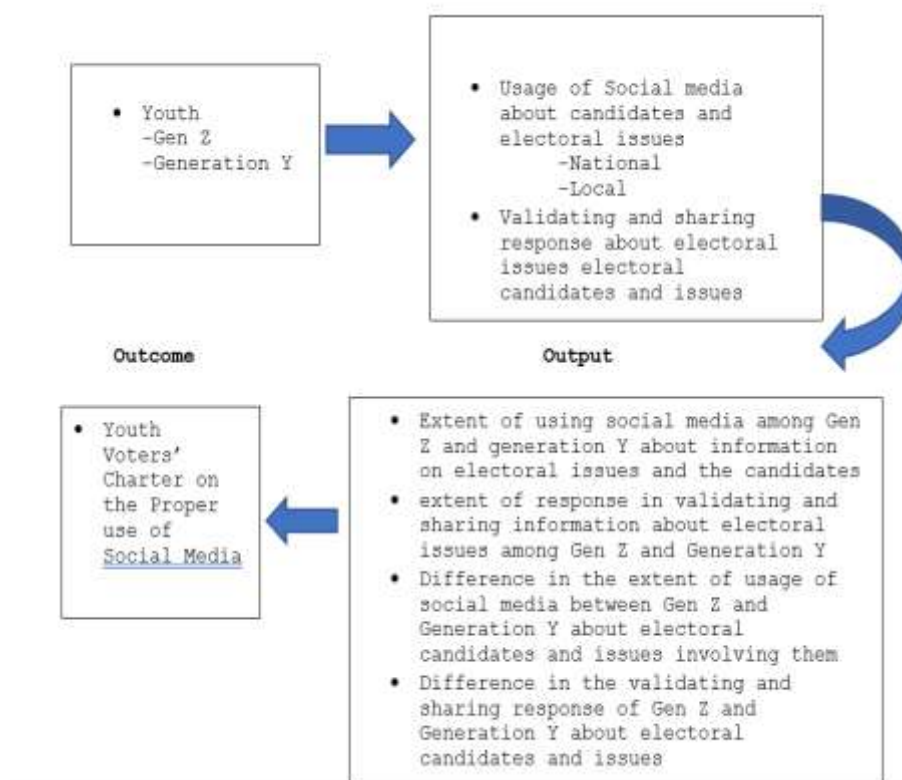
Considering the definition made across Europe by Perovic (2016) youth is marked with the important life changes, a milestone in education to job market transition, maintaining residential independence from the parental home, from being financially dependent to managing its own money, from being a son/daughter to raising the ones. It is the time of life when one is young, and often means the time between childhood and adulthood (Macmillan Dictionary, 2013).

A key formative characteristic for Gen Y is early and frequent exposure to technology, which has advantages and disadvantages in terms of cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes (Immordino-Yang et al., 2012). For example, they rely heavily on technology for entertainment, to interact with others and even for emotion regulation. Members have experienced long periods of economic prosperity (until the past few years) and a rapid advance in instant communication technologies, social networking, and globalization (Park & Gursoy, 2012). The study gives an example that the oldest “Post-Millennial” members would have been 10 when the iPhone was introduced, whereas many Millennials will still have memories of landlines, touch-tones, and rotary phones (Zachara,2019)

Figure 1 Research Paradigm

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable



Statement of the Problem

The general aim of the study is to assess the utilization of social media in the 2019 local and national elections in Ifugao by the Generation Y and Z. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of the usage of social media in getting information about the candidates and electoral issues among the youth?

2. What extent do the respondents utilize means of validating and sharing information?
3. What is the difference in the extent of usage of social media when compared among the generation?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Generation Z and Y regarding the extent of usage of social media.

What is the difference in the extent of validation and sharing responses when compared to among the generation?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Generation Z and Generation Y regarding the validation and sharing of responses.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This part contains discussions about the research study method, research design, scope and delimitations, data gathering tools and procedures, treatment of data and statistical tools that will be used in the study. It described the manner how the research interest is processed and done.

Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-comparative survey research design using a quantitative approach. The descriptive component was utilized to determine the level of media literacy and political participation among the respondents, while the comparative aspect was used to examine differences between Generation Z and Generation Y voters in terms of their media literacy and political participation. A quantitative survey method was deemed appropriate because it enabled the collection of data from a relatively large number of respondents and facilitated statistical analysis of the relationships and differences among variables.

Descriptive research is commonly used in the social sciences to examine existing conditions, characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of a particular population. It allows researchers to gather information through surveys, observations, and other systematic procedures to describe a phenomenon accurately (Manda, 2018). Comparative research, on the other hand, seeks to identify similarities and differences between two or more groups and draw meaningful conclusions based on these comparisons.

Population and Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Municipality of Lamut, Ifugao, one of the eleven municipalities of the province. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2015 Census), Lamut has a population of 25,279 and covers a land area of approximately 159.65 square kilometers.

The respondents of the study were registered voters residing in selected barangays of Lamut who participated in the 2019 National and Local Elections and maintained an active Facebook account, as Facebook is the most widely used social media platform in the municipality. The selected barangays were Bimpal, Nayon, Poblacion East, Poblacion West, Panopdopan, Lawig, and Payawan. These barangays were chosen because of their accessibility to the researcher and the availability of internet connectivity, which was relevant to the study's focus on social media use.

The target population consisted of 8,975 registered voters from the selected barangays based on records obtained from the Municipal Election Office of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC)–Lamut.

Participants and Sample Size

The study initially targeted 400 respondents, a sample size determined using Slovin's Formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where:

- n = sample size
- N = total population (8,975)
- e = margin of error (5%)

Using this formula, a sample size of approximately 400 respondents was obtained. However, upon data screening and validation, 30 questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses and failure to answer a substantial portion of the survey instrument. Consequently, the final sample consisted of 370 valid respondents, representing 92.5% of the targeted sample size.

The respondents were classified into two generational groups:

- Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012), who were eligible voters during the period covered by the study.
- Generation Y or Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996).

Demographic information collected from the respondents included age, sex, educational attainment, civil status, barangay of residence, frequency of social media use, and voting participation during the 2019 elections. These demographic variables were utilized to provide a comprehensive profile of the participants and support comparative analysis between generational groups.

Sampling Technique

The study utilized purposive sampling to identify respondents who met the specific inclusion criteria established by the researcher. To qualify for participation, respondents had to:

1. Be registered voters residing in the selected barangays of Lamut, Ifugao;
2. Have participated in the 2019 National and Local Elections;
3. Belong to either Generation Z or Generation Y age groups;
4. Maintain an active Facebook account; and
5. Voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

A list of registered voters was obtained from the COMELEC-Lamut office to facilitate the identification of potential respondents. The purposive sampling technique was appropriate because the study required participants who possessed specific characteristics directly related to the research objectives, particularly their voting experience and social media usage.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents

Barangay	Data from COMELEC	Distribution Using Slovincs Formula ($n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$)	Invalid	Actual Data Retrieved
Poblacion East	1479	39	7	32
Poblacion West	2137	44	5	39
Bimpal	1007	70	2	68

Nayon	1037	75	2	73
Panopdopan	850	58	3	56
Payawan	1312	72	3	69
Lawig	1135	42	9	33
Total	8975	400	30	370

Data Gathering Tools

The main tool of the study is a research-made questionnaire that specifically measures the extent of the usage of social media in getting information about the candidates and electoral issues and the responses of the respondents in terms of validating and sharing the information of the candidates and electoral issues. The questions are based on the related works of literature that the researcher considered in this research.

The tool has two Likert scales that help in the gathering and interpretation of the data. The first is 4-Always Used; 3- Often Used; 2- Seldom Used; and 1- Never to measure the extent of social media usage in getting the information about the candidates and the electoral issues. The second is 4-Always; 3- Most of the time; 2- Sometimes; and 1- Never to measure the extent of respondents' utilization of means in validating and sharing of information. The data were scored from one to four (1-4) for the two sets, one being the lowest score and four being the highest score. The tool has 20 items for the first set and 10 items for the second set.

The researcher underwent the content validity and reliability process. The content validity was verified by experts, Mr. Manuel Malingan III, DPA and Mr. Michael C. Jamillon, MA PolSci. After content Validity, it was followed by the reliability test that was administered with 30 respondents. The researcher utilized Cronbach Alpha with a reliability score of .87.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher asked permission from her research adviser and was noted by the College Dean before administering her data-gathering tool. Then, the researcher sought permission from the Municipal Mayor for her to float the questionnaires. Upon securing, the researcher sent letters to the Barangay Chairpersons of barangays Lawig, Panopdopan and Poblacion East and Poblacion West for permission and assistance in the administration of the questionnaires. For barangays Payawan, Nayon and Bimpal, the researcher personally administered the survey questionnaires and was assisted by two assistants. The gathering of data in these barangays was administered with follow-up questions by the researcher.

Treatment of Data

The study was analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences. A non-parametric test was used specifically, T-test. Mean and standard deviation was also used in interpreting the data.

The following scales were used to measure the extent of the usage of social media in getting information about the candidates and the electoral issues.

Scale	Verbal Description	Level
3.25-4.00	Always Used	Very High
2.50-3.24	Often Used	High
1.75-2.49	Seldom Used	Low
1.00-1.74	Never	Very Low

The following scales were used to measure the responses of the respondents in terms of validating and sharing about the information of the candidates and electoral issues.

Scale	Verbal Description	Level
3.25-4.00	Always	Very High
2.50-3.24	Most of the time	High
1.75-2.49	Sometimes	Low
1.00-1.74	Never	Very Low

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets data gathered in this study. It discusses the extent of usage of social media among respondents in Lamut Ifugao in validating and sharing information.

Also, it identifies the difference between the extent of the usage of social media in validation and sharing responses among generations.

Extent of Usage of Social Media

The following discussions present the extent of usage of social media by the youth in Lamut, Ifugao.

Table 2 presents the extent of usage of social media of the respondents in getting information about the electoral issues. Results show that the respondents obtained a high extent of social media usage in national electoral issues and local electoral issues with a total mean of 3.02 and 2.77 respectively and with a grand total mean of 2.09.

This could imply that in terms of electoral issues, the respondents often use social media outlets to get information regarding electoral issues in both national and electoral levels. It also reflects that the respondents regularly gain information from the Facebook posts in terms of national electoral issues while they often consider the comments from Facebook in gaining information. In the local electoral issues, the youth often get information from posts and comments of the Facebook page/s that they follow. They habitually share their opinions on Facebook.

Table 2 Extent of the Usage of Social Media in Getting Information about Electoral Issues among the Youth

USAGE OF FACEBOOK	MEAN	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
National Electoral Issues			
1. I know about the existing issues of the West Philippine Sea.	3.24	Always Used	Very High
2. Discussions on the Facebook posts and comment thread help me understand the Federalism issue in the Philippines.	3.06	Often Used	High
3. The post about the plan to change the 1987 Philippine Constitution helps me share my opinion through the comment section.	2.70	Often Used	High
4. I want to know more about the War on Drugs program of the Philippine President so I share links about the issue and ask my FB friends to comment on it.	3.02	Often Used	High
5. I am always updated about the national news like price hike of fuel and other political issues because I subscribed to GMA and ABS-CBN Facebook pages.	3.07	Often Used	High
TOTAL	3.02	Often Used	High

Table 2 continuation...

II. Local Electoral Issues			
1. I learned the reasons behind the failure of the construction of Ifugao General Hospital in Lagawe, Ifugao through Facebook posts of my friends.	2.80	Often Used	High
2. I learned about the landslide issue in Hingyon Ifugao last July from the comments of other people on a Facebook page that I am following.	2.98	Often Used	High
3. I want to learn and share my opinion about the frequent brownouts in our place so I posted it on Facebook to share and gather more information from my friends.	2.49	Seldom Used	Low
4. I learned about the vehicular accident in Hucab, Kiangan and other parts of Ifugao from the public and shared posts of my friends.	2.74	Often Used	High
5. Facebook provides me information that I am not aware of like the suspension of classes issued by the Mayor of LGU Lamut.	2.85	Often Used	High
TOTAL	2.77	Often Used	High
Grand Total:	2.90	Often Used	High

Based on the researchers' interviews, most of the respondents claimed that Facebook is the easiest social networking site where they can engage and gain information. They also said that they are more interested in learning social issues that are linked to political candidates.

El Jay Martin said that “pinpinhod un munbasa panggep hi probleman di election te aya ot pibo mihmihyat. In inshare u ot. Istolyaho pay hi nan kakadwa”. It is translated as “electoral issues are exciting to read and to share because I feel like I’m engaged with politics.” Moreover, Grayvin Buccahan said that “ay mas pinhod u tupay ji probleman basbasahon hi Facebook, isunga kanayuna an munposa ya muncommenta ta atlist ay jakor inila, haha”. Translated as, he likes to read, posts, comments issues posted on Facebook to know more. The result of the survey and interview revealed the accessibility of Facebook since most of the youths are gaining electoral issues in this platform. Personal Communication, August 16 2021).

This statement supported the work of Theocharis and Quintelier (2014), they said that Facebook provides suitability and accessibility for a sufficient number of people, improved access to information, online opportunities for political expression and political action. It is further elucidated by Abdul et al (2017) that the usage of Facebook among the youth has greatly increased recently for online political participation and they are particularly using it to influence social and political change.

In addition, Facebook is greatly trusted by the youths when it comes to political information like electoral issues. Facebook is being used by big TV networks like ABS-CBN and GMA to promote their channels aside from television networks. They created their Facebook page to upload daily news reports.

This activity can create trust from the youth and attract them evenly to consider using Facebook in accessing daily news reports. Youth can now rely on Facebook that will lead them to seek more information from different Facebook pages. Other studies reveal that the youth uses a particular channel of communication because of external and internal factors such as strength, quality, credibility, accessibility, timeliness, organization and arrangement of the information. Thus, the quality of information in Facebook should be considered in order to engage them in online political activities (Weiss,2020).

The result above also revealed a very high level (3.24, Very High) on national electoral issues in the particular statement “I know about the existing issue on the West Philippine Sea from Facebook posts”. This means that the youths are mostly informed about issues in the West Philippine Sea because of Facebook posts which are mostly shared by known Facebook pages. Thus, these will most likely be seen or accessed by millions of people who followed the page. In this case, Facebook algorithm and verified FB pages of notable TV networks with million followers chose to recommend such issue (post) to many people for easy access. This is how issues are circulated in the national and local level.

Facebook post is the most used feature of Facebook (Bowyer & Kayne, 2018). The West Philippine Sea is a crucial national issue that affects most Filipinos.

The ruling of Tribunal Court that favors Philippines arouses commotions in the social media wherein the constituents shares their insights. Diana Banhan from barangay Bimpal said that “penpenhod u atag an munbasa post ji FB friends u hi pesbuk mo nu munbaya tv lalo na nu nan pobleman ji West Philippine sea una maganganasan”. It is translated as “I prefer reading Facebook posts rather than watching TV especially when it involves the issue on West Philippine Sea”. (Personal Communication, August 16 2021) .

Also, an item on the usage of Facebook on the local electoral issues (2.49, low) obtained a low-level result which states, “I wanted to learn and share my opinion about the frequent brownout in our place so I posted it on Facebook to share and gather more information from my friends.”

This result suggests that the youth does not usually gather information from comments and status of FB friends shared on Facebook. The research of Anderson and Jiang (2018) revealed that 34% of the youths preferred to post their emotions and feelings in Facebook. They can post about their bad feelings about brownout but are not actually after the comments of their FB friends. Their motives are to release their sentiments in order to reach the management of IFELCO, the electricity provider of Ifugao Province.

This is further supported by Kylie Linnam as she said that “Mas kayat ku agbasa ti post ti friends ku ken comments da lalo na nu pangep ti brownout manen ta mas napasas ngem agpost ak metlang nu dadduma nu mabadtripak”. It is translated as “I prefer to read Facebook posts of my friends about brownout because it is faster . I also post on my Facebook page if I get frustrated.”. (Personal Communication, August 25, 2020). Thus, Facebook is just a way for the youth to outburst their emotions when they chose to post or share something.

The result in the National Electoral issues is higher than the Local Electoral issues which is 3.02 (mean) and 2.77 (mean) respectively. It is because of the numbers or quantity of Facebook post about national issues uploaded and circulated daily in Television such as GMA, ABS-CBN and other social media outlets. This only means that those who are using Facebook have the higher chance to see content/issues uploaded by FB groups as compared to local electoral issues which only seen by Facebook friends. Some FB groups or page are only followed by the supporters and every post are shown to a limited number of FB users. For example, if Kiko Pangilinan posted something about the increase of salary of laborers, there is a greater chance that it will reach all his million FB followers compared to a Provincial Governor who posted the same but he has a limited FB friend.

In addition, local electoral issues are not usually discussed publicly and in national TV outlets unless it concerns most of the constituents. An example is a local issue on the failed Construction of Ifugao General Hospital in Lagawe, Ifugao (Cabreza, 2013). A certain group in Facebook tried to broadcast the anomalies of the project but only few constituents were informed which are FB page users and followers.

It was only until the Philippine Information Agency- Ifugao (PIA) covered the issue where most are informed because it was even televised in the local TV news. This is supported by Parker Inyat, one of the respondents engaged in Facebook. He said that “wen, agpaysu nga agbasbasaak ti issues magapu facebook ngem nu dadduma ket haan ku unay mabasa lalo na nu dituy ayan tayu ta haan ku met nga friend dagijiay apopost” It is translated as “Yes, I am reading issues posted on Facebook but sometimes I only read post from my friends.”. (Personal Communication, August 25, 2021) The result of this particular chapter is in line with the Uses and Gratification theory which explains that youths use social media to obtain information from social networking sites. The result, thus, presents a picture of how Facebook is influential in the field of politics where one can just click or post and millions of people are informed. It shows that respondents are well-informed of the issue posted in Facebook newsfeeds and FB pages they ‘liked’.

It elucidates the claims of the literature of Theocharis and Quintelier (2014) that Facebook can provide suitability and accessibility for a sufficient number of people, improved access to information, online opportunities for political expression and political action wherein if one clicks then millions of people will be

affected by reading it. The respondents do not only gain information from FB posts but also informed of different ways that Facebook offers such as FB comments, shares, among others.

Furthermore, respondents are not only informed about general issues but also updated with political activities that happened before the election period. These issues might be used against the political candidates. It implies that the respondents are also using Facebook for this matter. Although Facebook provides easy access to information, we cannot deny the fact that it can also be a source of misinformation among the users. Misinformation by definition does not accurately reflect the true state of the world. The term refers to misinformation to information that is initially presented as true but later found to be false (Cook, Ecker & Lewandowsky, 2015).

Thus, Facebook is easily accessed and the respondents utilize its applications well regardless if it provides factual information or not. Moreover, the result shows that respondents mostly use and rely on Facebook in gaining political information. They have a very high reliance in using Facebook as the source of information as they are active users of Facebook. According to Matrina Duntog and Merlyn Kimayong, one of their sources of information is Facebook because they are more comfortable in using it.

They can watch TV news but can easily gain information by accessing Facebook anywhere. The result is also supported by some literature like Mittelstadt, Ternes and Towers (2014) in their research that reveals young adults increasingly using Facebook posts for political matters. Burrus (2010) has agreed that people become more dependent on social networking sites like FB and Twitter. It is to gain the latest information of friends and to maintain a relationship with friends and family. The dependency theory can further explain the reliance of the respondents in using Facebook to gain electoral issues.

The findings reveal that Facebook is a good avenue for a political campaign in terms of politics. Most of the youth are now connected with Facebook and utilized it to gain information like electoral issues. It can also be used not only during the election but also be a medium of information dissemination in schools, universities, communities and provinces.

It will serve as a positive predictor of political participation (Kim & Chen, 2012; Valenzuela et al., 2009). Chowdhury and Saha (2015) argue that youths tend to engage more in online political participation on Facebook that is a significant predictor of other forms of participation. Lastly, Facebook can be a medium to get opinions of constituents in solving a certain issue. However, too much time spent on Facebook can negatively predict online political participation especially if they are only interested in electoral issues.

Table 3 presents the extent of the usage of social media of respondents in getting information about electoral profile of candidates. Results show that respondents obtained low electoral profiles, both at national and local levels with a mean of 2.40 (Low) and 2.29 (Low) respectively and a grand total of 2.24 (Low). This could imply that in terms of electoral profile, the respondents sometimes use social media outlets to acquire information regarding electoral profiles of both national and local levels. It reveals that respondents often get information on Facebook through discussions of FB users specifically if it discuss political parties such as PDP, Liberal and others.

Table 3 Extent of the Usage of Social Media in Getting Information about the Candidate Among the Youth

Usage of Facebook	Mean	Description	Interpretation
A. National Level: Electoral Profile			
1. I know the educational attainment of the candidates under the OTSO Deretso and Hugpong ng Pagbabago regional party through Facebook.	2.49	Seldom Used	Low
2. Discussions on Facebook comments and posts help me understand and be informed about the work experiences of candidates under PDP Laban and other political parties.	2.57	Often Used	High

3. The posts about the platforms of senatorial candidates that I read help me share my opinion through my Facebook status and comments.	2.26	Seldom Used	Low
4. I wanted to know more about the platforms and qualifications of senatorial candidates, so I follow the Facebook pages of PDP Laban, Otso Deretso, GMA, ABS-CBN, and other political parties and candidates to receive updates.	2.37	Seldom Used	Low
5. I shared the links of my favorite political party to ask for more information from my Facebook friends through comments and discussions.	2.30	Seldom Used	Low
Total	2.40	Seldom Used	Low

Table X. Usage of Facebook in Accessing National-Level Electoral Profile Information.

Table 3 continuation...

Usage of Facebook	Mean	Description	Interpretation
Local Level: Electoral Profile			
1. I posted the qualifications and platforms of my candidates for governor and congressman to inform my friends and influence them to vote for them.	2.23	Seldom Used	Low
2. I “liked” the pages of the candidates for Congressman and Governor to be updated about their educational attainment and work experiences.	2.29	Seldom Used	Low
3. I read about the platforms of the candidates for councilor in Lamut from Facebook posts and the comments of my Facebook friends.	2.45	Seldom Used	Low
4. I commented on the posts of my Facebook friends and public posts to know about the list of candidates for councilor in Lamut.	2.24	Seldom Used	Low
5. I read about the platforms of aspiring congressmen while scrolling through my Facebook page.	2.22	Seldom Used	Low
Total	2.29	Seldom Used	Low
Grand Total	2.34	Seldom Used	Low

Table X. Usage of Facebook in Accessing Local-Level Electoral Profile Information.

It also implies that the youth are more interested in electoral issues they received from Facebook than information about the electoral profile of candidates as shown in table 2. Moreover, the result infers that the youth in Ifugao is not interested about the profile of the candidates. Thus, they are more concerned on the issues or accomplishment linked to the political candidate.

This might be because they are knowledgeable already of who the candidates are. Inchunu from barangay Nayon said that “miid hay silbin ni propesyon or adar ni kandidato nu un metlang umbun ya hay ibulsa na ji ingunu na.”. She said that the educational background of the candidates is useless if he will use it to practice corruption.”. (Personal Communication, August, 2021). This is one of the reasons why the youth are not usually interested to know the political profile of the respondents. They are more interested on the accomplishments of the candidate.

On the other hand, the youth has already a knowledge about the candidate because some are incumbent or a known personality in the country and in the province. In this case, they don’t need to read more about them.

Shyler Ann Felipe said that “hindi ko masyadong binabasa ang mga status na lumalabas sa FB ko tungkol sa profile ng mag kandidato dahil kilala ko naman sila halos, gaya ani atty. Eugene Balitang na halos ilang beses ng tumakbo at naging gobernador pa”.

It is translated as “I don’t usually read the status in my FB about the profile of candidates because I have almost a knowledge about them like Atty. Eugene Balitang, who is a former governor and is always filing his candidacy.”. (Personal Communication, August, 25, 2021).

In addition, the youth claimed that reading the profile of candidates is just a waste of time because they have already lost their trust on politics. Although, some are hoping that politics will be better soon, some are saying that they should not waste their time reading or hearing about the profile and platforms of the candidates. It is useless because those who have money will win.

Even if a candidate has a very holistic experience with a distinct professional degree but do not have money, he will not win. This is supported by Noemi Huklap, who said that “pihuu lattay mangabak nu election” translated as “money will still win during election.”. (Personal Communication, August 16, 2021).

However, item 2 in table 3 on the national electoral profile obtained a high level (2.57) which reads as “Discussions on the Facebook comments and posts help me understand and be informed about the work experiences of the candidates under PDP Laban and other political parties”. This explains the characteristics of the youth in Ifugao wherein they are mostly interested in the issues that is link to the candidate. According to Merlyn Kimayong, a respondent from Bimpal, she said that “munbasasaha hi comments ya nan punchickachikahan nan FB friend u Facebook on nainilaha bassit di umatan nan kakandidatu”. She usually considers the discussion on Facebook comments and posts about the engagements of candidates to a certain issue to know at least a little about their background. (Personal Communication, August 22, 2021). This result supported the results in table two in which the respondents are mostly interested in issues posted on Facebook.

Considering the overall result, the research is linked with the Uses and Gratification theory which explains that social media users will utilize media to get information that satisfies them best. Consequently, it reveals that the respondent’s search for electoral information leads them to use Facebook. Furthermore, the result supports the research of Park and Valenzuela (2009) that the youths fulfill their need to express their opinions on political matters through Facebook.

Moreover, these results tell us that the respondents do not entirely rely on Facebook when it comes to electoral profiles. It reveals that they do not use Facebook to get information about the political candidates. They use it in cases where they are not knowledgeable of the candidate. The features of Facebook such as comments, share, likes and others are rarely utilized in getting an electoral profile. It shows that they are more active when it comes to electoral issues as shown in table two than on electoral profile in both the national and local levels. It also disputes the claims of Burrus (2010) that people become more dependent on social networking sites like FB and Twitter to gain the latest information of friends. It entails that this media dependency theory depends on the need of the people.

Thus, they do not rely on their knowledge of electoral profile on Facebook but have other sources. This finding implies that there is a risk when it comes to the political status of the municipality and the province. This is because the respondents do not only focus on qualification of the candidate but also on electoral issues. These issues are just associated with them.

Hence, it is more important to consider their background. It disputes the research of Bode (2012) and Conroy (2012) that Facebook activities can predict positive political participation. It is inherent that Facebook users should know how to properly utilize it to avoid fake news. This serves as an eye-opener that too much exposure to social media can affect political participation. It is always good to engage in civil activities than to waste time on social media that will later destroy the ability to comprehend information. Moreover, a strong program that will encourage the youth to scrutinize candidates prior voting is needed. This might stop the trend in which money plays a vital role in politics. It is believed that youth is the hope of future generation Gupta (2019) so

they must be taught on how to properly utilize social media. This will allow users to gain interest and factual information about the background of the candidate if available.

Extent of Validating and Sharing of Information

The discussion that follows answers problem number two which asks for the extent of the respondents in validating and sharing information which they gained from social networking sites specifically Facebook.

Table 4 shows the responses of the respondents in terms of validating and sharing information about the candidates and electoral issues. The results show that respondents obtained a low score in their validating responses and sharing responses with a total mean of 2.02 and 1.84 respectively. This could mean that respondents sometimes validate and share information about the candidates and electoral issues they got from social media outlets. Looking at the mean where validating response is slightly higher than the sharing response, this indicates that the respondents prefer to validate information than to share it on social media even without validating the issues they are reading from social media.

Table 4 Extent of Validating and Sharing of Information

RESPONSES OF RESPONDENTS	MEAN	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
Validating Responses			
1. I confirm the issues I got from FB with the teachers.	1.98	Sometimes	Low
2. I validate the issues I got through Google reverse image.	1.89	Sometimes	Low
3. I validate the issues I got through Facebook graph.	1.95	Sometimes	Low
4. I look at the credibility of the source of information.	1.99	Sometimes	Low
5. I search through legitimate websites in order to validate the issues and to learn.	2.29	Sometimes	Low
TOTAL	2.02	Sometimes	Low
Sharing Responses			
1. I share the electoral and political issues I get when I am dissatisfied.	1.72	Sometimes	Low
2. I comment on posts when I am satisfied after reading this.	1.76	Sometimes	Low
3. I share the information, platforms, memes and issues I get from FB in order to persuade my FB friends.	1.91	Sometimes	Low
4. I share my thoughts about the issue because I am interested to engage and share my opinion.	2.08	Sometimes	Low
5. I share the link with my comment for me to compare my ideas with others.	1.74	Sometimes	Low
TOTAL	1.84	Sometimes	Low

The result revealed that the act of sharing comes after reading if the youth is disappointed or overwhelmed with the issue. Like what Jennifer said when asked about why she don't validate information from Facebook, she said that "basta binasak ket mayat ket ishare ku ladtan ngem nu madi mas lalo pay nga ishare ku ket uray haan ku a icheck nu agpayso ta masadutak ken awan talaga ti oras ku."

It is translated as "I share if the content is good or bad. I don't have time to check if the information is true and one more thing, I'm lazy." (Personal Communication, February 9 2021). This also supported the study of Marwick (2018) which reveals that the decision to share one type of content or information over another may

sometimes be motivated by a need to assert one's own identity or to show affinity with the ideas of others or a shared interest.

In addition to the statement of Jennifer she said that "haan ku nga kitan nu agpayso jiay basbasack ta am-ammuk met jiay nangipost, nu imbaga da nga brown out ket mamatiak ta isu met piman uray haan ku icheck nu adda silaw wennu awan."

It is translated as "I don't need to check if the information is true because I know the person who posted it. If they said that it is brownout then I trust them without checking if there is no electricity." (Personal Communication, February 9, 2021). This shows that the results are low because of lack of time to validate and the respondents can easily trust the person who shared the post or information.

This supported the study of Diz, Jiménez and de Cózar (2020) that trust affects the credibility of information, and that the appearance of newsworthy information ensures that regardless of the nature of the content, this information is more likely to be shared among young people. If a piece of content attracts their attention, they do not hesitate to share it without pausing to assess whether the information is reliable or not. Often, they spread it even knowing that it is not (Incibe & Osi, 2019).

This behavior of the youth can cause spread of fake news or misleading information considering the large number of youths who are engaged in social media or Facebook. This is an issue that should be addressed among the youth especially that we are now facing an era which we rely mostly in the online world. Youth should learn how do simple fact-checking tips and be more critical when it comes to issues that they are getting online. In the past election, many politicians are trying to create platforms and accomplishments that they have and spread it on the different social media platforms including Facebook. Some are not true but people believed and even shared it multiple times.

It is concluded by other researchers that messages containing misinformation tend to spread more quickly within particular groups, but take longer to spread across different group (Diz et.al, 2020). These activities can influence many people especially the decision making of the youth who are registered voters.

It goes with sharing issues wherein the FB users are spreading information just for fun and to inform their Facebook friends. The result shows that youth are sometimes sharing information about issues they are reading. It proves that they share more about themselves. Teens are sharing more information about themselves on social media sites than they did in the past (Beaton et. al, 2013). They usually share about their daily whereabouts, daily activities and others.

This is the reason why they are not engaging or sharing more information related to politics. Another thing is that, they are hesitant when it comes to engaging themselves in politics because they knew that politicians might get back to them if they tried to go against them.

A youth who don't want to be identified shared that "adiya unay munpost ya munshare hinan uggan ja ishare nga madmadin inat han politician hitu awadan tau te tumakuta te inay tigon nan hinaggon u go ya insumbung da ya marigatana man ot an mun odo obo baddang da". It is translated as "he doesn't want to share issues related to a politician in our province because he is afraid that a fellow might see and inform the concerned politician, he might find it difficult when asking help". (Personal Communication, February 9, 2021).

These are some of the reasons why they are not sharing information in Facebook. They share issues that is indirectly concerning the politicians like landslides and other environmental hazards.

The overall result proves the behavior of gen z and y, wherein they are critical when it comes to critically evaluating information depending on socio-political views. It concedes with the result of the study of Malasig (2019) that the youth are likely to validate information depending on their views about the issues. The respondents sometimes use other websites to check the authenticity of information received from social media

outlets. The research of Hu and Sundar (2010) about the validation process of youth reveals that respondents sometimes considers the credibility of information if they don't validate using social media tools.

In terms of sharing the information they got from FB, the result revealed that respondents share their thoughts on Facebook in order to share their ideas to others.

This reveals something about the liberal characteristics of generation z and generation y compared to previous generations. In relation to the literature by Bene (2017) that political posting and sharing are strongly influenced by the dissatisfaction with democracy, the study reveals that the respondents sometimes consider the credibility of information source if they can hardly validate the data using social media tools.

The result also reveals that the respondents share their thoughts on Facebook to share their ideas with others. This reveals something about the liberal characteristics of Generation Z and Generation Y compared to previous generations. In relation to the literature by Bene (2017) on political posting and sharing being strongly influenced by dissatisfaction with democracy, the study reveals that sharing of electoral issues and electoral profile result from dissatisfaction after reading an article. It conforms with the concept of social judgement theory that explains attitudes of FB users in comparing their perception and evaluation of an idea whether it is reasonable or unreasonable.

In some cases, the result reveals that respondents share links of issues with their own comments and reactions from others. The respondents are capable of detecting fake news and can easily be persuaded by the information that they are getting from Facebook. This shows one of the characteristics of the youth wherein they are active in social media but tend to fail in validating information. The result also reveals that there is a need for the government to address this situation.

Garreth (2016) suggested that we should turn more of our attention to other explanations and not focus on the information itself. Facebook users should seek for further information to make sure that the data is correct. This will prevent the proliferation of fake news because users make sure that what they are sharing on Facebook is verified. This kind of behavior might lead to a failure of leadership if we relate it to politics.

It supports the claim of Maraña (2018) that there is a democratic decline when society is unable to decipher information manipulation and freedom. It also confirms the result of the preceding table wherein the respondents are more interested in electoral issues than the electoral profile. Thus, they might be choosing the candidates who have no issues linked with them instead of the candidates who have many issues but with exemplary qualifications than their opponents. Validation is a very important skill that anyone should have to master because this can be applied not only in politics but also in every stage of life. It is sad to say that the youth in Ifugao does not really validate issues read because of laziness and trust factors. This might lead to the confusion between factual information versus fake information.

Their inability to check the validity of information is a threat to their political participation and other aspects of their life. Therefore, the government should do something to prevent this trend. In addition, the youth should also create a group that can fact-check the data uploaded in Facebook to prevent misleading information especially during election. In this way, it will help the youth and other generations to choose best candidates during election.

Table 5 presents the difference in the extent of usage of social media and the responses on information about electoral issues when compared between generation Z and Y. It shows that generation Y obtained a higher mean over generation Z in all four dimensions. Test of independent samples reveal that there is no significant difference between generation X and Y on the extent of usage of social media and responses on information about national electoral issues, local electoral issues, electoral profile in both national and local level.

Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. This could mean that generation does not affect the responses of the respondents in terms of the extent of the usage of social media in getting information about candidates and electoral issues. This could imply that the generation does not have any impact with the extent of social media usage about national and local electoral issues and electoral profile of candidates in both national and local levels.

Table 5 Difference on the Extent of Usage of Social Media and the Responses on the Information about Electoral Issues When Compared among the Generation

	Generation	N	Mean	Df	Sig	Remarks
National Electoral Issues	Generation Z	205	2.9580	356	.053	NS
	Generation Y	165	3.0933			
Local Electoral Issues	Generation Z	205	2.7278	336	.16	NS
	Generation Y	165	2.8315			
Electoral Profile National Level	Generation Z	205	2.3854	345	.66	NS
	Generation Y	165	2.4170			
Electoral Profile Local Level	Generation Z	205	2.2507	360	.28	NS
	Generation Y	165	2.3333			

The result highlights the characteristics of the generation Y and generation Z that contribute to the frequency of use and exposure to technology (Immordino-Yang et al., 2012; Arora,2019).

Lastly, the result revealed that gen Z and generation y in Ifugao have the same characteristics in terms of the extent of usage of social media. They are both using Facebook to gather information. It supports the research of Mitchell et. Al, 2015 that gen Z and gen Y rely on social media to gather political issues. Both of the generations use the internet to gather information. However, despite of the fact that Gen Z and generation Y are using the same platform, the percentage of their usage is different.

Gen Z uses Facebook to read some information but is more attracted to use Youtube because it is with videos. Millennials are greatly using Facebook than the Youtube because they are mostly attracted to the content of Facebook posts. This is supported by Denzy, an 18 years old student who said that “ay ususaro ji Facebook ta munbasaha hi upid an post ngem mas ususaro ji Youtube ya Tiktok te mas maganganasana.”. Translated as, Im using facebook to read any updates but I mostly use Youtube and Tiktok because I’m entertained.”. (Personal Communication, February 12, 2021).

In contrast with Jennifer, a 32-year-old who said that “kaykayat ku nga ag basa ti Facebook ta mas mayat ti contentsna ket atleast mabasak met dagijay ibagbaga da talaga, ngem ti Youtube nga buyaik lang ti kayat ku ngem haanak agabayag.”. It is translated as “I love using Facebook because the contents are good and I can read what is it all about. Unlike in Youtube where I can only watch what I like” (Personal Communication, September 16, 2021).

Another reason is that, millennials preferred to read the content than to watch videos from Youtube. They believe that watching from Youtube can take a longer time than just browsing it on Facebook. Davie, a 29-year-old claimed that “makatipida py hi oras nu basaho lang ngem nu buyaho ya mas mabayag ahi maawatan te ingana malpas nan mabuya. Nu basaho ya lopaso ladta depende kinpaspas un munbasa.” It is Translated as “I can save more time in reading contents than watching videos because I have to finish it before I can understand. I do it in my own pace if I read. ”. (Personal Communication, September 16, 2021).

The result suggests that age does not make a difference when it comes to use of social media. With the advent of globalization, we can’t deny the fact that most of us regardless of age are also trying to cope with it. Anybody can use Facebook to read or gather information especially on electoral issue and profile. As long as you can read and write, you can also participate in taking a glimpse on the social media. This is supported by the survey of Matsa, Mitchell and Gottfried (2015) which reveals that the use of Facebook is not measured by age.

It reveals that both generations X and Y get political news from Facebook than from watching television. However, there is a little difference between the Gen Z and generation Y when it comes to access of electoral issues and profile. Gen Z are really updated about political background and electoral issues linked to political candidates by merely reading it from Facebook posts and comments.

Compared to generation Y, they already have a background about political candidates and electoral issues. They are more mature when it comes to politics that is why they can only take a glimpse for any updates using Facebook.

This is supported by Myla who is 18 years of age, she said that “kina agpaysuna manang ya maid ha inila hi kakandidato te maid ha interest un ume makidongol hi nu waday rally da or meeting da. Uray pay nu mun instorya da ya sabali otyan di at atto. Isunga nu pinhod ya munbasaha mo talaga hi Facebook te hidi lang met han nalakan panigan te wada da moy Facebook page di ABS-CBN. Hidiya an munbasa mon a udum ya buyaho na in upload da go Youtube.”.

It is translated as “The truth is I do not know any of the candidates because I am not interested to join their rallies or meetings. Even if they tell stories, it is different from their acts. That is why, it is better to read on Facebook because they have Facebook pages and it is convenient like ABS-CBN. It is where I read and sometimes I watch videos uploaded in youtube.” (Personal Communication, September 21, 2021)

It is further explained by Grace who is 35 years of age when she said that “nu pangep hi politika ya at least an wada ahan tatawwa di inila hi umatan nadan kakandidato te dida dida metlang di tumaray oya uggan u pay donglon hi TV news lalo na nadan national candidates ya nan mang2yari tun nunboblyan tau isunga uray adiya unay munbasa pesbuk ya ininnila mo. Ituwen tawon u ya nunpikatnaha mon bimmotos isunga maid ha rason nga aggge in2ila dida. Nu man mun usara hi pesbuk oya hanan update di basaho talaga.

Umat I engr. Dalipog an timuray hi governor nga ininla mo hiyana te former mayor di Banaue ya uggan u donglon di rally na. Un u lang binasa han udum pay an in inat nad bannawol ya educational attainment na ihan inshare nan pesbuk friend u”.

It is translated as “When it comes to politics, the electorates should be aware of how candidates perform. As for me, I can be informed of what is happening in our locality and the national candidates when I watch TV even if I rarely log in to Facebook. I already voted several times at my age that’s why there’s no reason for me not to know them very well. Whenever I use Facebook, the first thing I will do is to really read updates. Like for example, I know Engr. Dalipog who has been our Governor and former Mayor of Banaue because I often hear about his rallies. I also came to know his educational attainment and achievements in Banaue by reading what was shared on Facebook.” Personal Communication, September 26, 2021).

One more thing is that, Genz are too busy watching and creating content for Tiktok so they lose their interest in using Facebook. The same with millennials, they are already busy achieving their goals, work or house chores. These are different activities but can be summed up into one. It only means that they don’t have a lot of time to spend in Facebook. Considering the statement of Grace and Myla, they can still use Facebook to access the electoral issues and political profiles for updates only because they can be informed using the TV news and the Youtube videos respectively.

This is also supported by the result of the research of by Anderson and Jiang (2018) that youth are already losing their interest to use Facebook, they preferred Youtube, Intragam and others. The findings imply that social media especially Facebook is a very good avenue for political participation especially for Gen Z and Gen Y. Even if the two generations are not 100 percent using the platform to gain information, it is still good because they are both using the platform. They have Facebook account, that only shows that we can further use it for educational purposes and others like disseminating information provided that the contents are factual.

This is a good avenue for the Local Government Units of Ifugao and other institutions like, Dep Ed, Ifugao State University and others to utilize social media especially Facebook in achieving transparency in all their services. Most of the generations are using the application not only for transparency purposes but also for information dissemination. Utilization of Facebook can also be a medium to lessen expenses of the government in most of their community activities like conducting symposia, seminars and trainings because they can just use Facebook to conduct such activities.

Table 6 presents the difference in the extent of response in utilizing means of validating and sharing information when compared between generation Z and Y. It shows that generation Y obtained a higher mean over generation Z in all the four dimensions. Test of independent samples reveals that there is no significant difference between generation X and Y in the extent of utilizing the means of validating and sharing information. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6 Difference on the Extent of Validation and Sharing Responses when Compared between the Generations

Responses	Generation	N	Mean	Df	Sig	Remarks
Validation Response	Generation Z	205	1.9824	334	.21	NS
	Generation Y	165	2.0679			
Sharing Response	Generation Z	205	1.8693	348	.32	NS
	Generation Y	165	1.8097			

This could mean that generation does not affect the respondents in sharing and validating information. Furthermore, this suggests that there is no impact on how they validate and share information regardless of age generation. However, the extent of validating and sharing response of the respondents as shown in Table 4 shows that Gen Z and generation Y sometimes validates and share information that they are getting from Facebook. This is supported by Noemi, 27 years old when asked if what did she usually do when she encountered Facebook post about a political issue or a political back ground of a candidate in the national level, she said that “iverify ku te dakol fake news adwani.” “I will verify it because there are a lot of fake accounts today”. (Personal Communication, September 21, 2021).

She was asked on how she usually verify it and she said “wada nan blue an kay check style na nu verified accounts.” “There is a blue check mark that shows if the accounts are verified”. (Personal Communication, September 21, 2021). She was further asked if how did she verify in the local level because usually their accounts are not verified and she said “local ke ya ireviewk nean nadan posts and comments and mutual friends.” It is translated as “I will review first their posts and comments and mutual friends.”. (Personal Communication, September 21, 2021).

Beverly, a 19-year-old, also said that “achi uggan I check nu immanong ngem nu ihnay aji maawatan ya munjamaga hi mamanang u wennu teachers u”. It is translated as “I’m not usually validating it but if I can’t understand, I will ask it from my sisters or from my teachers”. (Personal Communication, September 21, 2021). In sharing information, she said that “ajiya unay munshare mo nu pangep e hi problema tun province ya uggan u ishare ya munposta pay mismo. Umat hinan brown out ya nan hospital ad lagawe kuma nga na corrupt di budget na”. It is translated as “I’m not usually sharing information however, when it comes to problems encountered in the province, I usually share and even post it on my FB wall such as brown out and corruption issues on the construction of hospital in Lagawe”. (Personal Communication, September 21, 2021).

From their statements, it really shows that the act of validation and sharing activities in Facebook are sometimes done by the Gen Z and generation Y. They can validate information, however, due to lack of time and trust to the one who shared the information, they are not practicing it. This supported the research of Talwar et Al (2020) which stated that instantaneous sharing of news for creating awareness had positive effect on sharing fake news due to lack of time and religiosity. However, authenticating news before sharing had no effect on sharing fake news due to lack of time and religiosity.

In addition, the result also contradicts the research of Guess, Nagler and Tucker (2019) that older people are almost four times more likely to have shared fake news on Facebook than the younger generation. This is because they don’t have more time to validate the issues even if they have the knowledge on how to validate it. This the reason why Noemi said in her previous statement that she usually verifies the information but don’t do it every time due to lack of time.

The findings can be a wake-up call to our leaders and educators to do something in inculcating proper usage of Facebook and validating information received from Facebook. It is good that the two generations are both using

Facebook but if we look at its negative impact, this can be detrimental to the well-being of respondents and on how they participate in political activities considering that everything is accessed and uploaded online. The information circulated should be checked properly to avoid rapid spread of misinformation. Therefore, there is a dire need for the youth to initiate an organization to fact-check all important details circulated online.

This can help improve political participation of younger generation if these measures will be introduced to address issues encountered by FB users. It will negatively affect our political system if they only use FB for contentment and political issues not focusing more on the qualifications of political leaders that are posted on FB. This worsens when users do not try to check if information received are factual. This is supported by the present research of Abellán (2019) that fake news has been identified as a threat to national security for this government.

Overall, this study found out that the respondents obtained a high-level extent of usage of social media in getting information about electoral issues in both national and local level. A low level is obtained in the extent of the usage of social media of respondents in getting information about electoral profile of candidates in both national and local level. Moreover, the respondents obtained a low level in the extent of validating and sharing responses regarding electoral issues and electoral profile of candidate in both national and local level.

In terms of the difference in the extent of usage of social media to gain information among the Gen Z and generation Y, it was found that there is no significant difference. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the validating and sharing response of the respondents of Gen Z and generation Y. These findings imply that the respondents often use social media to gain information about electoral issues but they sometimes use social media to gain information about electoral profile. The respondents sometimes validate and share electoral issues and electoral profile gained from social media which suggests that Gen Z and generation Y seldom validate information before sharing it. In terms of generation, the result infers that generation doesn't have an impact in the extent of usage of social media and in validating and sharing response of the respondents.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations from the data presentation, analysis and interpretation to propose programs enhancing the proper usage of Facebook for political participation.

Conclusions

Based on the major findings, the following conclusions are derived:

1. The youth in the municipality of Lamut has high usage of Facebook in getting information about electoral issues with a grand total mean of 2.09. While there is low usage of Facebook in getting information about electoral candidates with a grand total of 2.24.
2. The youth in the municipality of Lamut has a low level when it comes to their practices in validating and sharing information they received from Facebook with a total mean of 2.02 and 1.84 respectively.
3. The youth in the municipality of Lamut has no identified significant relationship among the generation Y and Z regarding the extent of usage of social media. The youth in the municipality of Lamut has no identified significant relationship among the generation Y and Z regarding validation and sharing of responses.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendation are suggested:

1. The municipality of Lamut shall have a single legitimate Facebook page to enlighten the constituents regarding the electoral profile and electoral issues at the national and local level during election time. Also, an organization from the private and public sector shall be organized to detect, expose disinformation and respond to misinformation.

2. There should be a charter composed of youth in Ifugao. This charter will be named “Ifugao Youth Charter”. This charter will serve addressed the issue on Fake News in the Province and create awareness on social media users.
4. The Municipality in partnership with the Ifugao State University Lamut Campus shall do more researches about the attitude of generation Z and millennials in using social media for political purposes. There should be a team in Ifugao that will monitor the spread of fake news to make sure of the factual information that is spreading in the province. The team will be composed of members from the NGOs and government institutions in the province.
5. A training proposal regarding this research shall be passed after this study is approved to be conducted in at least any barangay from the locale of the study to make a first step in addressing the issue.

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