Social Media Use, Social Media Behavior, Cognitive Biases, and Political Awareness among Student Voters

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Abstract

Nowadays, it is very evident that social media has become part of our lives. Our country shifted from analogue to digital that created a wide space and open more resources for people to receive, gather, and acquire information whether it is politically related or for entertainment purposes. The abundance of online content and the new forms of distribution have enabled the quick propagation of both verified and unverified information, especially in social media. The study on social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases, and political awareness among the one hundred student voters of Laguna State Polytechnic University, San Pablo City campus utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. The data were gathered through a survey using researcher-made questionnaires. The results implied that the participants perceived social media use, social media behavior, and cognitive biases in different ways, such as never-rarely-often while having a positive political awareness. In conclusion, there is a significant relationship between social media use of (social media networking sites and microblogging and social networking service), social media behavior, confirmation bias, and political awareness among student voters.

Keywords: Social Media Use, Social Media Behavior, Cognitive Bias, Political Awareness.

1. Introduction

In today's generation, everything is instant and readily available in the internet. Relevant events took a huge space in digital world; one of which was the election season. In the past, people always rely on what they see on the television. However, as days go by, media has developed. (Opeyemi, 2018), asserts that social media platforms promote political information, particularly during elections. In fact, there were studies that discussed media and its relation to politics, either as an enabling tool for participation or as a means for manipulation, only focusing on forms of media like television and newspaper, which are not as interactive as today's media (Dunsmore, 2008).

There has been a lot of media platforms where people could get information about the candidates they want to vote. Social media gives everyone an equal voice. It can make every single event become trending especially if those involved are politicians. The abundance of online content and the new forms of distribution have enabled the quick propagation of both verified and unverified information, especially in social media (Newman N., 2017). These

platforms gave opportunities to aspirant content creators, media, and significant people around the world. This was an attempt to categorize and characterize how political language affects people's opinions on political candidates, particularly in the recently ended 2022 presidential election. People used the media as their primary source of information about presidential campaigns and as a reference to identify significant and key matters.

The researchers know how important direct political communication is in young citizens' campaign news feeds compared to content from traditional news sources or information from friends or followers. This direct political communication measures the effects of social media used during an election campaign based on voter actions such as creating, sharing, and discussing contents of these platforms such as social media networking sites, microblogging and social networking service and short-form and video-sharing app (Panergayo & Aliazas, 2021). Election campaigns are large events, and the news media have a significant impact on citizen mobilization and decision-making. Regarding direct communication with the young voters and the first-timer voter, political personalities increasingly use different social networking services, sites, microblogging, and short-form video-sharing app. Recent election campaigns were observed as containing many arguments about political issues.

The rise in popularity of social media really does have an impact on political candidates' communication strategies in the Philippines. Digital communication has been the media with the most growth in the last decade, and   allows most engagement, especially political participation. The context of this information does not specify whether it is true, fact-based, or intended to malign the audience. It is crucial that in choosing a candidate, voter should not just depend on what they see in social media but do deeper research about the candidates. Based on data from Commission on Election (COMELEC) in October 2021, it was anticipated that 63 million voters, mostly young people, cast ballots, including 4.5 million first-time voters (aged 18 to 23) and 1.6 million overseas Filipino workers. Given the lingering dangers associated with the COVID-19 epidemic and the potential for further limitations, it is likely that online campaign platforms will influence voters' decisions even more than in previous elections.

In 2018, an executive of a social media networking site (Harbath, 2018), acknowledged the difficulty of preserving election integrity on social media by announcing steps to defend against the assault on knowledge (e.g., addressing misinformation, false amplification, and misrepresentation), safeguarding citizens' safety (e.g., stopping harassment and threats of violence and strengthening account security), and preserving voter turnout (e.g., countering tactics to discourage people from voting). Harbath referred to the Philippines as "patient zero" in what many would later refer to as a fake news pandemic or "infodemic" across social media in a growing number of democracies because of the role that social media had in influencing the 2016 elections there. According to the same article, researchers at the Ateneo Policy Center in Manila have created a potential diagnostic tool to assess fake news vulnerability, especially among young people (aged 18 to 29), who were predicted to make up 24 million voters in the Philippines' May 2022 elections. The policy center has worked with educational institutions, organizations, and student governments from universities and colleges in the top 25 vote-rich cities in the nation as well as in the nation's capital to contribute to this emerging sector.

In an article from (TUQUERO, 2022), according to the findings of a Social Weather Station (SWS), the poll conducted in December 2021 and released on Friday night, February 25, most Filipinos, or 51%, found it challenging to recognize fake news on television, radio, or social media. According to the study, which was conducted from December 12 to December 16, 2021, 48% of Filipinos thought it "simple" to recognize fake news on social media, radio, and television. Mindanao got the highest percentage of people who found it challenging to recognize fake news on television, radio, or social media (54%), followed by Balance Luzon (52%), the Visayas (50%), and Metro Manila (47%, appropriately rounded). Given the situation and different surveys from various networks, the researchers assessed the registered student voters from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus.

This study produced an output where anyone can identify whether student voters were influenced by the rampant circulation of social media political information or not. This study was able to get an idea on how students perceived social media political behavior; if they see text, images, and videos as factors of changing a political stand. Overall, the study showed how the students at Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City campus think and act in relation to political activities in social media.

2. Objectives

Filipinos are known as wide-thinkers and creative in many ways. Social media has turned into one of the country's new sensations. This study was based on the theory of selective exposure of Nathalie Jomini Stroud of Oxford Handbook of Political Communication where it revealed several studies and explanations why selective exposure occurs.

One of its studies stated that selective exposure takes place because it takes less mental effort to process agreeable information than disagreeable information. This theory contends that because selective exposure is simpler for the brain, citizens may engage in it (Ziemke, 1980). Also, information search can be affected by mood and emotion. Particularly, moods can affect information selection in a way that enhances selective exposure when they are unpleasant (Eva Jonas, 2003).

Selective exposure is also influenced by emotions like wrath and fear; in relation to economic information, anger and fear may cause different patterns of exposure. Those emotions have been shown to influence information search, according to Valentino et al. However, they develop this hypothesis by demonstrating that fear promotes more objective search when people anticipate being asked to justify their opinions as opposed to when they do not (Kim, 2010).

This study aims to determine the social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases and political awareness among student voters. In line with this, the researchers formulated the following questions:

2.1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age and sex?

2.2. How do the respondents perceive social media use, social media behavior, and cognitive biases in terms of Social Media Use, Social Networking Sites, Microblogging and Social Networking Service, Short-form and Video-sharing app?

2.3. How do the respondents perceive political awareness?

2.4. Is there a significant relationship between social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases to respondent's political awareness?

3. Methodology

The study on social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases and political awareness among student voters utilized a Descriptive-correlational research design to find the relationship between variables. It is a type of research design where a researcher seeks to understand what kind of relationships naturally occurring variables have with one another.

The researchers conducted the study on the 2nd semester of Academic Year 2021-2022. The study on social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases, and political awareness among student voters were limited to one hundred (100) registered student voters of Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus of any academic department. The research instrument was divided into five different sections categorized for: the demographic profile of the respondents, social media use (social networking sites, microblogging and social networking service, short-form, and video-sharing app), social media behavior, cognitive biases (confirmation bias, illusory truth effect, source effect and bullshit receptivity) and political awareness.

The study on social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases and political awareness among student voters utilized the following statistical treatment. Simple descriptive statistics like percentage and graph were used to analyze the data regarding demographic profile of the respondents. Mean & Standard Deviation was used to determine the responses of students about social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases and political awareness in the essence of Likert scale for dependent variable. Pearson correlation was used to analyze the significant relationship between variables whereas, this statistical treatment was used to investigate if there were significant relationship between the variable's social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases, and political awareness among one hundred (100) student voters of Laguna State Polytechnic University-San Pablo City Campus in any department.

4. results and Discussion

4.1. Social Media Use

Table 1: Perception of students on social media networking sites

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I use social networking sites for entertainment including political participation.	3.17	0.77	Often
2. I use social networking sites as source of information.	2.84	0.87	Often
3. In using social networking sites I am updated about the political happenings in the country.	3.23	0.66	Often
4. Political-related news are rampant in social networking sites.	3.56	0.57	Always

5. I am using social networking sites to indulge in a political discourse.	2.66	0.95	Often
Overall	**3.09**	**0.76**	**Often**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

Table 1 indicates how student voters from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus perceived social networking sites. The findings on different indicators regarding social networking sites at least hinted that the specified social media channel has an association to students' political awareness.

Looking back at the demographics of this study, it was demonstrated already that aged 20-22 years old were participated in this research. Like this pattern, the greatest number of Facebook users in the Philippines were those aged 18-24 at 20.72 million users. They were followed by those in the 25-34 age group, at 16.35 million users (Kepios, 2017). It is interesting to note stated the Philippines had 67 million active social media users and all of them were Facebook users according to Hootsuite (2018) in his report WeAreSocial. In addition, he also concluded the results that 57% of 67 million social media users in the country were active the most in Facebook.

The students perceived social networking sites as often with an overall mean of 3.09 whereas the lowest mean value was 2.66 where students often use social networking sites to indulge in a political discourse. This mean that the students often use their social networking account in various reasons such as gathering news, source of entertainment, and be updated on the current events in the country. On its analysis, students always perceived that political related news are rampant in social networking sites having the highest mean value of 3.56 and it was due to their involvement in social networking sites.

Table 2: Perception of Students on Microblogging and Social Networking Service

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I use microblogging for expressing my feelings including political insights.	2.50	1.19	Rarely
2. I use microblogging as source of information.	2.46	1.07	Rarely
3. Microblogging makes me updated about politics in the country.	2.62	1.14	Often
4. Political news is always trending in microblogging.	2.99	1.08	Often
5. I am using microblogging to participate in political discussion.	2.20	1.09	Rarely
Overall	**2.55**	**1.11**	**Often**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

Table 2 showed the result of students' perceptions regarding microblogging as an avenue for expression, source of information and online interactions. The overall mean was 2.55 which was classified as Often in the frequency of use.

The one hundred (100) respondents from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus rarely use microblogging in participating political discussion. This indicator has the lowest mean value in the entire microblogging section. It has a similar result to an article from Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies entitled Student Participation in social media on Political Issues Concerning Candidates in 2016 Philippine Presidential Election, the result showed that many college students sometimes or rarely participated in social media on issues to the presidential election. Few students always read articles, watched, and shared videos, participated in social forums, posting opinions that were related to the presidential election in 2016, or campaign or denounce candidates.

Furthermore, the students often perceive that political news are always trending in microblogging. It has the highest mean value of 2.99. The circulation of political information regarding politics in microblogging could be seen or make the audiences has an accidental exposure to certain topic due to algorithm gossip.

According to (Joseph DiGrazia, 2013) strong candidates attract more attention from both supporters and opponents. Specifically, individuals may be more likely to attack or discuss disliked candidates who are perceived as being strong or as having a high likelihood of winning. From this, it was clear that people are making interactions, therefore microblogging users may also encounter political discussion under political news. Overall, students were often updated about political happenings even if the students rarely participate in political discussion.

Although the study showed that students often use microblogging as tool for political participation it was contradicted and proven that Facebook is the most used and accessible social media platforms in the Philippines (Pinky Salvador, 2017). Facebook is much more effective than Twitter at disseminating political news marketing through social media would be an alternative perspective of interfacing with individuals, and yet the most influential applications of social technologies in the global economy are largely untapped (Manyika, et al., 2011).

Table 3: Perception of Students on Short-form and Video-sharing App

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I like seeing content about politics in short-form and video-sharing app.	2.29	1.09	Rarely
2. I use short-form and video-sharing app as source of information.	1.91	0.94	Rarely
3. Short-form and video-sharing app makes me updated about political happenings.	2.16	1.01	Rarely
4. Political content occupies the trending list on short-form and video-sharing app.	2.42	1.04	Rarely
5. I am using short-form and video-sharing app to create political content.	1.43	0.82	Never
Overall	**2.04**	**0.98**	**Rarely**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

In Table 3, Indicator 1 attained the highest mean value of 2.29 and interpreted as rarely. They rarely to like seeing content about politics in short-form and video-sharing app. Moreover, the lowest mean value was 1.43 where students perceived never to the indicator stating, "I am using short-form and video-sharing app to create political content". It only showed that the participants of the study were not into political content and was supported by a claim that TikTok users' primary reason was to use the application for entertainment and past time purposes.

"The respondents also answered that they primarily watch short-form and video-sharing app videos for entertainment and past-time purposes. Some also watch "TikTok" videos to gather information and follow trends."

Although, the findings resulted in the students perceived short-form and video-sharing app rarely see political content, it has a similar pattern to microblogging; that students could still encounter information about politics due to algorithm gossip. (Bishop, 2019) argues that algorithmic chitchat is beneficial as a group tool for knowledge creation. Claims regarding shadow bans, or when platforms reduce the likelihood that users' content will be seen without eliminating it or notifying users, are one example of such algorithmic rumor. In short, false information could spread widely if users were talking about specific topic. Also, TikTok users could use the platform for entertainment and moderation.

According to (Mehra, 2020), he asserted that young consumers spend most of their time on applications that give them entertainment rather than consuming it on mobile applications that convey communication or productivity. Weimann & Masri (2021) shared that TikTok's innovative and fast-moving algorithm proves its appeal to young markets globally as it mainly features short-form videos to create joy and encourage creativity among its users.

This means that emotion brought by entertainment was the reason why the students often use short-form and video-sharing app rather than using it for political activities or participation.

4.2 Social Media Behavior

Table 4: Perception of Students on Social Media Behavior

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I share content that I relate the most in social media.	3.06	0.91	Often
2. I give reactions to the posts that I relate on.	3.48	0.63	Always
3. I give comments on the posts that I am seeing online.	2.44	0.82	Rarely
4. I am participating to political discourse online by means of reacting on the posts or sharing it with my insights on the captions.	2.60	1.05	Often
5. I call out my friends that shares false information online.	2.61	1.04	Often
Overall	**2.84**	**0.89**	**Often**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

Table 4 shows the perception of the students on social media behavior using the different indicators. It resulted in social media behavior having an overall mean value of 2.84 which was classified as "often". The highest mean value was 3.48 where students always give reactions to the post that they relate on. However, it was rarely for them to give comments on the posts that they encounter online. In short, the students at the Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus give reactions to post rather than commenting on it.

The findings show that the behavior of the students was continuous even if the information they see online does not add learning or triggers their preferences. This result has a similar pattern to the research evidence suggested that affective forecasting error might explain the condition where users continue to use social media despite imbuing little meaning to the activity and experience mood declines.

In line with this was the observation of the researchers on a positive trend social media usage in the Philippines as the physical limitations brought on by the Covid-19 outbreak, could project that the social media users or "netizens" in the country will rely on the information online that could lead to different interaction.

The recent Presidential Election was one of the hottest issues where Filipinos mostly involved. In fact, according to an article of "The Diplomat" Facebook and Instagram purged millions of posts during the 2022 Philippine Election. It was in the reason of hate speech and disinformation.

"The social media networks Facebook and Instagram removed more than 6 million posts from Filipino users in the lead-up to the country's election in May, for breaching their content guidelines, according to the networks' parent company Meta" (Strangio, Facebook, Instagram Purged Millions of Posts During Philippine Election, 2022).

Contrary with the results, recent studies and polls point out that more Filipinos are now more than ever connected with these apps, spend more time with them than before, and use them to get political information and possibly cues for their voting behavior, unwarranted, unregulated, and downright unethical uses of social media present critical perils to electoral integrity in the Philippines (Arungay, 2022).

The happenings in the country's latest Presidential Election, resulted to endless political discussion from netizens arguing what could the government have done to prevent significant issues in the country.

Additionally, people on social media are calling out the government to be more proactive as they can and be for the people that causes a lot of interaction from the supporters of the administration. One of the frequent hashtags was the "#nasaanangpangulo", it was first used during the presidency of Former President Rodrigo Duterte and topped the trending list when "Typhoon Paeng" struck the country.

4.3. Cognitive Biases

Table 5: Perception of Students on Confirmation Bias

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I believe that all politicians are corrupt.	2.35	0.87	Rarely
2. Corruption in the government is unstoppable.	2.82	1.02	Often
3. I think that women cannot lead a country.	1.23	0.62	Never
4. I believe that rallyist are part of the rebel group in the country.	1.70	0.83	Never
5. Electing the son/daughter of a former President will make the country in good terms.	1.88	0.88	Rarely
Overall	**2.00**	**0.84**	**Rarely**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

In Table 5, the results were interpreted based on how the students perceived cognitive biases in terms of confirmation bias through its indicators. It resulted in a confirmation of having an overall mean of 2.00 which was interpreted as rarely. The findings on confirmation bias demonstrated the highest mean value of 2.82 where the respondents often believe that corruption in the government is unstoppable. This was quite like the findings of Global Corruption Barometer Asia 2020 that showed 86 % of the Philippine Respondents believed that corruption in government is a big problem. At the same time, 82% of Philippine respondents believed that their anti-corruption agency is doing well in tackling corruption (Ibanez, 2020).

On the other hand, participants never thought that women cannot lead a country which has a mean value of 1.23. According to an article from Policy Notes entitled Filipino women in leadership: Government and industry, it is not because the voting public is not inclined to vote for women. Instead, few women are entering electoral politics (STUDIES, 2017). In addition, the same article cited the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) (2017) that women had comprised only 17 percent of the national and local candidates from 2004 to 2016 (Table 1). About the same proportion won the elections, wherein women currently hold roughly one in every five (21%) national and local elective positions. Clearly, not enough women run for office.

Some reports also say that students think that a women can lead a country. The recent national election has been the evidence of Filipinos thinking that a woman can lead a country like the Philippines. According to an article from Manila Bulletin last April 2, 2022 the students preferred the tandem of Leni-Kiko. The report says that University of the Philippines, Far Eastern University, and Ateneo students from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao preferred a woman to lead.

A report from Rappler said that a female Vice President was preferred by the Filipinos. It was based on the survey from octa research last April 2022. This means that the Filipinos do not prejudice a capability to lead based on gender identity.

Table 6: Perception of Students on Illusory Truth Effect

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I believe to that information online that I am seeing every time I open my social media account.	1.89	0.73	Rarely
2. The repetition of news online makes me think that it is factual and credible.	2.03	0.85	Rarely
3. If an information is shared by multiple people from social media makes me think that is correct	1.90	0.87	Rarely
4. I find an information accurate whenever it occurs multiple times in my feeds.	2.07	0.9	Rarely
5. The accuracy of an information online is based on the number of times it hit the trending list.	1.88	0.94	Rarely
Overall	**1.95**	**0.86**	**Rarely**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

Table 6 shows the result on how student perceived illusory truth effect and was discussed. The illusory truth effect was defined as when an individual judges a repeated statement, it is more truthful than a novel statement (Fazio, 2015). The study in terms of illusory truth effect resulted in the participants thinking of repetition of information online as believable. It has an overall mean value of 1.95 which was interpreted as rarely.

In view of this, the highest mean result was 2.07 where participants rarely find the information accurate whenever it occurs multiple times in their news feed. On the other hand, the lowest mean resulted as 1.88 where the one hundred (100) students of Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus rarely believe that the accuracy of information online was based on the number of times it hit the trending list. This supports the belief that repetition can even increase the perceived accuracy of plausible but false statements among participants who are subsequently able to identify the correct answer (Fazio, 2015).

One of the reasons why students believe or see information online in multiple times is because of algorithm of the users and the person they follow (Fideli & Aliazas, 2022). In a study, a writer asserted that our media environment is controlled by a "hyper memetic logic" in which "nearly every important public event sprouts a torrent of memes" (Shifman L., Memes in Digital World: Reconciling with a Conceptual Troublemaker, 2013).

This makes the social media users prone to accidental exposure and may engage to political discussion. In addition, the information they get in this kind of scenarios could make them believe that it is true and based on facts.

The researchers believed that the participants were media literate. They can distinguish false information online. *"Almost 9 out of 10 Filipinos who surf the internet to access their social*

media account are aware of fake news." In an article from Philstar, A Pulse Asia survey was conducted and resulted to "88% of Filipino internet users were aware of fake news online."

Table 7: Perception of Student on Source Effect

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The information from the person I trust is the information I only believe.	2.18	0.89	Rarely
2. I accept information as facts from my parents	2.11	0.84	Rarely
3. I only believe my grandfather/grandmother's version of history as facts.	1.89	0.86	
4. I believe that the information came from my favorite elected official is fact and credible.	1.81	0.88	Rarely
5. I believe that news from my favorite media outlet (ABS- CBN, GMA, TV 5, CNN) is superb and unbiased.	2.65	0.87	Often
Overall	**2.13**	**0.87**	**Rarely**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

In Table 7, The findings have an overall mark of 2.13 where students perceived source effect as rarely. It is by now generally accepted that students were not relying on the information given to them by the elders, friends, and false information/biased news outlets, somehow, it affects their political views. According to (Yanuaria, 2022), social media is an influential factor in Philippine culture. Given how slow and unreliable internet service may be, it's an easy and convenient way to consume content. In that way, students or anyone might believe easily to the information they see without fact-checking the information or the credibility of the source if they feel that the specific person or network is worth their trust.

As per the data, the highest mean value was 2.65 where the students often believe that the news from favorite social media outlet is superb and unbiased. This somehow agreed the study of (Sabigan, 2007) that online news was perceived to be a little bit more credible than television news. Nonetheless, it is to note that these companies, nowadays, use online platform for their scoop and coverages for hot stories in/out of the country. However, despite of how the participants perceived source effect when it comes to their favorite social media outlet the lowest mean value was 1.81 where the students rarely believe that the information came from their favorite elected official is factual and credible where in truth that social media outlet also give space for these personalities to speak and spread information.

In addition, the respondents often believe that their favorite media outlet is superb and unbiased. Despite of the controversies encountered by these media outlets; the participants still trust them. However, trust became subjective from a Filipinos survey by Digital News Report (DNR). In an article from Inquirer,

"Filipinos were more trustful of most news reports from media outlets during the COVID-19 pandemic but became less interested in the news in general".

> *"Trust in media brands also remained relatively stable, according to the gathered data. Overall, the dominant GMA Network leads the pack with a trust score of 74. "Beleaguered" media companies ABS-CBN got 57 and Rappler scored 45"*

Filipinos trust media outlet rather than believing the information they just see online from the sources they do not know.

Table 8: Perception of Students on Bullshit Receptivity

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I use "Bobo" as rebuttal in political discourses online.	1.49	0.88	Never
2. Ad hominem attacks are my strategy whenever my arguments weaken.	1.43	0.69	Never
3. I use inappropriate words if my opponents show documented information that are labeled as facts.	1.43	0.82	Never
4. I poke fun a friend whenever he/she is calling me out about sharing an alleged/labeled as false information online.	1.45	0.74	Never
5. I ask people about their credibility whenever I feel outsmarted.	1.65	0.94	Never
Overall	**1.49**	**0.81**	**Never**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Never; 1.76- 2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.25 Often; 3.26- 4.00 Always

Table 8 shows the student perceived bullshit receptivity as never (1.49). In that case, the highest mean value resulted to 1.65 where the students never asked people about their credibility whenever they feel outsmarted which was different on how we observed the behavior of people online regarding the recent Philippine Presidential Election.

In addition, there were two indicators which both resulted in the lowest mean having a value of 1.43. It pertains to how students deal with the people they had political discussion online. It talks about how and if these participants used ad hominem attack as their strategy when their arguments weaken and use inappropriate words if the opponents show documented information that are labeled as facts. The result was clear that despite of being classified as never, it does not sum up the reality that there were students who rarely used it as a way on dealing people online regarding political matters.

Furthermore, the 100 respondents from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus have a proper netiquette when committing to political discussions. It shows that the use of ad hominem or personal attacks was not practiced by the students of LSPU-SPCC.

Table 9: Students' Political Awareness

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. I am aware that journalism and media broadcasting network are doing their job to deliver an unbiased, factual and relevant news most especially when it comes to politics.	3.24	0.74	Aware
2. According to the article 16 General Provision, section 11, paragraph 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the ownership and management of mass media shall be limited to citizens of the Philippines, or to corporations, cooperatives or associations, wholly-owned and managed by such citizens.	3.00	0.83	Aware
3. I am aware that state-owned news outlet delivers only good about government actions.	2.63	0.81	Aware
4. My knowledge about the three branches of government is superb.	3.06	0.7	Aware
5. I am aware of the check and balances of our government.	2.93	0.86	Aware
6. I know my rights such as suffrage, citizenship and others.	3.44	0.66	Extremely Aware
7. I know that historical issues on politics have a huge role in present happenings in our country.	3.46	0.66	Extremely Aware
8. Political arena in today's generation is a result of constitutional reform in the past due to EDSA People Power 1.	3.09	0.75	Aware
9. The 1987 constitution gives back democracy and supreme power to people.	3.31	0.7	Extremely Aware
10. Right to dissent and freedom of speech must be freely practiced by the people regardless of age and social status.	3.50	0.6	Extremely Aware
Overall	**3.17**	**0.73**	**Aware**

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Not at all aware; 1.76- 2.50 Slightly aware; 2.51-3.25 Aware; 3.26- 4.00 Extremely Aware

In Table 9, the indicators pertain to different factors where the researchers observed without affirmation in any published studies that considered these as socio-political topics in today's generation. It was clear that the participants political awareness has an overall mean of 3.17 which was classified as aware.

In the manner now being indicated or exemplified, the highest mean resulted to 3.50 where the respondents were extremely aware of their right to dissent, and freedom of speech must be freely practiced by the people regardless of their age and social status. This was also affirming the study of (Dioso, 2019) under political issues that the participants were politically aware. It has an overall mean of 3.60 and verbally interpreted as "very high". On the other hand, the lowest mean resulted to 2.63 where it shows that students were aware that the state-owned news outlet delivers only good information about government actions.

The table above also illustrates the level of students' political awareness in terms of journalism, policies, constitution, and other positions in the past years. The participants from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus know journalism's role in society; being its 3rd party and the eyewitness of government actions. This also pertains to the participants' knowledge on the policies, policy making, and fundamentals of the constitution.

4.4. Correlation Between Variables

Table 10: Correlation Between Social Media Use and Political Awareness

Social Media Use	Political Awareness	
	r-value	Interpretation
Social Networking Sites	.384**	Significant
Microblogging	.384**	Significant
Short-form and Video-sharing app	-.119	Not Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result shows that social media use in terms of social networking sites and microblogging has a significant correlation. However, it demonstrated a weak – very weak association. Whereas the two variables that significantly correlated with political awareness have an r-value of .384**. On the other hand, short-form and video-sharing app do not have a significant correlation with political awareness of students from any academic department of Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus.

From this result, social media have significant association with political awareness among registered voters of any academic department in Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus. A similar result was obtained from the studies of social networking websites (SNS) which have a substantial impact on how people learn about politics and society online, especially young people, (Khan, 2015), similar to a study of social media that greatly impacted the results of Nigeria's 2011 elections, (Okoro, 2017). Despite of the association, it contradicted the study of (Kanagavel, 2014), where results showed that young people's decisions to participate in politics and make personal judgments throughout the voting process were heavily influenced by their use of Social Networking Sites. Furthermore, positive r-value for twitter affirmed the study of (S., 2017) found that Twitter use was a positive predictor of knowledge of political issues. This was seen in the recent 2022 Philippine national election.

Based on the data, there were two (2) variables having a significant relationship to political awareness due to several reasons.

•The participants often use social networking sites and microblogging as tools for political discussion. It has been discussed that most Filipino internet users use this kind of platform rather than short-form and video-sharing app. Algorithm gossip was one of the factors that involved them in political discussion online leading to the exposure of political contents whether they wanted it or not.

•The use of short-form and video-sharing app was limited for entertainment purposes as what has been cited on how the respondents perceived this kind of platform.

Table 11: Correlation Between Social Media Behavior and Political Awareness

	Political Awareness	
	r-value	**Interpretation**
Social Media Behavior	.496**	**Significant**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In terms of social media behavior, the key finding was "there is a moderate association of social media behavior with political awareness" in students from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo City Campus. It has an r-value of .496** which has a significant correlation at the 0.01 level. A significant correlation means that social media behavior such as liking, sharing, posting, and commenting add political knowledge to anyone that will have an exposure to the topic. It is clear to note that political information circulating online through students' social media behavior enhances political knowledge. However, it does not mean that the information is correct.

The study is like (Shah, 2017), that political speech, like interpersonal debate, may enable users to pay attention to and reflect on received content and further discuss political ideas with other users, leading to an increase in political knowledge. Sharing news on social media was proven to be a good predictor of structural political knowledge (Beam M. A., 2016). Together, sharing, commenting, and liking political content that has been received on social media may enable users to elaborate on and discuss the information with their network contacts, which may subsequently result in learning about politics.

Evidence about meme is one of the possible reasons raised by (Kim B., 2016). He mentioned in his research, "Memes can turn some of the most trivial moments and gossips about the candidates into central talking points of the campaigns..." So, it follows that memes might be a source of political news and updates on the country's political, economic, and social turmoil. The researchers saw this as source of social media behavior as they noticed that participants often use social networking sites for entertainment including political participation (see Table 1), where they often share content and always give reactions to the posts that they can relate on (see Table 4). In view of this, the researchers concluded that social media behavior affects the political awareness of the participants. It was proven in the recent discussions that the participants often use various social media platforms for entertainment and political discussions.

Table 12: Correlation Between Cognitive Biases and Political Awareness

	Political Awareness	
Cognitive Biases	**r-value**	**Interpretation**
Confirmation Bias	-.276**	Significant
Illusory Truth Effect	-.090	Not Significant
Source Effect	-.013	Not Significant
Bullshit Receptivity	-.096	Not Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 presents the findings on cognitive biases as to its significant relationship with the political awareness of the participants. It shows that only cognitive bias has a significant relationship with political awareness. It has an r-value of -.276**. Consumption of information

will always depend on how people want their social media feeds look like. As cited by (Westerwick, 2019), selective exposure refers to people's choices of media and messages, in particular, "any systematic bias in selected messages that diverges from the composition of accessible messages" (Knobloch-Westerwick, 2015, p. 3). In this study, the researchers found that the participants were rarely to believe different hot issues in Philippine politics (see Table 5) that makes confirmation bias having a significant relationship with political awareness, but in LSPU-SPCC student voters' case, it was only associated as weak at 0.01 correlation level. In short, students believe to information that suits their preferences. On the other hand, the remaining illusory truth effect, source effect, and bullshit receptivity emerged as no significant relationship with political awareness of the respondents.

Based on the data, only confirmation bias has a significant relationship with political awareness. The reason could be because of the selective exposure. The participants belief system is limited to their preferences, and it was discussed on how the students perceived confirmation bias. Using social media as their setting, the participants could decide on what they want to know and not. Technically, this evidence alone could be a concrete proof to conclude that confirmation bias has its significant relationship with political awareness among the one hundred students from Laguna State Polytechnic University San Pablo Campus. On the other hand, the remaining variables of cognitive biases have no significant relationship with political awareness due to the characteristics of the respondents. The data showed that participants were media literate, aware of false information online, and practice proper netiquette.

5. Conclusion

Based on the following findings, it formulated the following conclusions.

This study resulted into the student voters perceived social media use, social media behavior, cognitive biases, and political awareness in different ways. Therefore, the researchers concluded that there was a significant relationship between the variables of social media use in terms of social networking sites and microblogging; social media behavior and confirmation bias and political awareness of 100 students from Laguna State Polytechnic University-San Pablo City Campus, aged 18-25 years old. There is a significant relationship between social media use and political awareness. There is a significant relationship between social media behavior and political awareness. Furthermore, there is no significant relationship between cognitive biases and political awareness.

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