Navigating Electorate Landscape and Building Resilient Digital Ecosystem: Educational Blueprint for UBIAN Student Voters

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Abstract

This study critically examines the transformative role of social media in shaping electoral behavior from different colleges at the University of Batangas against the backdrop of the global disinformation crisis. It interrogates how digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube influence political narratives, propagate misinformation, and drive voter polarization. The research aims to (1) analyze students' perceptions of social media's impact on electoral attitudes, (2) evaluate the persuasive role of influencers and paid political content, and (3) design evidence-based interventions to foster informed civic engagement and digital literacy. The study utilized a rigorous stratified random sampling strategy to capture the full breadth of academic diversity across the university. All colleges were treated as distinct strata reflecting their unique disciplinary orientations. Within each stratum, respondents were randomly selected to ensure proportional representation and minimize sampling bias. Utilizing a descriptive research design complemented by a mixed-methods approach, the study synthesizes quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from focus group discussions to generate a holistic understanding of youth political behavior in digital contexts. Findings reveal that respondents exhibit moderate awareness of influencer impact yet demonstrate high recognition of the polarizing effects of sponsored political advertisements, underscoring both critical consciousness and the susceptibility of digital electorates to strategic messaging. Building on these findings, the study introduces innovative, community-centered interventions including interactive infographics, documentary video, and participatory forum that operationalize digital resilience and responsible engagement. These outputs exemplify a research model that bridges academic inquiry with practical societal impact fostering students' critical thinking, digital literacy, and democratic participation. The study highlights the imperative of integrating educational frameworks with cutting-edge digital strategies to cultivate discerning and civically engaged electorates in the contemporary information age.

Keywords: Educational Research; Electoral Behavior; Digital Resilience; Mixed-Methods Approach; Philippines