

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA LITERACY COMPETENCY AND THE POLITICAL STANCE OF THE STUDENTS IN DAVAO DEL NORTE STATE COLLEGE

Krisseah Marie Hilay

Student, Davao Del Norte State College, Panabo City, Philippines  
[hilay.krisseahmarie@dnsc.edu.ph](mailto:hilay.krisseahmarie@dnsc.edu.ph)

Michelle Laurente

Student, Davao Del Norte State College, Panabo City, Philippines  
[laurente.michelle@dnsc.edu.ph](mailto:laurente.michelle@dnsc.edu.ph)

Jenerica Marquez

Student, Davao Del Norte State College, Panabo City, Philippines  
[marquez.jenericae@dnsc.edu.ph](mailto:marquez.jenericae@dnsc.edu.ph)

Marjorie Orig

Student, Davao Del Norte State College, Panabo City, Philippines  
[orig.marjorie@dnsc.edu.ph](mailto:orig.marjorie@dnsc.edu.ph)

Glendell Jadraque

Faculty, Davao Del Norte State College, Panabo City, Philippines  
[glendell.jadraque@dnsc.edu.ph](mailto:glendell.jadraque@dnsc.edu.ph)

## Abstract

Being critical in today's media environment is crucial to becoming a well-informed citizen. The proliferation of internet hoaxes misleading the people has become rampant. The internet user's duty and responsibility are to conduct a simple scan of the laid information and be accountable for the effects it may cause. As modern platforms such as social media popularize various content, including political posts, literacy in criticizing propaganda should manifest. This research aimed to overlook whether media literacy correlates with peoples' political stances. The questionnaires were split into both variables, providing the media information competency scores and the political perspectives of the students in Davao del Norte State College. The results show that students' media literacy has a mean of 4.2637 with a standard deviation of 0.47603. At the same time, the political stance yields a mean of 4.2978 with a standard deviation of 0.43568. This result proves that both have a weak positive relationship, indicating that media literacy is not the sole factor in one's political engagements.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The recent 2022 Philippine elections opened the discussions of how social media influences voters' choices. The Philippines is not called the world's social media capital for nothing. Giant media platforms are becoming a vital "political machinery" to leverage their network [1]. Learning about media and how it works demands modern society as a requirement for citizenship [2]. Paul Mihailidis, an author of the book *Media Literacy and the Emerging Citizen*, also expresses how media literacy is the path that guides people to participate in civic engagements in the 21st century [3]. However, as media outlets continue to rise, fake

news, cybercrimes, and other illegal activities increase [4]. Our duty as citizens and media users is to be responsible and critical of the information we see and read.

Philippine curriculum integrated Media Information Literacy subject as part of the K-12 program. This course introduces crucial concepts for the digital era we are part of [5]. But studies about the connection between this educational course and improved political engagements remain limited [6]. This research article seeks to prove any relation between the two concepts. Gauging the impact of media literacy on the political leaning of an individual is critical for educators, policymakers, and politicians themselves. Understanding will help them utilize media literacy to empower citizens with accurate and credible information.

Media Literacy is the capability of a citizen to access, analyze, and produce information for a specific outcome [7]. It was traditionally conceived as a set of skills based on critical thinking. It demands a critical understanding of the deeper meanings of media messages [6], and its fundamental objective is necessary autonomy concerning all media [7]. The new digital era dramatically changes the media's position in society and its power in molding public opinion. Media and information literacy at media manipulation and disinformation is an increasing threat. It is a priority to guide the citizens to learn how to identify and access independent information sources, have a critical notion about how media works, and interact with it [8].

Media has played a hugely significant role in the political field as it can make or break them. The media can play up a story in favor or against the politician. People behind the media can portray the politician as some hero, thus, boosting the clan's image [9]. The media is a powerful tool for corporate and state interests. Nonetheless, it helped strengthen civil society [10]. Due to millions of active users that utilize social media apps to express their opinions, the Philippines has been referred to as "The Social Nation of the World." Social media has contributed to political activities in the Philippines, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. With over billions of users around the globe, success is due to significant factors. The ease of access and communication, apps such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have intuitive guides for individuals to create content for others. Another factor of social media apps is disseminating information from certified professionals for research [11].

Whether intended, hoaxes and false news technically deceive or misinform people. Its motivations come differently, which can either influence the minds and views of the people, push a political agenda, utilize for profits, or mainspring confusions [12]. Ellina Hoaxes of Facebook Group is an online community that assists and implements verification and operates the fake news phenomenon in Greece; stated from the evaluation they conducted that 89% of the users believed that fake stories mislead the users. Moreover, 62% of the participants agreed that false news makes users mistrust other true stories, and 2% said that fake news influences the user's political views [13].

Meanwhile, according to the Social Weather Stations survey conducted in December 2021, about 69% of adult Filipinos believe that the problem of fake news in media is profound. A majority of 51% of Filipinos find it difficult to spot fake news on television, radio, or social media. It implies that most people look up to this medium, expecting factual and trustworthy information. One of the leading adverse effects it can give people is where the study found the most common and fast-approaching effect on a population that covers 88% of the result. The negative impact following this can give the name and reputation of the government and sovereignty (50), harmful effect on the image of the political party(44%), and (30%) other negative impacts it can give [14].

According to [15], media literacy greatly influences the political knowledge of an individual, including the youth. In building a democratic state, young Filipinos need to understand and be aware of the political topics that will help them evaluate what democracy stands for [16].

This research study will center on the influence of media literacy on the student's political stance. Specifically, this study aims to investigate and evaluate the relationship between media literacy and the political perspective of the students at Davao del Norte State College. Using an equation, the researchers utilize the Pearson r analysis to show the relationship between media literacy and the students' political stance.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

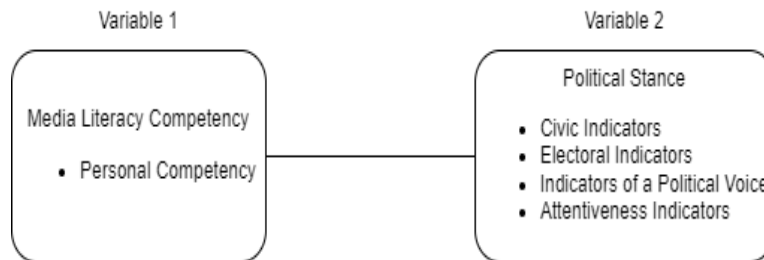


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 shows that the independent variable for this study is the score for the media literacy questionnaires. The dependent variable is the political stance and engagement of the students in media. The researchers will seek the relationship between two variables through linear regression.

The media literacy questionnaire extracts the students' knowledge and understanding regarding using and consuming digital information. The result depicts critical thinking and message-analyzing skills [2].

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research study aims to provide answers to the following research questions:

RQ1. What is the demographic profile of the study participants in terms of?

- 1.1 Sex
- 1.2 Time Spent on social media

RQ2. What is the level of students' media literacy competency in terms of:

- 2.1 Personal Competencies

RQ3. What are the students' political stances in terms of?

- 3.1 Civic Indicators
- 3.2 Electoral Indicators
- 3.3 Indicators of a Political Voice
- 3.4 Attentiveness Indicators

RQ4. Is there a significant difference in the level of students' media literacy competency when grouped according to:

- 4.1 Sex
- 4.2 Time Spent on social media

RQ5. Is there a significant difference in the students' political stance when grouped according to:

- 5.1 Sex
- 5.2 Time Spent on social media

RQ6: Is there a significant relationship between the students' media literacy score and political stance?

## Null Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant difference in the level of students' media literacy competency when grouped according to:

a. Sex

b. time Spent on social media

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the students' political stance when grouped according to:

a. Sex

b. Time Spent on social media

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between Media Literacy and the Political Stance of the Students at Davao del Norte State College

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research study implores to seek the relationship between media literacy scores and the political perspective of the students in Davao del Norte State College. This chapter details the following sections: research design, research locale, study participants, sampling techniques, statistical techniques, data collection procedure, research instrument, and ethical considerations.

### **Research Design**

In this study, the researchers employed a correlational research methodology that allows the researchers to evaluate the relationship between media literacy and the students' political stance at Davao del Norte State College. A correlational study design examines a link between two variables without requiring the researchers to manipulate them. It seeks to learn whether or not there is a positive association. The study's goal is to determine the relationship between the variables of media literacy and the political stand of the students.

### **Research Locale**

The study will be conducted in Davao del Norte State College, Panabo City. The population will be chosen on a non-random basis using Quota Sampling with the students as the participants.

### **Participants of the Study**

The population of interest is the members of a particular group. The researchers get the needed information and apply the result to accomplish the study presented in the objectives [17]. The participants of this correlational research study are the students of Davao del Norte State College who belong to the Institute of Computing, Institute of Aquatic and Applied Sciences, Institute of Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Good Governance, and Institute of Teacher Education. The student participants must be college students currently enrolled for the second semester of 2021–2022. Participants must be active users of any social media platform and be willing to be part of the study.

### **Sampling Technique**

This study will utilize Quota Sampling. It is one of the most widely used and standard non-probability sampling techniques because the population is chosen on a non-random basis. It is also a simple method in some cases. A Quota Sampling was adapted to ensure enough representation of students from the four institutes. It was also advantageous for the researchers to utilize this sampling method since it is less expensive. Using it does not need a sample frame to generate the sample [18].

Moreover, this study will use Quota Sampling to acquire the sample size. The researcher will set a quota of 130 sample participants. It is also essential to state that the researchers decided to get male and female participants in every institute to represent the subset of the population.

### **Statistical Techniques**

The researchers utilized statistical tools to obtain the results according to the defined research questions. An appointed statistician will recommend appropriate mediums and assist the researchers in analyzing the values. The researchers used the following formulas to attain the desired results:

1. Measures of Central Tendency – are used by the researchers to determine the highest value in the collected demographic profiles according to gender and time spent on social media.
2. T-test – is utilized to acknowledge the mean of the two datasets that may have shared features.
3. ANOVA – an inferential formula intended to obtain the results between the means of two variables.
4. Pearson  $r$  – is an operation to calculate the relationship between media literacy scores and political perspective.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

To fulfill the research questions, the researchers collected the samples through an online form as a safe option to survey during this time of the pandemic. Google form was the chosen platform for the survey since students are already acquainted with it. Only participants with DNSC organizational email are allowed to answer the survey. This feature ensures the credibility and integrity of the results. Before sending out the surveys through Davao del Norte State College affiliated Facebook groups and ages, the research adviser checked the appropriateness of the study. The researchers then disperse the online questionnaires, including the ethical considerations. The participants will receive a digitally written assurance for non-disclosure of personal data.

### **Research Instrument**

A general information questionnaire form, developed by the researchers in line with the literature, was utilized for the study's data collection. A survey questionnaire is a flexible research method consisting of questions formulated to gather data from a pre-defined group of respondents [19]. The form includes a single part with six questions that aimed to define the demographic profile of the participants, media literacy competency, and political perspectives.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The researchers obtained required institutional permissions from the campus (Davao del Norte State College) and from its four different institutes where the study is conducted. After getting their consent, the researchers informed the students about the objectives and subject matter of the paper. Participation in the study was based on the proposition of voluntariness. Moreover, the participants' identities are confidential [20].

### **Results and Discussions**

This chapter revolves around the outcome of the research. It discusses the output from various statistical tools to realize the research questions defined. The students from Davao del Norte State College partook in the data collection process for the researchers to know the relationship between media literacy and political stance.

RQ1. What is the demographic profile of the study participants in terms of?

1.1 Sex

1.2 Time Spent on social media

A total of 130 respondents participated in the study. Table 1 shows the demographic profile regarding sex and the time spent on social media.

The first row reflects a frequency of 85 or 65.4% percent of female respondents and 45 frequency or 34.6% of the male population. While the highest recorded hours of the students' time spent on social media is 6-9 hours making up 31.5% of the whole participants. Only 13 people, or 10%, finished 9-12 hours before their screens. The result of this could correlate with the ongoing online classes.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Characteristics (n=130)	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	45	34.6%
	Female	85	65.4%
Time Spent on Social Media	1-3 hours	19	14.6%
	4-6 hours	37	28.5%
	6-9 hours	41	31.5%
	9-12 hours	13	10.0%
	12 hours and above	20	15.4%

RQ2. What is the level of students' media literacy competency in terms of:

## 2.1 Personal Competencies?

Table 2 shows each question's mean and standard deviation for media literacy personal competency.

Table 2. Level of Students' Media Literacy Competency in terms of Personal Competencies

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PC1	130	1.00	5.00	4.4308	.73599
PC2	130	1.00	5.00	4.3769	.69623
PC3	130	1.00	5.00	4.5000	.70711
PC4	130	1.00	5.00	4.3462	.75443
PC5	130	1.00	5.00	4.1308	.80105
PC6	130	1.00	5.00	4.1923	.79822
PC7	130	1.00	5.00	4.1308	.82018
PC8	130	1.00	5.00	4.6538	.74409
PC9	130	1.00	5.00	4.5615	.71532
PC10	130	1.00	5.00	4.1462	.93271
PC11	130	1.00	5.00	4.1692	.87283
PC12	130	1.00	5.00	3.6231	1.16981
PCMean	130	1.00	5.00	4.2718	.55029
Valid N (listwise)	130				

The mean level of students' media literacy competency in personal competencies is 4.718, with a standard deviation of 0.55029. This outcome means that students' media literacy competency in personal

competencies is very high. It could be attributed to the Media Information Literacy subject, a requirement for senior high school students.

RQ3. What are the students' political stances in terms of:

- 3.1 Civic Indicators
- 3.2 Electoral Indicators
- 3.3 Indicators of a Political Voice
- 3.4 Attentiveness Indicators

Table 3 depicts the correlation of the students' political stance according to the indicators for civic, electoral, political voice, and attentiveness.

Table 3. Level of Students' Political Stance, n=130

Indicators	Mean	Standard Deviation
Civic Indicators	3.1962	.80574
Electoral Indicators	2.6577	1.03389
Indicators of a Political Voice	2.8573	.75527
Attentiveness Indicators	3.4154	.65337
<b>Students' Political Stance</b>	3.0316	.62671

The mean level of students' political stance in civic indicators is 3.1962, with a standard deviation of 0.80574. These numbers mean that students' political views regarding civic indicators are very positive. Alongside that are the electoral indicators with a standard deviation of 1.03389, which concludes how positively correlated it is with their political stance. Indicators of a political voice and attentiveness yield a strong positive correlation. Generally, the result of the students' political stance has a mean of 3.0316 and a standard deviation of 0.62671.

RQ4. Is there a significant difference in the level of students' media literacy competency when grouped according to:

- 4.1 Sex
- 4.2 Time Spent on social media

Table 4 explicitly provides the difference between the level of media literacy competency between male and female students.

Table 4. Significant Difference in the Students' Media Literacy Competency when Grouped According to Sex

Test Variables	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.	Decision
(ANOVA)	Male	4.2500	.43845	.107	.744	Accept HO
Level of Students' Media Literacy Competency in terms of sex	Female	4.2833	.60329			
	Total	4.2718	.55029			

Since, p-value  $0.744 > 0.05$  then the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference in students' media literacy competency when grouped according to sex. No Post Hoc Test is necessary.

Table 5. Significant Difference in the Students' Media Literacy Competency when Grouped According to Time Spent on Social Media

Test Variables (ANOVA)	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.	Decision
Level of Students' Media Literacy Competency in terms of Time Spent on Social Media	1-3 hours	4.1491	.48319	.594	.668	Accept HO
	4-6 hours	4.3694	.35494			
	6-9 hours	4.2805	.75410			
	9-12 hours	4.2051	.41053			
	12 hours and above	4.2333	.50408			
Total		4.2718	.55029			

Since, p-value  $0.668 > 0.05$  then we do not reject the null hypothesis. There is no significant difference in students' media literacy competency when grouped according to time spent on social media. No Post Hoc Test is necessary.

RQ5. Is there a significant difference in the students' political stance when grouped according to:

5.1 Sex

5.2 Time Spent on social media

Table 6. Significant Difference in the Students' Political Stance when Grouped According to Sex

Test Variables (ANOVA)	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.	Decision
Students' Political Perspective in terms of Sex	Male	3.1742	.69714	3.636	.059	Accept HO
	Female	2.9561	.57614			
	Total	3.0316	.62671			

Since, p-value  $0.059 > 0.05$  then we do not reject the null hypothesis. There is no significant difference in the students' political stance when grouped according to sex. No Post Hoc Test is necessary.

Table 7. Significant Difference in the Students' Political Stance when Grouped According to Time Spent on Social Media

Test Variables (ANOVA)	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.	Decision
Students' Political Perspective in terms of Time Spent on Social Media	1-3 hours	3.0428	.62415	1.608	.176	Reject HO
	3-6 hours	3.0726	.63737			
	6-9 hours	3.1331	.67312			
	9-12 hours	3.0625	.63130			
	12 hours and above	2.7170	.43799			
	Total	3.0316	.62671			



Since,  $p\text{-value } 0.176 > 0.05$  then we do not reject the null hypothesis. There is no significant difference in the level of the political stance of college students when grouped according to their time spent on social media. No Post Hoc Test is necessary.

RQ6: Is there a significant relationship between the students' media literacy score and political stance?

Table 8. Correlations between Students' Media Literacy Score and Political Stance

Variables	Mean	SD	r-value	p-value
Students' Media Literacy Score	4.2637	0.47603	0.271	0.000
Political Stance	4.2978	0.43568		

Table 8 shows the positive correlation between students' media literacy scores and political stances. Since the  $p\text{-value } 0.000 < 0.05$ , we reject the null hypothesis. There is a significant relationship between students' media literacy scores and political stances. With the  $r\text{-value}$  of 0.271, media literacy and political stance have a weak positive relationship.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study of the relationship between media literacy competency and Davao del Norte State College students' political stance conclusions and recommendations gets discussed in this section. This part will provide thorough insights into the results regarding the defined research questions, including the requests for future researchers.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study to determine the significant relationship between media literacy competency and political stance provided a new insight to ponder. The study concluded that the two variables have a weak positive correlation. It addressed the research questions and arrived at a concrete conclusion.

1. 34.6% of DNSC college students surveyed had been male, while 65.4% had been female. It suggests that almost all respondents spent 6-9 hours per day on social media.
2. Most students were conscious and disciplined in managing their time on social media. Therefore, the level of personal competence was high.
3. The civic engagements of the students yield a strong correlation with their political stance which means they know their duties and participates in the activities as a member of society. The electoral indicators also provided a perfect positive correlation, indicating the acknowledgment of conducted political activities. Both indicators of political voice and attentiveness resulted in a strong correlation. The result of the students' political stance implies that they have an understanding and concern regarding the happenings in the society, political or not.
4. There is no significant difference between male and female students' media literacy competency, which acknowledges that both sexes are adequately or sufficiently close. Having our null hypothesis accepted. The time spent by the students on social media doesn't exhibit a significant difference in the level of their political stance, resulting in our null hypothesis being accepted. The result demonstrates that the student's number or length of time on social media has no significant impact on their attitude and political viewpoint. Each of them has its stand and demeanor that cannot get changed by the time spent on social media.

5. In research question 5, there is no significant difference in the students' political stance when grouped according to sex. Moreover, when grouped according to time spent on social media, the result also proves no significant difference in the students' political stance. These two moderating variables do not affect students' political perspectives.

6. In research question number 6, the r-value of 0.271 shows a weak positive relationship between the students' media literacy scores and political stance. The fragile positive relationship indicates that the students are media literate. It has a positive effect on their political stance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommend creating further understanding between media literacy and political stance among different groups in the society, especially those who have not learned Media Information Literacy. This future reinforcement acknowledges various economic and educational backgrounds that the current study does not scope. MIL is only added to the new curriculum, implying that the older generation may not have received an education about the topic. Additionally, since the study resulted in a weak relationship between the two variables, it would be productive to know other perspectives and factors that affect people's political stances. Understanding how the citizens are influenced to partake in political activities is crucial and beneficial.

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