



Impact of Facebook Likes and Shares on Campaign Posts in Predicting the 2016 Philippine Presidential Election Results

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ABSTRACT

The active usage of the Filipinos in the social media application called Facebook may influence the society, the election campaign and result but hard evidence is scarce. Hence, this study intends to analyze how the engagement of users through ‘likes’ and ‘shares’ on the Facebook campaign posts can impact the outcome of the 2016 Presidential election. The study delved on interpreting how Facebook as a communication channel influenced the election result based on the engagement in likes and shares on the Facebook campaign posts. Only the number of likes and shares of the posts based on the total count on the original post on the candidates’ official Facebook page were analyzed. These were posted during the campaign period declared by the Commission on Elections. The social net importer was used in the data gathering process then the calculation using a statistical tool followed as basis for analysis. The official election result from the COMELEC confirmed that Rodrigo Duterte won in the 2016 Presidential election with a total of 16,601,997 votes. Grace Poe secured the highest number of likes and shares, 13,036,065 likes and 1,511,020 shares, respectively but she only ranked as third in the official election. Results show that the number of likes and shares on the Facebook election campaign posts are not significant in influencing the election result. Future studies in relation to Philippine Presidential election may be conducted and other variables can be considered like the Presidential debate likes and shares, comments, and other Facebook reactions like heart, wow, sad and thankful.

Keywords: Facebook Likes, Facebook Shares, Campaign Posts, 2016 Philippine Presidential Election Results.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet has become an integral part of modern society because people use it for several reasons: information access, entertainment, interpersonal utility, pass time, and convenience (Antonopoulos, Giomelakis, Veglis, Gardikiotis & Dimoulas, 2016). However, only a few people treated the Internet as an important communication medium when it was first introduced in the developed countries (Chadwick and Howard, 2009). It was often dismissed as a passing fad, a minority pursuit too dependent upon specialist forms of technical knowledge, of far less

importance than television and the press, or a simple manifestation of irrational exuberance in the financial market (Chadwick and Howard, 2009, p. 3). Some scholars dismissed this domain of research as seemingly without effect on the traditional evidence of political science such as campaign spending, voter turnout, and public opinion formation (Chadwick and Howard, 2009, p. 3). This, however, is history. The information and communication technologies later became an effective tool during campaigns due to its ability to attract additional supporters for political organizations (Chadwick and Howard, 2009). Technology enables the political and stirs its users in more rapid connections and communities, specifically through the power of telecommunication. (Philippine Political Science Journal, volume 24 p. 4). Furthermore, it has the capacity to deepen the engagement with supporters on a regular basis since it can offer regular and in-depth supporter input through virtual discussion forums, online surveys, e-mail links, blogs and social networks sites such as Facebook (Chadwick and Howard, 2009).

Social Media

The advent of social media through the internet has become a game-changer in the political landscape in terms of communicating to netizens and ensuring success in the election which was apparent during the 2012 presidential election in the United States when Obama maximized the presence of the experts in social outreach, data mining and social media mobilization during his campaign for presidency (West, 1954). Social media is now a platform for a new campaign style and in expressing opinions, reacting and interacting with netizens on certain issues hence it has also influenced election which is a vital in a democratic country like the Philippines (Mishra & Krishnaswani, 2013). In effect, social media has changed the nature of politics as also the way a politician connects with the masses (Mishra & Krishnaswani, 2013, p. 30).

The public currently enjoys the new way of connecting, communicating, and disseminating information through various social media platforms (Kalsnes, 2016). The social media platform allows the users to create, share content and connect with others including the list of friends, followers, fans or circles (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; O'Reilly, 2007). The social media platform can be created as public/semi-private profile (Mossberger and Wu, 2012; Boyd and Ellison, 2007). These networks emerged as part of the Web 2.0 technologies and it enables web-based interaction and collaboration among users that are "inexpensively storable, shareable and participatory" (Mergel 2013, 169; O'Reilly 2005). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Web 2.0 tools evolved which is an advancement from Web 1.0 that could only allow users to view

but cannot create content (Nabatchi & Mergel 2010). Online information sharing has become fast and convenient due to Web 2.0 through various social media platforms. This advancement in technology paved the way to a fast and interactive mode of communication. The process of sharing digital content can be characterized as the fundamental and constitutive activity of Web 2.0 (Antonopoulos, Giomelakis, Veglis, Gardikiotis & Dimoulas, 2016, p. 721). The participation of the people in Web 2.0 includes the processes of distribution and communication (John, 2012).

Social Media and Political Communication

Politicians have recognized the advantage of social media for engagement hence they incorporate it in political communication through various campaigns in mobilizing supporters and convincing undecided voters. Winning elections is the most obvious goal of all political actors so their main objective is to attract media and most importantly social media in order to influence public opinion (Kalsnes, 2016). The social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are effective traffic drivers for mass media and are suitable platforms in reaching readers and political sources.

Social media has been widely used in election campaigns in the Philippines and it is the top country in social media election engagement in Asia-Pacific according to Elizabeth Hernandez, Head of Public Policy for Facebook in the Asia-Pacific. The election is the act or process of choosing someone for a public office by voting. This is the instance of the electorate voting for the candidates for an elective office (Webster, 1828). This is known to be the lifeblood of the country. According to Article 2, Section 11 of the Philippine Constitution, the Philippines is a democratic and republican State. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them. In this type of government, the citizens have the power to elect the government officials. Hence, the Omnibus Election Code, Section 4 clearly talks about the obligation to register and vote. It shall be the obligation of every citizen qualified to vote to register and cast his vote (Sec. 5, 1978 EC).

The active usage of the Filipinos in the social application Facebook may influence the society, the election campaign and result but hard evidence is scarce. Hence, the research gap of this study intends to analyze how the engagement of users through 'likes' and 'shares' on the Facebook campaign posts may impact the outcome of the 2016 Presidential election.

Statement of the Problem

The use of the social media in everyday lives has changed the communication landscape. It is not only conducted online but through the use of highly advanced information and communications technology (ICT). Any post or share made on social media can easily influence friends of friends in obtaining support for a particular cause. The property of the medium had transcended barriers to communication. Unique to other traditional media platforms like radio and television, for instance, the social media has its innate capacity to be more interpersonal and intimate instead of treating the audience as a general public. It becomes a concern if influential groups can touch the lives of vulnerable groups because of the fast and quick responses on posts uploaded online that are liked and shared instantaneously. Election campaigns are no exception. Through the individual FB accounts of the voters, they can express their support to the candidate that they want to vote during the election. This can be apparent in their comments, likes and shares. As a result, the campaign managers, political analysts, and researchers want to delve into such online information in order to know how it will affect the election result. In this relation, this study wants to find out how the Facebook analytics, such as likes and shares, predict the 2016 Philippine presidential result.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to:

1. Identify how Facebook likes on campaign posts impact the election result;
2. Describe how Facebook shares on campaign posts impact the election result.

Significance of the Study

Results of this study could contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the power of the social media in predicting the election result. Also, the study can influence netizens to exercise their right to vote, to vote wisely and in promoting speedy and versatile political communication. As well, the study may be a useful reference for students who want to conduct further research on the effects of social media use of Facebook as predictor of campaign results be it about elections or an advocacy. Moreover, this could serve as basis for future studies on the advancements of social media and its influence on the cognitive, affective, and behavior of Facebook users.

The results of this study may also serve as basis for future studies on how social media influence the public and shape their perceptions. Moreover, the results can also serve as a foundation for future ideas and/or arguments regarding the underlying meaning of the high engagement rate of users on Facebook.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study delved on interpreting how Facebook as a communication channel predicted the election result based on the engagement in likes and shares in the Facebook campaign posts of the Presidential candidates on their Facebook official page. Only the number of likes and shares of the posts based on the total count on the original post on the official Facebook page were analyzed.

The analysis was also limited to the campaign posts on the official Facebook page of the candidates during the campaign period declared by COMELEC which was on February 9, 2016 to May 7, 2016. However the number of posts that were analyzed in this study was not limited to the 89 days of campaign period. Since the number of posts that the Page admin can publish is beyond the researcher's control, there were days that a candidate's FB Page has no post or the FB page admin may have posted something but it's not part of the scope indicated in this paper. Also, there were days that the FB Page admin posted more than 1 post and these posts are suitable data based on the scope of this research. Hence, there were days that there were one or more posts gathered from a single candidate. However, there was an equal time interval in the data presented from February 9, 2016 to May 7, 2016. The researcher checked the candidates' FB Page daily regardless if there was a new post or none.

Moreover, the campaign posts that were analyzed in this study may or may not reflect the candidates' photo, lines quoted from the speech or photos taken during the campaign programs conducted in various locations in the Philippines. However, campaign videos posted on the official page are included such as videos where the presidential candidate endorses his candidate for vice president. Additionally, the reposts of a news or news headline about the presidential candidate on the official Facebook page were included.

The study did not take into account number of comments on each post to avoid biases especially that bashing and exchange of comments among various supporters of the candidates are rampant. Also, this study did not include memes, the campaign posts on the individual Facebook accounts of the supporters, edited photos of their presidential candidates and

uploaded as primary pictures. Also, posts about controversies being faced by the presidential candidates were excluded.

Since age and gender factors can be manipulated by Facebook users, this is one of the limitations of the study. Moreover, there are also Facebook users who do not participate in elections but are registered voters. On the other hand, there are registered voters who do not cast their votes but are active in the social media. There are also registered voters who exercised their right to vote but are inactive or have no Facebook account

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media and Election Campaign

Politicians capitalized on their various campaign strategies and used all forms of media, whether print, radio or television. The paid-for television advertising was one of the most important and most expensive aspects of the campaign in the United States since the 1970s (Chadwik and Howard, 2009). Nowadays, the internet had revolutionized the election campaign strategies and was regarded as the best medium for election campaigns. The main campaign message is “vote for me” or “don’t vote for my opponent”. The campaign websites of home pages provided candidates personal and professional biographies and information about the candidate’s family. More importantly, it also provided information about the policy positions of the candidate, rebuttals of charges from the opposition, which included statements of issue positions speeches and campaign pamphlets. It is vital that one understands the platform of the President (Chadwik and Howard, 2009).

Campaign Period in the Philippines

In the 2016 Philippine presidential election, aspirants also used campaign strategies for a longer campaign period compared to other positions. Section 3, Batas Pambansa Blg. 881, s. 1985, reflects that the election period shall commence ninety days before the day of the election and shall end thirty days thereafter. A presidential candidate or any electoral candidate can use any medium during the campaign period including social media.

Apparently, the new face of campaigning in the Philippines is through the social media (Paurom, Mangosing, Corrales, 2016). A big part of the FB users’ population are of legal age hence politicians can easily reach a big portion of the entire populace who are registered voters in the country through Facebook. More so, there are over 47 million Filipinos who have FB accounts and if majority of these users vote for a certain candidate, it would be a sure win.

Campaigns and the Positive Effect of Social Media

In the study of Homelo and Valenzuela (2012), it was confirmed that Facebook plays a vital role in the success of the election campaign and the election result. In a US national data, there was a significant predictor of both online and offline civic, social capital and political participatory behaviors of the people. The controlled demographic variables like the frequency and size of political discussion networks, seeking information via social network sites (SNS) were considered in the data gathered. The positive result in predicting the electoral participation of voters was based on the informational use of SNS for news. (Homero, Valenzuela, 2012).

Another proof that digital media campaigns can positively affect the election campaign and election result was conducted for the campaigns of Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 (Bimber, 2014). Obama personalized the political communication and the commodification of digital media gave him an edge against other candidates. His campaign strategies included campaign finance strategy, innovation in social media, data analytics and voter mobilization on the ground (Bimber, 2014).

Furthermore, a study conducted by Teehankee (2010) showed that political parties in the Philippines actively used the Internet for election campaigns. The political parties strengthened linkages with the Filipino netizens and voters through information provision, transparency, interactivity and networking via online websites. The content analysis focused on the websites of five mainstream political parties and 12 party list organizations represented in the 14th Congress. This proves that the growth in the use of ICTs in the country played a dynamic role in elections and that these are being used by candidates, campaign manager and political parties that could translate into votes.

Social Media's Minor Influence to the Election

On the contrary, a study conducted in the United Kingdom by Harris and Harrigan (2015) showed that the social media was not a valid indicator of the political decision making of the citizens and in shaping the political debate during the election campaign for the May 2010 election. The researchers gathered from the two constituencies in Hampshire. Unlike the US election, it showed that the UK general election was not an "Internet election" due to the little evidence in the online and offline engagement. The study, however, asserted that if the social media communications become a part of a systematic and long-term online and offline relationship-building strategy, it can add significant value to the local. Unfortunately, this is

not appropriate for short-term applications that aim to influence the result of a particular campaign (Harris & Harrigan, 2015).

Furthermore, a study in analyzing the Facebook “likes” if it can predict the electoral result was conducted during the 2011 Italian Administrative Elections. The researchers created two models in this study. The first model was designed in order to predict the candidates’ vote shares and the second model aimed to forecast the name of the winning candidate. The data were gathered months before the election and it included the amount of Likes received on the Facebook pages of the 229 candidates vying for the mayor offices in the 29 provincial capitals (Giglietto, 2009). Unfortunately, the result showed that there was a non-significant correlation between the respective share of votes and the share of candidate popularity on Facebook. But in 39% of the cases, the most popular candidate on Facebook actually won the contest. The other 43% of the case, the candidate came in second (Giglietto, 2009, p. 5). In areas where more candidates are active in Facebook, the result shows that there was a small margin of error in the races. This led them to the conclusion that the model will become more precise in the future if there will be improvements in the widespread use of Facebook campaign marketing. Though the forecasting models were partially unsuccessful, it can serve as a foundation in developing future models (Giglietto 2009).

Facebook and COMELEC Partnership

Similarly, Facebook has become a very important online platform in the Philippine elections. In 2016, the COMELEC sealed its partnership with Facebook to promote the May 9, 2016 election. COMELEC Chairman Juan Andres Bautista, Facebook executives Katie Harback and Elizabeth Hernandez signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the partnership. The MOA also included an agreement with Facebook to source out questions for COMELEC's debates for presidential and vice- presidential candidates (Viray, 2016). Chairman Bautista said that collaborating with Facebook will enhance their ability to reach out to millions of Filipinos who have made the network site a part of their daily life here and abroad (Crisostomo, 2016).

Presidential Candidates for 2016 Philippine Presidential Election

First on COMELEC’s list of the candidates for 2016 Presidential list was Jejomar Binay from Paco, Manila, the 13th Vice President of the Philippines and who was known for his promise “Ginhawa ang buhay kay Binay” (Life will be better with Binay). He is the candidate of the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA). The second candidate vying for the presidential post was

the feisty and esteemed senator from Iloilo City, Miriam Defensor-Santiago. She was the candidate under the banner of People's Reform Party. Her tagline during her candidacy was “Si Miriam ang sagot” (Miriam is the answer). The third presidential candidate was known for his tagline “Tapang at Malasakit” (Courage and Concern) and for being the Davao City mayor, Rodrigo “Rudy” Duterte. He was running under the banner of Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban). The fourth candidate vying for the presidency was Mary Grace Natividad Poe-Llamanzares or commonly known as Grace Poe. She was the only independent candidate. The fifth presidential candidate was the administration bet Manuel” Mar” Roxas II. He was running under the banner of Liberal Party. His platform was to continue the “Daang Matuwid” (The Straight Path) which serves as the principle in his entire platform.

Conceptual Framework

This case study assumes that FB users’ engagement through “likes and shares” of what they read about the presidential candidates can impact the election result. This means that the number of likes and shares can determine their dependency on FB use. Similarly, the likes and shares can influence societal stability. This is because as they get engaged with FB, they constantly read posts and messages that would affirm their decision about whom to vote. It can be assumed that FB likes and shares as form of social engagement can influence or predict the election result. The tendency of FB users to learn or believe a particular candidate is dependent on how many liked or shared the post of the presidential candidate could have been engaged before the presidential election in 2016. As daily users, they are exposed to various information and messages while surfing the internet. In order to identify if the engagement of Facebook users through ‘likes’ and ‘shares’ can predict the 2016 national presidential election in the Philippines, exploring the role of Facebook in the system, and the Facebook users’ relationship to the new media is vital. There are various theories that are interrelated to this study.

First is the Media System Dependency Theory by Ball-Rokeach and De Fleur. It attempted to explain why there are varying cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects on different people based on their media exposure. This explains the relationship among individuals, institutions, and the media (Riffe, Lacy and Varouhakis, 2008).

The theory states that the more a person depends on media use to gratify his needs, that media plays a vital role in one’s life.

Second is the Agenda Setting Theory which is also known as The Agenda-Setting Function of the Mass Media by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw was put forth in 1972. The theory describes the ability of the news media to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda. When a news article reaches a certain level of prominence, the audience will give more importance to it. This theory also suggests that the media sets the public agenda which means that the media may not exactly tell you what to think but it may tell you what to think about.

Another theory that is also related in this study is the theory of Connectivism. It is known as a new theory for the digital age. It was originally conceptualized by Steven Down and George Siemens. The theory asserts that the starting point for learning occurs when knowledge is actuated through the process of a learner connecting to and feeding information into a learning community. This theory says that knowledge is distributed across an information network and can be stored in a variety of digital formats. (Kop & Hill, 2008, page 2). In the connectivist model, a learning community is described as a node, which is always part of a larger network. Nodes arise out of the connection points that are found on a network. A network is comprised of two or more nodes linked in order to share resources (Kop & Hill, 2008, page 2).

Lastly, is the Uses and Gratifications theory originated in the 1970s and is an alternative to traditional media. The theory points out that the media and their content are sources of influence among other potential sources. Motivated behavior and involvement are central to this study. The motivation is a key component because it influences the selective and active manner in which we participate in the communication (Rubin, 2009, p. 147).

Given these theories, the researcher created a conceptual framework as reflected below.

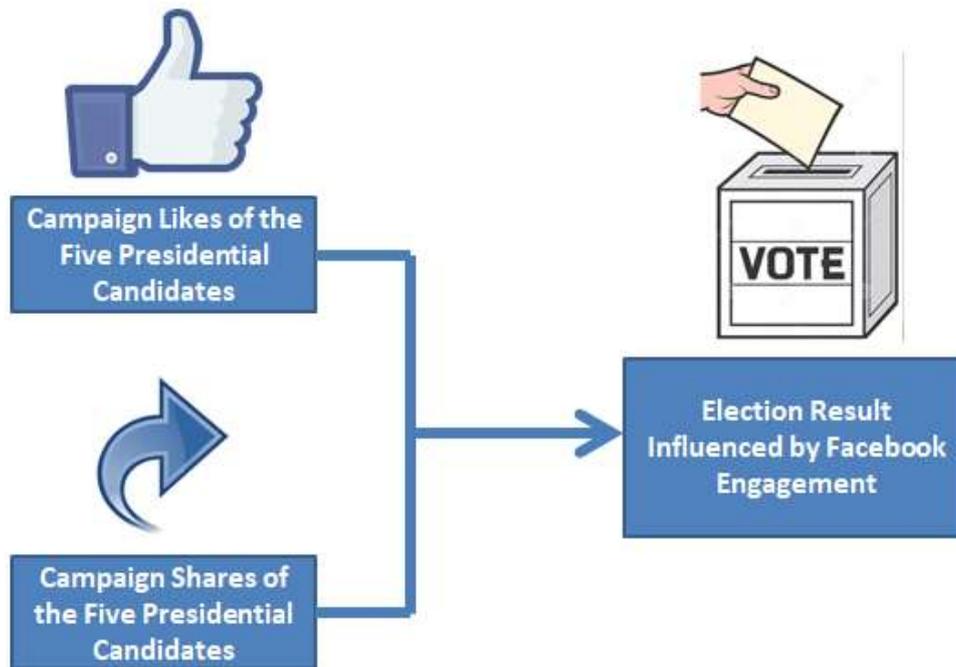


Figure 1. Predictor of Election results in the 2016 Philippine Presidential Election

Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between the campaign post likes and the election result.

H2: There is a significant relationship between the campaign post shares and the election result.

Variables of the Study

The study assumed that engagement reach through likes and shares on the Facebook campaign of the candidates can impact the election result. The independent variable is the 2016 presidential election result while the dependent variables are the FB campaign post likes and FB campaign post shares.

METHODS

Research Design

The case study research design was used to analyze how Facebook likes and shares can impact the 2016 presidential election result. The case in point are the Facebook Pages of the five Philippine presidential candidates in 2016.

Locale of the Study

The data gathering was conducted online via the social media site Facebook.

Data Gathering Procedures

By querying the internal search engine of Facebook with the name and surname of all five candidates, the official Facebook page of Jejomar Binay, Miriam Defensor Santiago, Grace Poe, Mar Roxas, and Rodrigo Duterte showed up. Where more than one page was returned by the query, an attempt was made to identify the official page as reflected in the description box. Through the use of social net importer, the data gathering was made possible. Posts on the Facebook official page were selected during the duration of the campaign period from February 9 to May 7, 2016. The limitations mentioned were taken into consideration by setting the filter in the social net importer. After gathering the data, the calculation using a statistical tool followed as basis for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data from the official Facebook page of the five presidential candidates were gathered then the total number of likes and shares per post were tallied and reflected in a bar graph. The candidate who reached the highest number of engagement based on likes and shares was identified. Then candidates were ranked and the result was compared to the rank of the candidate in the official election result from the COMELEC. Linear regression was used to analyze the relationship of campaign post likes and campaign post shares.

The campaign post likes refer to the total number of likes reflected on the container metric of the original post on the candidates' FB page. Similarly, the campaign post shares refer to the total share count reflected in the counter of the original campaign post in the candidates' FB page.

In this study, predict refers to the quality of being able to forecast or anticipate the Philippine Presidential election result. The model was created through several tests in identifying which model has the best fit using the data gathered. Linear regression analysis aided the researcher to estimate the relationships among the variables.

Below is the regression model to find out which among the independent variables (likes and shares) could better predict the dependent variable, election counts. The formula for the regression analysis is as follows:

$$\text{constant} = \frac{(\sum y)(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)(\sum xy)}{n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2}$$

$$\text{coefficient} = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2}$$

Thus, a regression model would be:

$$\text{Dependent variable} = \text{constant} + \text{coefficient} (\text{independent variable})$$

After the data analysis and testing of the model, the total number of debate likes per candidate and the actual vote count per candidate were plotted. The X axis reflects the total number of debate likes while the Y axis reflects the total number of votes per presidential candidate. Hence, it resulted into five data points. After which, the independent variable that could best predict the dependent variable election result was identified

RESULTS

The focus of this study is to develop and test a predictive model for political communication through the use of Facebook Analytics and determine how Facebook likes and shares predict the 2016 Philippine Presidential Election.

The official election result from the COMELEC confirmed that Rodrigo Duterte won in the 2016 Presidential election with a total of 16,601,997 votes. Grace Poe secured the highest number of likes and shares, 13,036,065 likes and 1,511,020 shares, respectively but she only ranked as third in the official election. Results show that the number of likes and shares on the Facebook election campaign posts are not significant in predicting the election result.

In order to develop and test the predictive model for political communication, the official election result during the 2016 Philippine Presidential result was gathered (See Table 1). The official election result from the COMELEC confirmed that Rodrigo Duterte from the PDP-Laban Party won in the 2016 Presidential election. This vote count is inclusive of the total number votes from the local and national level as well as the votes from the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).

Table 1. Presidential Candidates' names, party and the total number of votes garnered

Name Of Candidate	Party	Total Votes
Duterte, Rodrigo	PDP-Laban	16,601,997
Roxas, Mar	Liberal Party	9,978,175
Poe, Grace	Independent	9,100,991
Binay, Jejomar	UNA	5,416,140
Defensor-Santiago, Miriam	People's Reform Party	1,455,532

With the purpose of identifying who among the five presidential candidates reached the highest number of engagement in Facebook based on the likes and shares, the researcher gathered the data from the official Facebook Page of each candidate (See Figure 2).

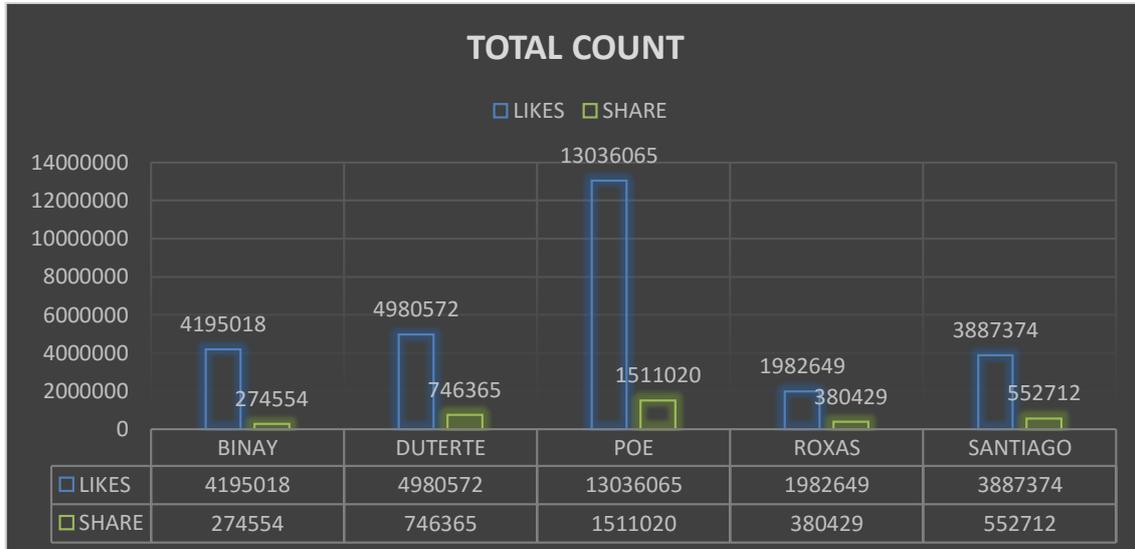


Figure 2. Total likes and shares on the campaign posts of the five candidates

Among the five presidential candidates, Poe secured the highest number of campaign likes and shares, 13,036,065 likes and 1,511,020 shares respectively. While Duterte reached the second spot for the highest number of campaign likes and shares, 4,980,572 likes and 746,365 shares respectively. Binay ranked third in terms of campaign likes that reached up to 4, 195, 018 likes but he got the lowest number of

campaign shares since he only reached 274, 554 campaign posts shares.

Then Santiago was fourth in campaign likes with 3, 887, 374 likes but she improved in terms of campaign shares since was able to reach 552, 712 shares that placed her on the third spot. Lastly, Roxas was on the fifth spot with 1, 982, 649 campaign likes but he was fourth in terms of campaign shares since he was able to reach 380, 429 shares.

Statistical Computation

The result after conducting regression analysis for the different independent variable mentioned above is reflected in Table 2. Among the independent variables, campaign likes and shares, there was no variable that was found significant to “election count”.

Table 2. Result after conducting regression analysis

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	RMSE	R-square	P-value of the Model	Result
Election Count	Likes	6.50E+06	0.0118	0.8622	Insignificant
	Shares	6.30E+06	0.0612	0.6883	Insignificant

DISCUSSION

Among the five presidential candidates, Poe secured the highest number of likes and shares, 13,036,065 likes and 1,511,020 shares, respectively but she only ranked as third in the official election result with a total of 9,100,991 votes. Duterte was in the second spot for the highest number of likes and shares, 4,980,572 likes and 746,365 shares, respectively but he won the election with a landslide win of 16,601,997. This means that popularity does not necessarily imply high influence to the Facebooks users and/or to the voters. However, it is also clear that Duterte has reached an excellent number in the engagement counter for likes and shares which means that he has massive online supporters as well. As discussed earlier, Poe possibly has a team of social media employees who monitor the online platform for their campaign. Also, Poe possibly maximized the Page boost feature in Facebook that resulted in high engagement rate. For Duterte, his personal views regarding the pressing issues in the country contributed to the high number of shares during the debate and/ or campaign. The result of this study is similar to the study that was conducted at the Italian Administrative Elections. The results confirmed that there was no significant correlation between the share of candidate popularity on Facebook and the respective share of votes (Giglietto, 2009). Similarly, the highest count of engagement for Poe in the campaign posts did not pave the way in winning the actual election. Furthermore, Duterte’s high numbers in engagement for the campaign post did not serve as a reliable basis in predicting the election result. As reflected in the result after applying regression analysis, campaign likes and shares have no significant relationship to the election count.

Conclusion

Development Communication students may conduct future studies in relation to Philippine election and test the same model to find out if the same variable can predict the election result.

Recommendation

Future researchers may conduct a study on analyzing the comments on Facebook and the effects of the new Facebook features like heart, wow, sad and thankful in the affective, cognitive and behavior of the respondents. Moreover, future researchers may also study the

effects of cyber trolling and paid advertisements on the political communication on Facebook and the decision-making of the voters.

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