

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION AND ITS INFLUENCE IN SHAPING PERSPECTIVE OF STUDENTS ON SOCIAL ISSUES AMONG GRADE 11 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT BESTLINK COLLEGE OF THE PHILIPPINES

ABSTRACT

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People acquire news and updates through various media channels such as newspapers, television, and the internet. However, these channels have the potential to significantly influence public opinion, particularly on critical topics such as religion, education, and social issues, due to their compelling and pervasive nature. In the digital age, the widespread dissemination of misinformation, biased opinions, and manipulated content has challenged individuals' perceptions and understanding of reality. This study aimed to identify the most commonly used communication channels and examine how these platforms influence public opinion. The research is guided by the Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication, which highlights key components such as the source, message, encoding, decoding, channel, and destination, emphasizing the complexity of communication and interpretation in shaping public discourse. The researchers used a survey questionnaire as the primary data-gathering instrument, employing an exploratory descriptive-quantitative research design. A quota sampling technique was used to select participants, consisting of 133 Grade 11 students. To analyze the collected data, the researchers applied various statistical tools, including frequency and percentage distribution, ranking, mean, and a 4-point Likert scale to interpret the responses accurately. The results revealed that speaking skills played the most significant role in communication among the respondents, with a mean score of 3.48. Among the communication channels, newsletters emerged as the most influential in shaping public opinion, receiving a mean score of 3.44. Overall, the respondents "Strongly Agreed" on the importance of confidence, comprehension, and speaking skills in communication. In terms of communication channels influencing public opinion on social issues, the highest ratings were given to face-to-face communication, newsletters, and social media. Lastly, the most commonly encountered problem in using communication channels to shape public opinion was the spread of misinformation and disinformation. It is essential to provide accurate, evidence-based information—such as content from established news organizations and peer-reviewed scientific journals—to enhance communication and effectively shape public opinion on social issues.

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