

Democracy Resilience and Media Literacy amid the Pandemic: Perspectives of Civic Journalists in the Philippines

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Received Date: 28/10/2021 Accepted Date: 3/12/2021 Published Date: 25/1/2022

Abstract

In today's time of global pandemic, it is difficult to ascertain the information shared by various forms of media. Democratic resilience and media literacy are more important than ever to help audiences of all ages be responsible for the information they receive in various forms of media that may be a factor in their decision-making as media consumers. Thus, this study discusses the perspectives of civic journalists from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao on democracy resilience and media literacy amidst the pandemic. Specifically, this examines the thoughts and insights of community journalists on media literacy and democracy resilience, and its possible relationship. This study uses an exploratory sequential design in which it started with the conduct of a focus group discussion with the selected civic journalists and validated through a survey. Using the mixed method, the study reveals that the public's dependency on media and government in times of crises is not evident in the study. Factors such as fake information and propaganda seem to affect the supposed dependency of the public to media and government during times of crises.

Keywords: *Democracy resilience, media literacy, civic journalists, fake information, media, government*

1.0 Introduction

Democratic stability and resilience have been a challenge during the pandemic. Many countries worldwide, including leading democracies in the recent months have witnessed the imposition of unprecedented restrictions on individual liberties and the democratic sphere [1]. These include freedom of movement (travel restrictions), right to privacy (contact tracing), and military intervention (checkpoints & inspections).

Still, being in a democratic country in the middle of a crisis proves to be an advantage. In a democratic regime, there is a stronger foundation for demands that the government function with transparency, and the understanding that it can be criticized for concealing information.

The ability to criticize the government and to expose its misconduct, which exists in democratic regimes, creates an additional layer of protection for the public and ensures that publicly elected officials

are to promote the public good and not only their personal interest, as is prevalent among authoritarian rulers.

Community newspapers embodying civic journalism are able to provide reliable and updated news from the frontlines about issues, events and problems concerning ordinary people to the public. Moreover, the public gains a source of news they can rely on, covering stories and areas usually left out by the mainstream media. This increases the chances for Filipinos in every region to be reached out, enabling them to make informed choices and to be active members of a democratic society [14]. On these grounds, the researchers opted to make civic journalists as key informants to the study.

A democracy's steadfastness is reflected in part through its "democratic resilience." Societal resilience expresses "the capacity of a system to respond flexibly to a severe disruption or disaster – in accordance with its magnitude and severity of its consequences – in order to contain the damage and the inevitable decline of the system's functionality, and to bounce back rapidly to its normal entity, structure, and conduct." "Democratic resilience" evolves from the concept of societal resilience and seeks to examine the conditions under which democracy can properly deal with disruption or disaster.

A democracy qualifies as resilient if its attributes of recovery, flexibility, adaptation, and innovation are "capable of addressing complex challenges, and weathering and responding to the crises that affect its survival or durability, and its overall quality and performance."

Under the present circumstances, it is important to ask, "How resilient is the Philippine democracy in the present crisis?"

Democracy resilience requires active civic engagement among its citizens. Civic engagement means making a difference in our communities and developing a combination of knowledge, (MIL) skills, values, and motivation needed to enact change. It includes formal and informal activities such as volunteering, voting, lobbying for a politician, community gardening, completing the census, coaching a community sports team, writing to an elected official, researching ballot initiatives, and more.

Meanwhile, active civic engagement requires Media and Information Literacy (MIL). This is because media literacy serves as an empowering means to address threats to democracy.

Developing an empowered population that can identify and avoid misinformation (as well as unjust attempts to invalidate legitimate sources) on its own terms is not only the most effective solution available.

It is also the most democratic way to restore trust in media, fellow citizens, and other institutions. It empowers citizens to make informed choices about what information is worthy of their trust, instead of leaving those decisions to governments or other entities, which can cross a fuzzy line between serving the people and outright censorship - something counter to democratic ideals.

According to Kibore, media literacy is an important factor in promoting democracy [5]. Media literate people know and understand that in a democracy, their freedom of expression is guaranteed by their constitution -- and that the fourth estate - the media should deliver messages to the people without being oppressed or intimidated by the authorities of the respective country or any entities that have the authority to prevent information from the people. Also, media literacy enhances democracy in a strategic way to involve passive to active, from recipient to participant, from consumer to citizen [2].

It is in this premise that the researchers conducted a study on democracy resilience and media literacy amid the pandemic from the perspectives of civic journalists in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the thoughts and insights of community journalists on media literacy and democracy resilience and its possible relationship.

2.0 Literature Review

For the Philippines and other democratic nations worldwide, the pandemic period has caused unprecedented restrictions on individual liberties. To prevent the spread of infection, the rights and liberties of the people were suspended. The situation prompted the Duterte Administration to put up the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF – EID) created through Executive Order No. 168, s. 2014 in pursuance to the constitutional policy enshrined in Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which provides that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

In an article, four main levels of community quarantine measures were imposed by the IATF namely: the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ), the modified enhanced community quarantine (MECQ), the general community quarantine (GCQ), and the modified general community quarantine (MGCQ). Exact measures per level though, were no longer the same over time due to the government revising its guidelines, the strictest of these measures is the ECQ and the most lenient being the MGCQ [6].

The Bayanihan to Heal as One Act which was effective in 2020 also provides measures related to the ECQ, such as: (1) Limitations on all forms of transportation; (2) Work suspensions and the setting up of alternative working arrangements such as teleworking/work from home; Ensuring the supply of food and medical products; (3) Measures against profiteering and hoarding of essential goods; (4) Provision allowing a 30-day grace period for loan and rental payments during the quarantine period; (5) Cancellation of mass gatherings; (6) Closure of non-essential businesses and; (7) 24/7 opening of essential businesses and utilities in 100% operational capacity [10].

When ECQ was reintroduced in March 2021 in the Greater Manila Area (or NCR Plus as designated by the IATF-EID); new set of measures were observed such as: (1) All households are required observe strict home quarantine. (2) Movement outside the place of residence is limited to Authorized Persons Outside Residence (APORs), those accessing essential goods and services, and workers in establishments allowed to operate. (3) People aged 18-years below and above 65, people with comorbidities, and pregnant women are barred from going out their homes except to either obtain essential goods and services or to report for work. (4) Mass gatherings (more than 10 persons outside and non-household members indoors) and face-to-face classes are not allowed in ECQ zones. Religious gatherings and dine-in services are not allowed. Shopping malls are allowed to operate for essential services. (5) Limitations on mass transportation. (6) Essential and priority constructions projects are allowed to resume in accordance with Department of Public Works and Highways guidelines; (7) In addition to front-line services (health and other emergency services) full operations are allowed for certain operations including agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and delivery and courier services of essential goods and (8) Limited operations for certain sectors [3].

During the tension and fear over the pandemic and requisite community quarantine, the government has also forced a major media company off the air, literally closing it down. The regulators at the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) issued a cease-and-desist order that closed down

ABS-CBN Corporation on May 5, promptly executed on the day after the current franchise expired. A democratic government should even be more careful in shutting down a media enterprise because this would violate fundamental rights of free expression and media freedom enshrined in our Constitution [13].

In times of emergency, there is a natural tendency to unite in face of the threat, to close ranks, and to support the government. The resilience of a democracy is reflected in the fact that even in emergencies, freedom to express criticism of the authorities is maintained. Moreover, the ability to express oneself freely and to raise critical voices must also be maintained on the level of public discourse. Caution must also be exercised to avoid a rally-'round-the-flag phenomenon – meaning, the conviction that when we are fighting an enemy, it is preferable not to criticize the government [1].

Now that the Philippines is set to have its National Elections this 2022, political forces are already butting heads on issues heavily in the social media. Within these media and social contexts, the increased reliance and role of citizens to encounter and spread news through social media presents new challenges for democracy and media literacy. Moreover, social media platforms pose significant challenges as spaces for news consumption and public discourse are increasingly controlled by private corporations who desire markets over democracy. Democracies nowadays, rely on informed citizens. The media forms from which citizens learn about political happenings have shifted and mingled over time from pamphlets and newspapers to radio and television to cable news and social media. Our media environment has never been so complex. [8].

It is in this premise that the researchers sought to explore on democracy resilience and media literacy based on the perspectives of civic journalists. Organizations of journalists should assume a more active role in introducing media literacy programs and coordinating activities between journalists, media companies and audiences. Media literacy should be initiated by journalists, their organizations, and companies because of the fact that there is a pressing need nowadays to empower audiences to be able to discern trustworthy, ethical, professional, credible journalism and distinguish it from many new forms of manipulation and disinformation produced by various channels [4].

Democracy resilience requires active civic engagement among its citizens. Civic engagement means making a difference in our communities and developing a combination of knowledge, (MIL) skills, values, and motivation needed to enact change. It includes formal and informal activities such as volunteering, voting, lobbying for a politician, community gardening, completing the census, coaching a community sports team, writing to an elected official, researching ballot initiatives, and more [12].

Meanwhile, active civic engagement requires Media and Information Literacy (MIL). This is because media literacy serves as an empowering means to address threats in a free country. It is considered as a core competency for engaged citizenship in participatory democracy [9].

The researchers sought the assistance of the Philippine Press Institute (PPI) in securing the availability of its respondents and key informants since empowerment of civic journalism is one of its flagship programs. Civic Journalists from the three island groups of the Philippines, namely Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao were tapped as respondents and key informants in the study.

Civic journalists in the Philippine, in recent years have been killed at the highest rate in the world, because of its Westernised, vigorous press and the violent insurgencies that have continued in some provincial areas. At present, the country is still placed as the seventh most dangerous country for journalists, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said in its report [7].

Recent experiments with civic journalism in the Philippines under corporate sponsorship suggest how adaptations of the civic journalism model might help organise effective news reporting, supported by local citizens, to inform safer and more effective press practices in regions such as the island of Mindanao where journalists have been particularly endangered [11].

With the experiences of civic journalists in the Philippines, they have much to talk about democracy resilience and the role that the media play in promoting media literacy amid the health crisis.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a mixed method to analyze the perspectives and insights of civic journalists from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao on democracy resilience and media literacy amidst the pandemic.

The study used the exploratory sequential design, which started with the conduct of a focus group discussion (FGD) with 15 key informants Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao in January 2021. The scope of the focus group discussion focused on (1) the condition of Philippine democracy in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of media freedom and restrictions, and (2) their contribution in promoting media literacy to the public. With the informants' consents, the FGD was recorded and transcribed. Open and axial coding and thematic analysis were applied in the study.

Survey was also conducted after the FGD to validate perspectives and insights that came out during the first phase of the study. The survey part measured the two variables of democracy resilience and media literacy as reflected in the study's problems. Respondents of the survey were 60 civic journalists representing equally Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Civic journalists' opinion, practice and perceived impact of democracy resilience were measured such as importance of democracy resilience, behaviors that show democracy resilience, etc. Media literacy was measured in terms of opinion, practice, and impact such as what kind of works, advocacies do civic journalists practice in order to promote and increase media literacy among themselves and more importantly among the public. Results of the FGD were included in the survey instrument along with indicator statements measuring the two main variables of democracy resilience and media literacy.

Correlation within variables under democracy resilience was conducted – the level of understanding affects the level of willingness and practice or would willingness lead to actual behavior and practice. The same variable correlation was done for media literacy in terms of opinion, practice, and impact i.e., are the actions, practices enough to make a difference in the level of media literacy impact.

The survey results were encoded in excel and the Pearson correlation was run using SPSS. The study made use of a 5-point Likert Scale.

4.0 Result and Discussion

This paper presents the results from the focus group discussion conducted with 15 key informants, and the findings on the survey conducted with 60 journalists representing Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. This section will also discuss different themes about the thoughts and insights of community journalists on media literacy and democracy resilience.

4.1 Democracy Resilience (DR) Axial Codes

1. The pandemic is being used by people in power to control the public and the 2022 election.
2. Democracy's biggest issue is manipulation of public information.
3. Media are restricted and threatened; most have expressed fear and frustration.
4. Media's role as watchdog is crucial with propaganda and fake news spreading in social media.
5. Public trust in media and government is affected with various, dichotomous contents in social media.
6. The public needs to be more critical with the media restricted, and the government's manipulation of information.
7. Media and public should be vigilant of human rights violation.
8. Democracy resilience is continuing to speak against abuses in power, human rights violation, and curtailing propaganda and fake news.

Highly manifested under opinion are statements on *"The public watch and read news to be informed of events"*, and *"The public not only consume media content, but also provide content for others."*

The study revealed uncertainty on *"The public understand propaganda and do not get easily swayed"*, and not manifested on *"The public act, individually and collectively, when there are injustices."*

The rest of the statements are manifested. These are on the public using the social media to raise important issues in society; understanding the importance of election amid the pandemic; believing that rights should not be violated even in a crisis; following policies and directives of the government only if these do not violate their rights; and that even with perceived red-tagging, remaining steadfast in protecting democracy.

The results indicate that the public remains democracy resilient amid the pandemic with a weighted mean of 3.95 or manifested. The public based on the perspective of community journalists are aware of their democratic rights, utilize traditional media and social media for information, but do not necessarily translate to a discerning, critical public that respond to injustices.

Highly manifested under practice are statements on *"As a journalist, the more the government restricts press freedom, the more I resist control and assert people's right to information"*; *"Media remain to be a credible source of information to the public"*; *"Media verify information provided by the government"*; *"Journalists are at the forefront in protecting democracy"*; *"Media and journalists risk their lives to stand for the truth"*; and *"The media fulfills its watchdog role especially in a crisis."*

The rest of the statements are manifested. These are on media informing the public of fake news generated by the government; that in cases of media and government conflict, the public usually siding with media; and that the media having a collective stand on issues that threaten democracy.

The results indicate that the media remains strongly democracy resilient in times of crises with a weighted mean of 4.23 or highly manifested. The study shows a higher level of democracy resilience in self-assessment i.e., among journalists as compared to their assessment of the public's level of democracy resilience.

Highly manifested under impact is the statement on *"Media play an important role in voting literacy."* Results showed uncertainty on *"The public do not see any positive change in the next two years."*

The rest of the statements are manifested. These are statements on *with media and government's seemingly opposing views, people are confused as to the state of democracy; public's trust in government is weakened in handling of the health crisis; public's trust in media is low with the perceived biases of some media practitioners and journalists; public's optimism is low when threats to democracy are evident; public's love for country is affected when crises are not handled well by government; people come together when there are threats and attacks to democracy; there is high mistrust among the people on the capacity of government to handle the health crisis; there will be public uprising in case of the 2022 election be suspended; with rampant fake news, it becomes all the more difficult to trust media and government; and media play an important role in voting literacy.*

The results indicate that public's patriotism, trust and optimism depend on the public's trust in media and government with a weighted mean of 3.92 or manifested. The survey validates the earlier generated finding in the FGD which states that with a hostile relationship between media and government, public trust in both media and government is affected. The impact of this mistrust may translate into a more independent, critical public relying more on personal and technological means of accessing information other than media and government.

The data revealed the capacity of the public to remain resilient in threats to democracy, the media's efforts in protecting democracy, and the public's and the media's separate relationship with the government- not on a tripartite relationship but on a parallel two- way relationship i.e., public and government, and media and government.

Media's practice of democracy resilience is reflected on its opinion of the public's democracy resilience, but on a higher level. Media's practice and public's opinion (based on media) on democracy resilience are observed in impact i.e., the public's trust decreases in both the media and government with the spread of propaganda and fake news, with media biases, and with government's threats to democracy and inability to handle the pandemic.

4.2 Media Literacy (ML) Axial Codes

1. Media literacy has to be an institutional advocacy, not just a personal advocacy.
2. Media literacy is crucial in fighting propaganda and fake news.
3. The popularity of social media i.e., Facebook has contributed in the problem of propaganda and fake news.
4. The importance of context, research, facts and sensemaking in Journalism should be observed by other content producers in social media.
5. There is a need to collaborate with various sectors i.e., media, academe, NGOs in the fight against fake news.
6. Media's job has become more difficult in dealing with propaganda and fake news.
7. Opposing views are needed in discernment and decision- making.
8. Owners of social media sites should be responsible and accountable to proliferation of fake news.

Highly manifested on opinion are statements on "There is a need to institutionalize efforts and initiatives to promote media literacy"; "Media literacy should be understood on three levels: source, content, and audience"; "The biggest concern on media literacy is fake news"; "A media literate society validates information and decides based on factual, impartial information"; and "The public should be active recipients of media content".

The rest of the statements are manifested. These are on “The media is already media literate; advocacies on media literacy should focus more on the audience/ consumers/ public, not so much among media practitioners and journalists”; “Media messages should be understood within the context of politics”; and “Media content are constructed and are represented realities”.

Data revealed that media literacy upholds the truth and creates a critical public with a weighted mean of 4.21 or highly manifested. Results showed how the journalists see media literacy as an important tool for a democracy resilient nation with the public adhering to truth and being critical with content through more community and institutional efforts in advancing media literacy among the public.

Highly manifested on practice are statements on “I try to promote media literacy by calling out people who spread fake news on social media” and “I support movements that promote media literacy”. The rest of the statements are manifested. These are on “Media institutions are working together to increase media literacy of the public”; “Media institutions are working together to increase media literacy among media practitioners and journalists”; “I am a member/ officer of advocate groups on media literacy”; “I report fake news found”; “I accept invitations to speak on media literacy”; “I write articles on media literacy”; and “Institutions I work with/ for have programs promoting media literacy”.

Data revealed that media and journalists, individually or collectively, promote and support media literacy with a weighted mean of 4.15 or manifested. Results show that community journalists engage in activities that promote and advance media literacy among the public, and that the importance of media literacy for a critical society is actualized in their works in media.

Highly manifested on impact are statements on “Media literacy allows for a critical, discerning public”; “Misinformation, disinformation and malinformation reduce media’s credibility to the public”; “Lack of media literacy adds to the confusion of the public”; “With rampant fake news, the public finds it difficult to determine news from propaganda”; “A media literate public protects and defends democracy”; “Media content shapes public’s perception”; “A media literate public make informed political and voting decisions”; “Media literacy allows the public not only to learn from media, but also to be sensitive to manipulation, even if the manipulation comes from the media”; “Media literacy allows for dialogues between and among sectors in seeking ways to understand and resolve issues”; and “Media literacy develops and increases civic participation”.

Manifested statements are on “People’s inability to determine news from propaganda allows the government to mislead and manipulate people”; and “A media literate public engages in political discourses.”

Data revealed that media literacy affects the type and level of political participation of the public with a weighted mean of 4.26 or highly manifested. Results revealed media’s strong belief in the value of media literacy in fighting propaganda and fake news, and in increasing the public’s engagement in national affairs especially in democracy issues.

Media literacy opinion is translated to media literacy practice and is strongly reflected in impact (with a very high negative correlation). The last two variables on practice and impact show later in the correlation a very high negative correlation.

4.3 Democracy Resilience and Media Literacy Axial Codes

1. The public need to be able to filter information; media should help the public in carrying this out.
2. Media even with restricted information and limited mobility cannot be silenced.
3. Red- tagging, freedom of the press, and of free speech and expression, propaganda and fake news are strong issues in democracy resilience.

Media's practice of democracy resilience is reflected on its opinion of the public's democracy resilience, but on a higher level. Media's practice and public's opinion (based on media) on democracy resilience are observed in impact i.e., the public's trust decreases in both the media and government with the spread of propaganda and fake news, with media biases, and with government's threats to democracy and inability to handle the pandemic.

Media literacy opinion is translated to media literacy practice and is strongly reflected in impact. ML practice and ML impact later in the correlation have shown very high negative correlation which means that the journalists' actions are not enough to make an impact in media literacy.

Opinion on democracy resilience and media literacy have a weighted mean of 3.95 and 4.21 respectively; manifested and highly manifested in that "*The public remains democracy resilient amid the pandemic*" and "*Media literacy upholds the truth and creates a critical public.*"

Practice on democracy resilience is highly manifested with a weighted mean of 4.23 while practice on media literacy is manifested with a weighted mean of 4.15. It shows a higher level in practice i.e., actions and engagements on democracy resilience than media literacy among community journalists.

Impact on democracy resilience is manifested with a weighted mean of 3.92 while highly manifested on media literacy with a weighted mean of 4.26. It shows the strong call for the advancement of media literacy in maintaining a democracy resilient nation.

From these axial codes, the following themes are generated from the focus group discussion.

1. In a pandemic where media is restricted with mobility and information, and when the government is perceived as manipulating information, the public relies on social media for information.
2. Fake news and propaganda may translate to a more critical public out of desperation. But this may only happen with a media literate public.
3. With a hostile relationship between media and government, public trust in both media and government is affected.
4. Media remains to be resilient in facing and responding to issues on human rights violation, on abuses to power, and on the curtailment freedom of speech and expression.
5. A critical responsible media is needed for a discerning public.
6. For so long as media and society remain critical and active in the affairs of the nation, democracy prevails.

7. Interdependencies between media and government, media and society, and government and society in terms of public information, public order, social integration, and mobilization are limited, which should be strongly operational in a crisis.

4.4 Correlations

Democracy Resilience (DR) Opinion has very high positive correlation with DR Practice (.94), Media Literacy (ML) Impact (.96), and DR Impact (.96). Democracy Resilience Opinion is translated to DR Practice, ML Impact and DR Impact which state that “*The public remains democracy resilient amid the pandemic*”; “*The media remains democracy resilient in times of crises*”; “*Media literacy affects the type and level of political participation of the public*”; and “*Public’s patriotism, trust and optimism depend on the public’s trust in media and government.*”

ML Opinion has high positive correlation with ML Practice (.65) which state that “*Media literacy upholds the truth and creates a critical public*” with “*Media and journalists, individually or collectively, promote and support media literacy.*” ML opinion is translated to ML action. However, ML Practice has very high negative correlation with ML Impact (-.81) which means that ML practice does not translate to ML impact i.e., the journalists’ actions are not enough to make a difference in media literacy. While ML Practice has high negative correlation with DR Opinion (-.62) i.e., ML practice has no relation with DR opinion.

DR Practice has very high positive correlation with DR Opinion (.94), DR Impact (.99), and ML Impact (.82). It shows that DR practice reflects DR opinion, DR and ML Impact. The statement on “*The media remains democracy resilient in times of crises*” is connected with statements on “*The public remains democracy resilient amid the pandemic*”, “*Public’s patriotism, trust and optimism depend on the public’s trust in media and government*”, and “*Media literacy affects the type and level of political participation of the public*”. However, what appears to be of only significant value is DR Practice and DR Impact at 0.02 p- value.

In summary, the Democracy Resilience (DR) variables have very high positive correlations—opinion is shown in action, and perceived impact is evident. Media Literacy (ML) variables, on the other hand, show only high positive correlation between opinion and practice, but is not demonstrated in impact. ML Impact shows high negative correlation with ML Practice, while ML Practice shows high negative correlation with DR Opinion. ML Impact is shown to be more positively correlated with DR Practice and DR Impact. The relationship is on positive and negative relationship, not on causal relationship.

5.0 Conclusion

The public’s dependency on media and government in times of crises is not evident in the study. Factors such as fake information and propaganda seem to affect the supposed dependency of the public to media and government during times of crises. What appears to be evident is the public’s relying on social media for information.

As observed in the qualitative part of the study, in a pandemic where media is restricted with mobility and information, and when the government is perceived as manipulating information, the public relies on social media for information. Interdependencies between media and government, media and society, and government and society in terms of public information, public order, social integration, and

mobilization are limited, which should be strongly operational in a crisis. A fully operational strong media literacy sustains democracy resilience. This is observed in the qualitative data and appeared as positively connected in the survey.

Also, fake information and propaganda may translate to a more critical public out of desperation. But this may only happen with a media literate public. This dichotomy of fake information and propaganda either creating a blinded manipulated public or a critical discerning public, in this case the latter being evident.

The significant correlation of the study was on the public's democracy resilient being connected to the public's patriotism, trust and optimism which is based largely on their trust in media and government. This validates the general principle of the MSD theory on the public's dependency and need for government and society in times of crises. However, the dependency is grounded on perceived trust i.e., loss of trust in government and media reduces the need and dependency of the public in these two institutions.

Through this study, some recommendations of the study include the following:

1. It is suggested that various projects on the promotion of democracy resilience and media literacy be conducted by civic journalists through the Philippine Press Institute (PPI), along with stakeholders and partner organizations.
2. Other institutions and organizations that promote media and information literacy and democracy resilience should conduct projects geared towards educating the people to make informed decisions on prevailing democratic issues such as: a) vaccination program; 2) claiming pandemic provisions guaranteed by the government; c) democratic issues in the upcoming elections; d) discerning propaganda and disinformation in the current political landscape; and the like.
3. An evaluation on the effectiveness of the recently conducted PPI Voter's Education Webinar-Forum for various universities in the country is highly recommended.
4. A similar study may be conducted for the mainstream media practitioners.
5. A study on the readiness of the Philippines for the upcoming elections is highly recommended

7.0 References

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