

**COMPARATIVE STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC ACTION IN THE FACEBOOK
ACCOUNTS OF AKBAYAN, BAYAN MUNA AND PARTIDO NG
MANGGAGAWA IN THE 2010 PRE-ELECTION, ELECTION AND POST-
ELECTION PERIODS**

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ABSTRACT

Facebook as a social networking site offers an arena where users can engage in political discussions. Facebook is also increasingly becoming an important venue for political socialization and for gathering and sharing political knowledge among its users. For political parties in particular, Facebook is a useful tool in forwarding its agenda and generating interest among followers. This paper examined the volume, density and quality of democratic action, categorized into information sharing, public opinion and public discourse, among users of the Facebook accounts of Akbayan, Bayan Muna and Partido ng Manggagawa political parties before, during and after the 2010 elections. The level of information sharing in the Facebook accounts depicted a downward fashion, having only the greatest outlay of data in the pre-election period. Public opinion elicited the least number of participation with the election period as the lone impetus for opinion-giving. Public discussion in Facebook political party pages was present. However, the extent to which these discussions have been forwarded was limited. The discussions also tended to focus on issues that the parties care about but generating little debate and few participants. The presence of information-sharing is high indicating that initiation of public discussion is primarily administrator-driven. Public opinion lagged behind information sharing implying that public discussion is basically affected by the bias in information sharing. Overall, Facebook political party pages have not yet reached the level of interaction that entails a wider audience participating in enlightened discussions.