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Research Article

Social Media Use, Transparency And Trust In LGU: A Prediction Model On Citizen Participation

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ABSTRACT

The author's main objective in the conduct of this research was to look into the predictive value of Digos City's government's participatory use of social media and transparency and trust in Digos City LGU to citizen participation. The study employed a quantitative, descriptive, and correlational research design. Utilizing proportionate stratified sampling, 381 registered voters of Digos City who voted on the May 13, 2019 national and local elections were surveyed. Results revealed that Digos City's government's participatory use of social was high. Additionally, transparency and trust in Digos City LGU had a statistically significant positive correlation with citizen participation. The results in the analysis of the multiple regression determined that changes in the Digos City's government's participatory use of social media and transparency and trust can explain 57.3% of the variance in citizen participation. Hence, Digos City government needs to give stronger focus on elevating the transparency of government activities particularly on organizational matter, fiscal expenditures, urban planning and land use management. This will strengthen trust and consequently increase citizen participation with the Digos City's government's social media platforms. The conclusions and recommendations fully support the Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to Goals 5, 16 and 17.

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INTRODUCTION

Citizen participation in the Philippines has been recognized as problematic due to low engagement among civil society organizations and citizens (Philippines, National Economic Development Authority, *Citizen Engagement*). This has been determined in various areas of the public sphere. The participation of citizens in the budget process has been limited due to lack of formal consultation and factor in socio-political environment limited the democratic engagement by the people. (Philippine Open Government Partnership 25). This has also been observed in local government policy development initiatives; there has been minimal participation by citizens in local governance reforms (Medina-Guce 34). Insufficient response from citizen groups and citizens themselves, especially in the governance at the local level, has not fully utilized the effort of the government to provide online avenue for people's engagement, vis-a-vis Citizen participatory Audit. (Tan 20). There are no sustained and systematic interventions to inform people about the initiative and build the capacities of citizens to engage in the process (Philippines, National Economic Development Authority, *Philippine Development Plan*).

Under the right conditions, the participatory effort of the citizens could be of big help for the government in reaching the results of the development targets, such as improved delivery of services, better management of public finances, enabling people's empowerment and inclusion in the

governance. (Johnson 13). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the involvement of the people became especially crucial because it provided governments with insight into how the community have been affected by the pandemic and could enable real-time course correction where needed (Falanga 3).

In terms of participatory governance, citizen participation in the Philippines enabled citizens to make informed decisions in enhancing public policies, ultimately influencing how the government was being run (Independent Reporting Mechanism 11). Research in the Philippines has proven that citizen participation could lead to improved social accountability in local governance and increased representation of citizens' interests. Social accountability, governance, and risk mitigation measures produced better enabling environments for local governance in Mindanao through constructive citizen participation (Cruz et al. 16)

Another evidence in Mindanao showed that in the presence of active citizen participation, large amount of budget towards services improvement for the public have been included in budget allocation, the level of accountability and local governance's responsiveness have also improved. (DAI 7). The essence of citizen participation was highlighted in the Davao del Sur 6.9 Earthquake Joint Rapid Assessment of Impact and Needs, wherein the necessity of citizen participation in the formulation of strategic response planning was stressed.

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This was also emphasized by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies when it reiterated citizen participation and consultation to better understand the early recovery program that would be best suited to the earthquake-ravaged localities. (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 23).

Government's participatory use of social media provided avenues for dialogue between agencies and the public, enriching citizen participation (Lappas et al. 92). Social media platforms facilitated governments' release of a large amount of information to a huge number of people in real-time at a relatively low cost, allowing citizens to participate with the government with immediacy (Zhang et al. 2)

The Philippine state has recognized government's role in utilizing social media such as Facebook as an online mechanism that has the potential to open up opportunities for citizen participation with elected officials in local legislation. The use of social media in governance was being viewed being as an accessible way for Filipino citizens to participate in local governance (Afable 35). This was due to the fact that there were a little over 84.45 million Filipinos who were active social media users, and 95.09% of these Filipinos used Facebook as a social media platform (Kemp 17). The government's participatory use of social media also had implications for transparency and trust in local government units or LGUs.

Current research reveals that the government's participatory use of social media resulted in perceptions of higher government transparency (Porumbescu et al. 1) and accountability (Aloysius et al. 116). Governments that utilized social media in disseminating information gained greater trust in their overall governance (Starke et al. 8), trust in their accessibility (Sonnenberg 189), trust in the quality of government information (Pramiyanti et al. 12), trust in their responsiveness (Arshad and Khurram), and trust in their administrative competence (Roengtam). In turn, transparency and trust in government encouraged citizen participation (Dominic et al. 114). Transparency builds legitimacy and trust in government, enhancing citizen participation (Kumagai and Iorio 6).

The above-mentioned studies validated the research gap on investigations regarding the Digos City government's participatory use of social media and transparency and trust in LGU as predictors of citizen participation in Digos City. Thus, the related studies substantiated the timeliness and urgency of studying the variables of the government's participatory use of social media, transparency, and trust in LGU, and the consequent citizen participation that may be developed. This research would be able to contribute to the global and societal sphere because it provided primary data on the interactions among the three variables that were delved into by this research.

This study intended to investigate the predictive value of the Digos City's government participatory use of social media

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and transparency and trust in Digos City LGU to citizen participation. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to ascertain the Digos City's government's participatory use of social media in terms of presence, engagement, and responsiveness. This research also had the goal of measuring the level of transparency and trust in Digos City LGU in terms of transparency and trust.

Additionally, this research also aimed to assess the level of Digos City's citizen participation in terms of agenda-setting policy, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. Moreover, this study intended to evaluate the predictive value of the Digos City government's participatory use of social media and transparency and trust in the Digos City LGU to citizen participation. Furthermore, this research intended to test two hypotheses. First, the Digos government's participatory use of social media does not predict citizen participation. Second, that transparency and trust in Digos LGU do not predict citizen participation.

This study was established on Good Governance Theory proposed by Beshi and Kaur in 2020. This theory was the foundation for the formation of the concepts on the independent variable of transparency and trust in Digos City LGU. The Good Governance Theory advocates the responsible, honest disclosure in managing resources such as the people, government finances, economic dealings and natural resources to maintain sustainability and equity in governance. This challenges the government's strong accountability and practice high level of transparency so the

people can get the information needed. Besides, governments also need to be responsive to their people's needs by exhibiting responsiveness and safeguarding human rights to gain public trust.

Furthermore, the Empowerment Theory postulated by Marc Zimmerman in 2000 was an additional anchor of this research. It informed the conceptualization of the dependent variable citizen participation, as this suggests that empowered citizens has a higher level of involvement in the governance. The citizen's participation is seen as evident force that could affect the quality of the government's decision makings as public servants. (Sepasgozar et al. 106).

Overall, as a study on communications, this research was founded upon the Agenda-Setting Theory refined by McCombs et al. (781) to include the social media issue agenda. With global explosion in the use of various social media to gather information, Agenda-Setting Theory was utilized to analyze a vaster number of channels for mass communication.

Literature relevant to the study at hand included discussion on the government's participatory use of social media with its three indicators of presence, engagement, and responsiveness. This also included transparency and trust in LGU as it pertained to transparency and trust. Discussion also encompassed citizen participation with its three indicators of agenda-setting policy, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. This section incorporates the correlations among the government's participatory use of

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social media and citizen participation, and transparency and trust in LGU and citizen participation. The last part of the section provided a synthesis of all the concepts discussed.

Social media is seen as significant tool that influences the formation of public values and how society acts, as revealed by the finding of several related studies. This is where then that the government's play a critical role in providing vital insights congruent to the progress and execution of its policies. The strategic role social media plays in promoting a more transparent and open and citizen-involved governance is also highlighted. Since social media serves as the glue holding together a group of active people, it has gained strategic significance (Lovari and Valentini 8).

Social media as an online platform, allows not only citizens to express their thoughts in governance but also gives public servants an empowerment as it gives them opportunity to craft messages of government on project and services, helps come up with ways to solve an issue through online interaction with social media users, and handles massive information digitally gathered via data-driven approach (Lin and Kant 11). Social media provides governments with a new communication outlet that allows them to be more transparent, within the bounds of what can be revealed, and more answerable to the media and public opinion. In doing so, social media contributes significantly to the redefinition of power dynamics, relationships, and communication tactics between digital publics and governments. In

developing countries such as the Philippines, social media usage in governance is still at the level of just providing information. That is, the governments use social media platforms primarily for announcements and news updates while exhibiting minimal interest in collaboration, engagement, and responsiveness towards the public. (Al-Aufi et al., 2017).

The first indicator of the Government's Participatory Use of social media was *Presence*. the Government's Participatory Use of social media was *Presence*. Considering the presence of social media and what it can do, the government finds its utilization a necessity as it influences not only individuals but also unconventional interest groups. Governments and their institutions have increasingly used social media as a component of reform strategies and innovation processes in communication with their public. Governments all over the world have realized the need and importance of social media as interactive communication channels with the public.

Thus, government organizations have begun adopting social media technologies to better serve the citizens. Social media technology facilitates the conveyance of a government's public administration model. These interactive platforms, being utilized by governments, are geared toward increasing the trust of the public in their government (Schirch 6). It is on social media that governments have recently promoted interest among the public in issues of governance. Social media has changed the communicative relationship between

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governments and their citizenry by facilitating interaction with the people through the sharing of important information (Irfan et al. 9).

More recently, social media has been used by governments as a conduit in managing crisis. It has been widely used particularly for information exchange and management during crisis situation. A government's presence in social media enables the government to disseminate essential information during a crisis to communicate with their constituents (Ohio State University 3). Social media platforms give government organizations a way to communicate with the public right away, alert them to the situation, stop the spread of misinformation, answer requests from stakeholders, keep an eye on the issue, and assist victims.

Numerous instances of social media usage of government during various disasters, including earthquakes, floods, and water contamination, have been documented in earlier research (Villodre and Criado 2). These studies mainly focused on the timeliness, the content (Wang et al. 3), and the dissemination features (Wukich et al. 5) of government social media use during crises. Government social media use in the context of crisis management has four main roles: information sharing, disaster preparedness planning and training, collectively solving problem and decision making and data gathering. These outlined a map into preparedness, response and recovery phases that depict scope of how using social media may enhance risk communications.

The government's social media presence provided reassurance to its citizenry of evidence-based leadership and policymaking. It was also a valuable resource for critical information that was deemed to be more reliable than other sources (Calil 5). Moreover, the capacity of social media for inclusion of citizens in policy making process strengthens trust between the citizen and the government.

The second indicator is *Engagement*. The government's engagement with the citizens through social media begins with public servant who opens the avenue for the people to get information and respond on given information online. The personnel select from various ways ranging from simple information dissemination to more interactive dialogue (Wukich 6). Sandoval-Almazán and Valle-Cruz (3) used innovative frameworks to investigate the influence of social media in governance and in the rallies by the politicians. The result revealed that majority of the innovators were supporters of the right wing political party and from Northern Mexican region who resisted technology implementation and are still connected with the country's most conservative and oldest party.

To deeper understand the government's way in disseminating information through social media, three categories were proposed by DePaula et al. (2); Information provision includes the direct or public report and public education campaigns, as a one-direction channel and a push strategy; Input seeking is a pull strategy in which

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governments require information from citizens, is a “two-way asymmetric model”; and Online Dialogue and Offline Interaction means “tools for a dialogue” a conversation to build relationships and collaboration. In support of this idea, Gruzd et al. (9) concluded that by establishing and sustaining an active presence and following on social media, especially Twitter, organizations can develop the ability to address social concerns during disruptive events or infrastructure projects like “The Big Lift.”

Similarly, Wukich’s (5) investigation about three U.S. states after hurricane Florence found that citizen involvement efforts were far less common in social media. Few cities convened conversations about their risk exposure or discussed how to build stronger communities. They could create more engagement and did not utilize the total range capacity of social media features in their communication.

The third indicator is *Responsiveness*. Social media’s propensity to incite populism and bolster the authority of political leaders has raised serious concerns that it could weaken democracies while strengthening autocracies. The effect of the government’s responsiveness with citizens online engagement in political matters will determine whether or not this worry is warranted. Studies on how the ways in governance has been affected by social media is still limited, though it attracted so much attention in the academic and economics field.

The citizen’s belief on the press remains a vital role in the crafting of the government; responses to the people’s needs (Besley and Dray 8). It is unclear though how the government may react to issues that may be made for manipulation purposes and topics that are difficult to verify. Accordingly, Yixin and Yanhui (11), studying social media and government responsiveness in local governments’ procurement of vaccines in China during 2014- 2019 found that Chinese local governments strategically respond to public opinion voiced on social media in their policy implementation, and their response is primarily driven by their perceived pressure of top-down inspection. They discovered that the crucial difference is whether a government reacts to the demands of its constituents directly or through alleged top-down pressure. The media alerts the government to the needs of the populace, and a good government will address those demands. On the other hand, a government that is under constant observation reacts to public opinion to the degree that it will lead to a top-down inspection and obstruct the professional growth of local officials.

Relatedly, Liao et al. (10) examined public engagement and government responsiveness in the communications about COVID-19 during the early epidemic stage based on an analysis of data from Sina Weibo, a major social media platform in China. They came to the conclusion that in order to enhance the timeliness of communications on an outbreak, the government should keep a careful eye on social media data. Exchanging information and policies alone might not be enough to generate public interest in the

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communications as the outbreak develops. As the disease affects more people, the government may address public concerns by communicating in a more sympathetic manner.

Initiatives for open government and transparency have also evolved into means of boosting the legitimacy and confidence of the administration (Roelofs 7). In general, transparency is predicated on the notion that the public would have greater faith in the state the more transparency it exhibits. Transparency has been viewed as the highly effective way in addressing pressing democratic issues- increasing distrust by the people to the government. (Jannah and Sipahutar 9).

The first indicator of the Transparency and Trust in LGU was *Transparency*. Transparency could be used in different contexts. The transparency of nations/governments could be categorized into two dimensions. The first is information transparency which composes of the amount, quality, and flow of information in a society. The second is accountability, as for instance fiscal transparency and free media among others (Bauhr et al. 13). Within the context of this study, the focus is on the first dimension that is information transparency.

An important precondition for the efficacy of public institutions' decision-making processes is information transparency. The quality of public services is influenced by information openness (Bauhr and Carlitz 14). Additionally, it boosts confidence in governments. Building confidence requires

the government to be upfront and honest about the information it is sharing. Transparency is also a crucial requirement for international cooperation and connections. An essential component of successful governance is the openness with which public information is provided. Transparency fosters an atmosphere of transparency that enables citizens to have control over institutions and take part in decision-making by promoting confidence and increasing people's faith in governments.

The second indicator was *Trust*. Implementing initiatives like participatory budgets, which allow taxpayers to choose how their funds are allocated to improve overall welfare, need trust. Political mistrust is not a result of poor governance; rather, it is a result of a more knowledgeable populace having greater faith in the government since they will be more aware of the ways in which local government policies advance the common good. Therefore, boosting public confidence requires the dissemination of information regarding government actions.

This information must be the leverage that forces people to hold their incumbents responsible, as will be shown later. For democracy to be strengthened, this transparency must actually affect how people evaluate the performance of their representatives. Lack of openness contributes to a decline in trust, which in turn leads to fiscal illusion. The agency theory, which holds that politicians (agents) may not always strive to improve the welfare of citizens (principals), but rather occasionally pursue their own goals regardless of the

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demands of citizens, links fiscal illusion to transparency.

Higher levels of information, according to the agency theory, lessen information asymmetries, which reduces the possibility of conflicts between principals and agents and boosts public trust in politicians (Khosrowjerdi 6). For example, in order for people in all societies to respond appropriately to global health emergencies during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was imperative that reliable and timely information be disseminated (Arora et al. 9). According to a recent study, there is a high correlation between the number of COVID-19 mortality cases in 108 countries and the degree of information transparency (Annaka 3).

METHODS

The research respondents, instruments, design and procedure and statistical

Research Respondents

Quantitative research design that was descriptive and inferential in nature, employing the survey technique was utilized by the researcher. Thus, proportionate stratified sampling was most appropriate for this study. There were 381 respondents for this study. The inclusion criterion for respondents was being a registered voter of

The conduct of this research was primarily anchored on the Theory of DeLone and McLean's Information Systems Success Model as proposed in 2003. The 2003 D&M model of Information Systems Success was utilized as the foundation upon which the constructs of the independent variable, City Government of Digos' participatory use of social media, were formulated. The IS Success Model, or the 2003 D&M model, identifies and describes the relationships among six critical dimensions of IS success: system quality, information quality, service quality, system use/usage intentions, user satisfaction, and net system benefits.

treatment employed in the study is presented in this section of the paper.

Digos who actually voted on the May 13, 2019 national and local elections. Prospective respondents who had not seen any single social media post by any government agency were excluded from the pool of participants. Participants were allowed to withdraw their involvement in the study at any point in the research process.

Materials and Instrument

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This research utilized three research instruments. The research instrument Digos Government's participatory use of social media was adapted from the study of Al-Aufi et al. (189) entitled Citizens' Perceptions of Government's Participatory Use of Social Media. The adapted instrument had 15 items distributed among three indicators. The research instrument on transparency and trust in Digos LGU was adapted from Alessandro et al. (17) entitled Transparency

and Trust in Government: Evidence from a Survey Experiment. The adapted instrument had 15 items distributed among two domains. The research instrument on citizen participation was adapted from the study of Kim and Lee (9) entitled Citizen Participation, Process, and Transparency in Local Government: An Exploratory Study. The adapted instrument had 15 items distributed among three domains.

Design and Procedure

This research utilized the quantitative research design that was descriptive and inferential in nature, employing the survey technique. This was appropriate for this study because the researcher had the goal of measuring the Digos City's government's participatory use of social media, transparency, trust in the Digos City LGU, and citizen participation.

To commence with the collection of the data for this study, the researcher requested permission from the Office of the City Mayor to conduct the study within the jurisdiction of the City of Digos. When the Office of the City Mayor approved to conduct the research, the researcher wrote formal letters

to the *Punong Barangay* of each of the 26 barangays in the City of Digos to formally inform them of the support of the City of Digos mayor for the research. The letter also respectfully requested for assistance in the conduct of the study within the barangay. When this was accomplished, the researcher then wrote letters to the identified registered voters who actually voted in the last national and local elections and invited them to become respondents in the study. When they agreed to become respondents of the study, the researcher commenced with the ethical protocols' prerequisite to the administration of the survey questionnaires of the study.

Statistical Treatment

Multiple regression analysis and the mean were the descriptive and inferential statistical tools used to process the collected data. In relation to the primary data on the study's variables, the mean proved helpful in identifying the central tendency.

The study employed multiple regression analysis to ascertain if public engagement was statistically substantially predicted by the City of Digos government's participatory use of social media, as well as by transparency and trust.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data gathered from the respondents' view of the Digos City's government's participatory use of social media were analyzed, interpreted, and presented in this section. The results of the data collected were presented and arranged according to the order of the objectives. First, ascertain the level of Digos government's participatory

use of social media; next is to measure the level of transparency and trust in Digos LGU; also, to assess the level of Digos City citizen participation; and lastly, evaluate the predictive value of Digos government's participatory use of social media and transparency and trust in Digos City LGU to citizen participation.

Digos City Government's Participatory Use of Social Media

Shown in Table 1 is the Digos City's government's participatory use of social media.

Table 1
Government's Participatory Use of Social Media

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Presence	1.41	4.30	High
Engagement	.64	4.06	.High
Responsiveness	.66	4.02	High
Overall	.72	4.12	High

Note. *** = $p < .001$

Overall, the Government's Participatory Use of social media was high, with a mean of 4.12 ($SD = .72$). All three indicators of the Government's participatory Use of social media had mean scores that fall within the range that had high as a descriptive level. Presence had the highest mean at 4.30 ($SD = 1.41$), followed by Engagement with a mean of 4.06 ($SD = .64$). Responsiveness had the

lowest mean of 4.02 ($SD = .66$). These results indicate that the participatory use of social media by the City of Digos LGU was high. This result is in accordance with previous research that in the Philippines, the role of government's participatory use of social media such as Facebook was an online mechanism actively utilized by most Filipinos (Kemp 17). This finding is encouraging

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because government's participatory use of social media has the potential to open up opportunities for citizen participation with

elected officials in local legislation (Afable 35).

Transparency and Trust in Digos City LGU

Table 2
Transparency and Trust

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Transparency	.84	3.82	High
Trust Competence	.75	3.97	.High
Trust Benevolence	.81	3.97	High
Trust Honesty	.86	3.93	High
Overall	.72	3.94	High

Note. *** = $p < .001$

Transparency and trust in the City of Digos LGU trust was high, with a mean of 3.94 (SD = .74). All three indicators of Transparency and Trust had mean scores that fall within the range that had high as descriptive level. Trust Competence and Trust Benevolence both had the highest means of 3.97, with SDs .75 and .81, respectively. This was followed by Trust Honesty, with a mean of 3.93 (SD = .86). Transparency had the lowest mean of 3.82 (SD = .84). These results indicate that the citizens of Digos had high perceptions of transparency and trust in their government. However, the citizens perceived the Digos City LGU to be more trustworthy than transparent.

This result supports current literature that transparency is a major antecedent of effectiveness of decision makings of public institutions. Information transparency contributes to quality of public services (Bauhr and Carlitz 14). This result also affirms literature stating that a better-informed public trusting government more, since citizens will understand more clearly how local government policies contribute to public welfare (Sofyani et al. 11).

Digos City Citizen Participation

Shown in Table 3 are the results of the survey on Digos City's Citizen Participation.

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Table 3
Citizen Participation

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Agenda Setting Policy	1.01	3.66	High
Policy Implementation	1.13	3.59	High
Policy Evaluation	1.11	3.56	High
Overall	1.03	3.60	High

Note. *** = $p < .001$

Table 3 shows that the Citizen Participation was high, with a mean of 3.60 (SD = 1.03). All three indicators of Citizen Participation had mean scores that fall within the range that had high as descriptive level. Agenda Setting Policy had the highest mean at 3.66 (SD = 1.01), followed by Policy Implementation with a mean of 3.59 (SD = 1.13). Policy Evaluation had the lowest mean of 3.56 (SD = 1.11). These results indicate that the participation in the government's social media by City of Digos citizens was high.

This result is in contrast with the findings that citizen participation in the Philippines

was low (NEDA) and that it was limited due to lack of formal consultation mechanisms (POGP 25). This also was not aligned with findings that there had been minimal participation by Filipino citizens in local governance reforms (Medina-Guce 34). While the results of this study on citizen participation was not in concordance with previous research, it is positive that citizen participation in the City of Digos was high because citizen participation could help governments achieve improved development results in improved public service delivery, public financial management, governance, social inclusion and empowerment (Johnson 13).

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Relationship between Digos City Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Citizen Participation

Table 4

Relationship between Digos City's Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Citizen Participation

Government's Participatory Use of Social Media	Citizen Participation			
	Agenda Setting Policy	Policy Implementation	Policy Evaluation	Overall
Presence	.42	.028	.085	.054
	.418	.586	.096	.291
Engagement	.519***	.485***	.511***	.528***
	.000	.000	.000	.000
Responsiveness	.564***	.536***	.536***	.551***
	.000	.000	.000	.000
Overall	.352***	.309***	.370***	.359***
	.000	.000	.000	.000

Note. *** = $p < .001$

Overall, the Digos City Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Citizen Participation were positively and significantly correlated, $r = .359$, $p < .001$. The correlation coefficient of .359 implies a weak association between the two variables. The individual indicators of the two variables that had the highest correlation coefficient were Responsiveness for Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Agenda Setting Policy for Citizen Participation, $r = .564$, $p < .001$. The correlation coefficient of .564 implies a

moderate association between the two indicators.

The individual indicators of the two variables that had the lowest correlation coefficient were Engagement for Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Policy Implementation for Citizen Participation, $r = .485$, $p < .001$. The correlation coefficient of .485 implies a moderate association between the two indicators. The indicator of Presence for Government's Participatory Use of Social Media did not have a statistically significant correlation with any

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of the indicators for Citizen Participation, with p values higher than the .05 α level of significance set by this study.

This result on the positive and statistically significant correlation supports recent research that government's participatory use of social media provided avenues for dialogue between agencies and the public, enriching citizen participation (Lappas et al. 92). The result that the individual indicators of the two variables that had the highest correlation coefficient were Responsiveness for Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Agenda Setting Policy for Citizen Participation is in agreement with relevant literature stating that governments that

utilized social media in disseminating information gained greater trust in their responsiveness (Arshad and Khurram).

The result that the indicator of Presence for Government's Participatory Use of Social Media did not have a statistically significant correlation with any of the indicators for Citizen Participation conforms with literature that while presence of the government in social media provides reassurance to its citizenry of evidence-based leadership and policymaking (Calil 5), the potential for mere presence of the government in social media to motivate citizens to participate in governance is yet to be harnessed.

Relationship between Transparency and Trust and Citizen Participation

Table 5
Relationship between Transparency and Trust and Citizen Participation

Transparency and Trust	Citizen Participation				Overall¹
	Agenda Setting Policy	Policy Implementation	Policy Evaluation	n	
Transparency	.720*** .000	.730*** .000	.737*** .000		.764*** .000
Trust	.595*** .000	.626*** .000	.646*** .000		.652*** .000
Competence					
Trust	.629*** .000	.628*** .000	.681*** .000		.677*** .000
Benevolence					
Trust Honesty	.587*** .000	.617*** .000	.622*** .000		.638*** .000
Overall	.706*** .000	.716*** .000	.744*** .000		.756*** .000

Note. *** = $p < .001$

Overall, Transparency and Trust had a positive and statistically significant correlation with Citizen Participation, $r =$

.756, $p < .001$. The correlation coefficient of .756 implies a strong association between the two variables. All of the individual

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indicators of Transparency and Trust had a positive and statistically significant correlation with each of the indicators of Citizen Participation.

The individual indicators of the two variables that had the highest correlation coefficient were Transparency for Transparency and Trust and Policy Evaluation for Citizen Participation, $r = .737$, $p < .001$. The correlation coefficient of .737 implies a strong association between the two indicators. The individual indicators of the two variables that had the lowest correlation coefficient were Trust Honesty for

Transparency and Trust and Agenda Setting Policy for Citizen Participation, $r = .587$, $p < .001$. The correlation coefficient of .587 implies a moderate association between the two indicators.

This result corresponds with current research that transparency and trust in government encouraged citizen participation (Dominic et al. 114). It also coincides with literature that states that high transparency and trust in government have a real impact on how citizens assess their politicians' performance, paving the way for citizen participation in democratic processes (Khosrowjerdi 6)

Predictive Value of Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Transparency and Trust to Citizen Participation

Table 6

Predictive Value of LGU's Participatory Use of Social Media and Transparency and Trust to Citizen Participation

Variables	B	SE	t	β	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Model 1						0.573***	.573***
Constant	-.573	.227	-2.52		.012*		
LGU's Participatory Use of Social Media	-.045	.056	-.80	-.031	.42		
Transparency and Trust	1.11	.056	19.79	.772	.000***		

Note. Dependent variable: Citizen Participation; B = unstandardized coefficients; SE = standard error associated with the unstandardized coefficient; CI = confidence interval; β = standardized coefficients; * $p < 0.05$; R^2 = proportion of variance in Citizen Participation accounted for by the predictor(s); ΔR^2 = change in the proportion of variance in Citizen Participation accounted for by the predictor(s), *** = $p < .001$.

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Overall, the predictive model was statistically significant, $F(2,377) = 252.78$, $p < .001$. Changes in Government's Participatory Use of Social Media and Transparency and Trust can explain for 57.3% of the variance in Citizen Participation, $R^2 = .573$. Government's Participatory Use of Social Media negatively predicted Citizen Participation. $B = -.045$ ($SE = .056$), $t(2) = -.80$, $p > .05$. The unstandardized regression coefficient signifies that it can be predicted that for one increase in number of Government's Participatory Use of Social Media, Citizen Participation will decrease by approximately 4.5% of engagement in the government's social media, statistically significant with a p-value less than the 0.05 α level of significance set by this study. When Government's Participatory Use of Social Media is zero, it is predicted that Citizen Participation will be -.573. Thus, predicted Citizen Participation = $-.573 + (-.045 \times \text{number of social media use})$, when Government's Participatory Use of Social Media is measured in number social media use.

Transparency and Trust positively predicted Citizen Participation. $B = 1.11$ ($SE = .056$), $t(2) = 19.79$, $p > .001$. The unstandardized regression coefficient signifies that it can be predicted that for one increase in Transparency and Trust, Citizen Participation

will increase by approximately 111% of engagement in the government's social media, statistically significant with a p-value less than the 0.05 α level of significance set by this study. When Transparency and Trust is zero, it is predicted that Citizen Participation will be -.573. Thus, predicted Citizen Participation = $-.573 + (1.11 \times \text{transparency and trust indicators})$, when Transparency and Trust is measured in indicators.

The result on the predictive value of government's participatory use of social media and transparency and trust to citizen participation supports various studies. Social media platforms facilitated governments' release of a large amount of information to a huge number of people in real-time at a relatively low cost, allowing citizens to participate with the government with immediacy (Zhang et al. 2). Government's participatory use of social media resulted in perceptions of higher government accountability (Aloysius et al. 116) and overall governance (Starke et al. 8), affirming belief in their accessibility and consequently increasing citizen participation (Sonnenberg 189). Moreover, transparency builds legitimacy and trust in government, enhancing citizen participation (Kumagai and Iorio 6).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Digos City government is strongly active in utilizing social media in its attempts to engage with its citizenry. Their presence in

the specific platform of Facebook reassures the citizens of the reliability and value of the government's posts, and hence, the citizens

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are satisfied with it. The local government is perceived to be weak in responding to queries or comments made by the citizens who did engage with the government's social media.

Additionally, Digos City citizens actively participate in the social media platform of the government. The citizens are particularly engaged with matters concerning policies of the local government and the exercising their right to voice opinions regarding policies. On the other hand, the citizens are less engaged in evaluating actions of the local government.

The citizens of Digos have confidence in the trustworthiness of the local government. The citizens believe that the local government is capable, innovative, and prudent with the city's finances. Also, the citizenry have faith that the local government officials are sincere in keeping the interests of the city and its citizens a priority. The citizens are not absolutely certain of the transparency of the local government. Furthermore, as the City becomes more active in social media, the participation of the citizens in it becomes less. But with increased transparency and trust, the citizens of Digos will more likely engage with the local government's social media platforms.

Finally, the outcomes of this study are relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs, specifically to Goals 5, 16, and 17. The implications of the study uphold the promotion of gender equality towards active participation of women in voicing their concerns through government social media platforms. This is in concordance with SDG

Goal 5 which is to Promote Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls. The significance of the results of this study also supports constructive interaction of the LGU and the citizenry through social media platforms regarding responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels of governance. This is in consonance with SDG Goal 16 which pertains to Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

The findings indicate that this study is congruent with the SDG Goal 17 that relate to Partnerships for the Goals. This study strongly advocates for bolstering the opportunity of LGUs and citizens to utilize the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications. Through this, the development of collaborative efforts with the private sector and non-governmental organizations or NGOs may be promoted to accomplish sustainable development initiatives.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and conclusion, the researcher recommends for the City of Digos to become more prompt in responding on queries or clarifications made by citizens on the local government's social media platform by creating a dedicated communications team towards this end. Also, for the local government officials to encourage the citizens of the City of Digos to express their evaluation of quality of services, fiscal expenditures, and the conduct of officials by providing for pathways and means by which the citizens of the City of

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Digos could voice their opinions. Additionally, for Digos to be more proactive in providing authentic, accurate, and precise information regarding the dealings of the local government by using the official social media of the city of Digos as a reliable verification platform for government

operations. Finally, for Digos to give stronger focus on elevating the transparency of government activities, particularly on organizational matters, fiscal expenditures, urban planning, and land use management.

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