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ABSTRACT

A total of 100 sales workers were surveyed and five were interviewed in-depth as part of this quantitative-qualitative study to identify what social media do Filipino sales workers in Abu Dhabi use as a communication tool to convey complaints and grievances to the Philippine government, determine issues Filipino sales workers in Abu Dhabi face they may want to express through the social media; and find out how the Philippine government can use social media as a communication tool to reach out to Filipino sales workers in Abu Dhabi.

Premised on the Theory of Public Sphere by Jürgen Habermas, the study determined how social media was transformed as the new public sphere. Facebook was identified as the most used social media as a communication tool to express work-related complaints and grievances to the Philippine government. Furthermore, social media as an emerging public sphere in communication through the use of different tools like digital or online platforms can serve as a public sphere among overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to express their views and opinions about various issues that could affect them and the society as well. Likewise, the exchange of ideas and thoughts between the Philippine government and OFWs could create, amend, and solve issues pertaining to OFW conditions while working outside the country. As the new public sphere, social media can indeed become a potent tool for communication and for exercising freedom of expression.

Four themes were drawn to explain social media use such as facetalkation, facemation, facetagnation, and facewatch.

Keywords: Social Media, Freedom of Expression, Facetalkation, Facemation, Facetagnation, Facewatch