

WOKENAM: JUAN'S NEW DOGMA

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ABSTRACT

The call to stay woke emerged in the early 19th century as a metaphor for social justice. However, despite early exposure, this globally perceived culture was obscured in some communities. The proponents utilized Creative Research and interviewed active individuals in this echo chamber: one public historian and a professor, one journalist who writes primarily on pop culture to debunk the roots of this culture, and five participants from different universities and organizations in the Philippines who are actively participating in the social and political discourses. The researcher found that the term woke is more prevalent within left politics while the critics are right-winged. However, both could be a target, especially if their political stance no longer favors the government. With the help of existing studies and respondents, the proponents have magnified the idea; contrary to the widespread presumptions, the wokeness of Filipinos is the effect of social realities, and activism is a norm in such culture. Furthermore, the creation is apparent in Philippine democracy; it has been subject to democratic pitfalls because of political polarization resulting from canceling culture. Today, slang embraces progressive activism and is evident in our information ecosystems. This study is vital to human society regardless of their stance and affiliated circle.

Keywords: Woke Culture, Political Spectrum, Political Polarization, Cancel Culture, Progressive Activists, Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a democratic country like the Philippines, citizens hold critical views against political and social issues. In the present age of mainstream media and with the influence of today's generation, the social creation that is on the rise in expressing socio-political views and opinions is the *Woke Culture*. Besides, political expression and discourses are more widespread in social media. With the rapid growth of social media, new forms of engagement in political aspects have emerged (Velasquez & Rojas, 2017).

From its origin in the Black activist community, the term woke now covers every social issue ranging from politics, race, hatred, gender, and sexuality to religion. The term rose to national prominence in 2012 because of the Black Lives Matter Movement, and that *wokeness* even entered the national discourse. The term *woke* has primarily been used by African Americans since the 1940s (Ng, 2021). It was a concept within Black communities since a black person, Michael Brown, was killed by a police officer. The phrase set off as awareness of people who advocate Black Lives Matter dedicated to battling racism towards Black people (Romano, 2020). However, through the years, the woke culture became derogatory and toxic.

The said term that was previously noble has now become twisted or polluted and implies contrary to what it means (Rose, 2020).

In Philippine history, the relevant date wherein woke culture was inflamed is in the 1970s during the Marcos era when Nick Joaquin, a writer and journalist, stood his ground in ensuring his friend, Jose F. Lacaba's freedom. Also, in 1986, during the People Power Revolution (EDSA Revolution), millions of Filipinos formed a resistance. They protested against the dictatorship of former President Ferdinand Marcos, which led to the end of his regime (Ligon, 2019). In the current cultural and political state, the said term and phrase are primarily used in a sneering and pejorative sense, just like Republicans opposing Democrats and Centrist Democrats opposing Liberals (Bacon, 2021).

Generally, *woke* means being aware of society's injustices and other forms of oppression. Frequently, *wokeness*, or in what Filipino term, refers to how mindful we are and how we construct our interpretations and beliefs for a social cause that later criticizes our intellectualism. Along the way, it resurfaced from describing awareness into something weaponized. Its meaning is diluted and corrupted. In the Philippines, sociopolitical wokeness measures an ideology on the current political situation and social issues and how a particular person is vocal about his/her stance. When someone stands up and expresses themselves, they are seen as conscious and educated or socially and politically aware; some label them as *pa-woke* and smart-shames those with different views, especially on socio-political issues. Hence, it devalues intellectual pursuits. Besides, another toxicity that arises around woke culture is that the term also applies to people who start making issues out of minor matters, complicating them, and hurting or insulting someone in the process.

The purpose of this study is to deeply understand the socio-political wokeness of Filipino citizens in terms of the present social-political issues that have been adding weight to the existing and systematic problems surfacing in the contested democratic status of the country. Its intent includes assessing what the latter and the woke culture, in general, means to Filipino society, analyzing if wokeness is a positive sentiment or a plain insult to social norms for pursuing personal validation rather than engaging in a deep-seated conviction and disingenuous argument. Several articles have been written about *wokeness* or *woke culture*, especially in the United States of America. However, no studies are examining how Filipinos accept *woke culture* as a part of the modernity brought by society. Also, there are no related local issues on *wokeness* in Davao City, only national issues or articles.

In addition, this study aims to examine the history of *woke culture* and its link to cultural undertones of the awareness of Filipinos in every relevant social issue in the country, including the tale of the war of the present political parties and the political labels they have received for their critique. Also, the participants of this documentary were the selected Filipinos who are more active in different digital spaces, grassroots activism, social scientists, and journalists who debunk or analyze Filipino's notion of the said culture.

This study was anchored on three communication theories. First, Lev Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory states that knowledge is co-constructed, and individuals learn from one another (Kurt, 2020). Hence, it means that a person's development is through exchanging information and knowledge negotiated between humans in which cultural values and beliefs are obtained (McLeod, 2018). Hence, this theory describes learning as a social process in woke culture. Wokeness is associated with social interaction, which significantly shapes an individual's sociopolitical wokeness. Second is the Uses and Gratifications Theory. This theory suggests how people use the media for their needs and get satisfied when they are fulfilled (Spring, 2002). Media is the primary source of information and motions about the current political sphere. It establishes the agenda for public discourses on current issues, providing the people with a forum to express their political views and opinions (Owen, 2021). Hence, media plays a vital role in shaping one's political wokeness. Woke people or those people who are socio-politically aware are media users. Lastly is the Participatory Communication Theory. This theory allows everyone to speak or share their opinions, perceptions, and views among the various stakeholders, facilitating empowerment. The approach based on dialogue is not just about exchanging information and experiences but also aims to explore new knowledge on social issues that need improvement (Tufte, Mefalopulos, 2009).

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study utilized the Creative Works format. Creative Works is a type of Research brought about through the initiatives and assessment of Research Outputs Collection (ROC), Research Productivity Index (RPI), and, more recently, the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) framework. This directed more prominent recognition of creative works (Harrison, 2014). This acknowledges that Research and contribution to new knowledge may be shown in different ways and through forms in the creative arts.

Creative Research is a non-traditional product created through writing, composing, designing, creating, performing, and recording (Charles Sturt University, 2021). More so, this study is categorized as recorded or rendered creative work, thus producing a documentary magazine. In producing such creative and informative output, the researchers referred to numerous books, pdf books, news and journal articles, and interviews with experts.

Participants

This study utilized Purposive Sampling in identifying the participants. Purposive sampling involves selecting respondents that might provide insight into the research question. (Creswell, 2014).

The criteria for choosing our respondents are their engagement in social media and explicit sharing of their socio-political views and opinions. The participants must be someone who has exchanged ideas and opinions with other people who have the same stances as them and, at the same time, the opposite stances—those who have experienced joining in civic activities. Hence, the participants must have the knowledge and experience in engaging the different issues the country is currently facing. More so, in this documentary, the professionals'

perspectives would be needed, especially in explaining the concept of woke culture. Therefore, there is a need to have a social scientist who is more familiar with the said culture. The expertise of a media professional is also needed since their field is more exposed to this culture every day, especially in the mainstream media.

Moreover, the researchers interviewed one public historian, a professor, and a journalist who writes primarily about pop culture politics. The researchers believed they were tailored-fit as participants for the study since social scientists/writers look at every facet of society, from historical events and achievements to human behavior and group connections. Their responses shed light on how individuals, organizations, and institutions made decisions, exerted power, and adapted to change (studentscholarship.org). Also, the researchers included five participants from different universities and organizations in the Philippines who actively participate in the social and political discourses. These participants gave the researchers different perspectives on how people view woke culture in socio-political issues.

Instruments

The researchers developed a documentary output entitled *Culture Explained* with its particular segment entitled #Wokenam: Juan's New Dogma. The researchers researched, read, and referred to studies, literature, publications, and videos as a requirement to create a context for the documentary, to know what footage and other visuals were needed, what content of interviews would appear, and to create a script for the whole narration (Master Class).

The researchers have applied the tools found on the internet. These digital and traditional platforms help support the news magazine documentary – the primary genre of this creative documentary. Also, online electronic communication for interviews includes Google Meet and Zoom. Besides that, audio and video scripts during the production process, editing software like Adobe Premiere, Adobe Animate, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Edition, and Sony Vegas Pro 17 was present. Furthermore, shooting equipment, such as a tripod, DSLR Cameras with different lenses, audio recorders, and microphones, were used.

In gathering data and information necessary for the study, the researchers spent most of their time meeting and discussing online via Google Meet and Telegram. These sessions addressed and discussed significant concerns, issues, and progress. The demand for the distribution of tasks to each member was projected. This was to organize the whole process, meet the goals on time, and progress daily.

Data Gathering Procedure

This Research used in-depth interviews to gather data from the participants. This technique implies intensive individual interviews to explore their viewpoints on a particular idea, issue, or situation (Boyce and Neale, 2006). The interviews were conducted through video conferencing to follow the university's data-gathering guidelines and protect the researchers' and participants' health and safety. Researchers prepared questions as guidelines and made additional clarificatory questions during the interviews. To gather the data needed for this study, the researchers secured permission from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Education to conduct an interview and collect data. Before the interview, each participant

received an invitation through their email and social media accounts to ask for their voluntary participation in the study.

The confirmed participants were sent another communication consisting of Informed Consent, an Interview Guide Questionnaire, and a Letter to the participant. They were also asked for preferred interview schedules alongside the documents sent. The recorded interviews were then transcribed and analyzed. The analyzed responses were scrutinized and selected to support the study and the documentary film.

Production Method

This method consists of three production stages: pre-production, production, and post-production.

Pre-production Stage

The researchers developed a documentary output entitled "Culture Explained" with its segment entitled "#Wokenam: Juan's New Dogma." The researchers have researched, read, and referred to studies, literature, publications, and videos as a requirement to create a context for the documentary, to know what footage and other visuals are needed, what content of interviews will appear, and to create a script for the whole narration (Master Class). Moreover, the storytelling, ways or approach, and visual or art direction were based on the visual references (iJuander, Asian Boss, and Vox) mentioned in the first chapter.

In gathering data and information necessary for the study, the researchers spent most of their time meeting and discussing online via Google Meet and Telegram. These sessions addressed and discussed significant concerns, issues, and progress. The demand for the distribution of tasks to each member was assigned to organize the whole process, meet the goals on time, and progress daily.

The documentary was conducted primarily online due to the critical preventive measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The interviews for both the social scientists and participants were done online via Zoom during their respective schedules. The shooting of the host's spiels was done inside the house and maximized the space and equipment.

The production output of this study is a news magazine documentary. No studio shots included. All interviews were done online, except for the documentary, where the host needed a production team to shoot the documentary's spiel.

The documentary's production processes are discussed online via Telegram and Google Meet. A stable internet connection is essential during this process since there is no other way for the researchers to meet and confer.

Production Stage

The production process involves capturing or shooting the footage and scenes that can be seen in the documentary, hence putting into action the concepts and preparations made during the pre-production.

Post-production

In this phase, the editor used editing software such as Adobe Premiere or Sony Vegas Pro 17 to edit videos, add transitions, and compile shots. On the other hand, the editor also used Adobe Animate to create moving images and animate the documentary's official logo and third lines. In contrast, Adobe Illustrator was used for graphics design and poster. The editor used Adobe Audition for good audio or sound quality.

The editor used Adobe Premiere and Sony Vegas Pro for a smooth transition, cinematic color, visual graphics, and adding or removing videos; the foreshadowing effect, the first documentary sequence, was used. The color grading used in the opening part of the documentary and other necessary videos that need unconventional effects, thus, did not appear in the remaining parts of the documentary. The color grading depended on the videos, but the art direction itself is colorful based on the colors and trends of pop culture.

The editor used Adobe Audition for the sound design, as researchers have mentioned in the first part. A natural sound supported the interviews, while other videos have background music and SFX to hook the audience. The editor inserted Pinoy Pop's instrumental sound effects with traditional and modern music for a Pinoy Popular Culture news magazine.

For the moving images, animated logos and overlaying of the interactive texts have been applied through Adobe Animate. Pop colors dominated the video to achieve an interactive visual and a lively art tone.

For the poster and graphic design, Adobe Illustrator is evident as software instead of Photoshop since the art direction of the documentary's official poster is maximalist, colorful, and imaginative, and some elements were vector-based. There was some photo manipulation, but the remaining elements were caricatured to emphasize real pop art.

Data Analysis

This study utilized the following tools to analyze the study. First is the Onion Tool, formally known as the Positions, Interests, and Needs tool. It is a concept from Conflict Analysis adopted as an investigative tool under Conflict-Sensitive Journalism (CSJ). The name Onion Tool can be traced back to Peace and Conflict Studies, wherein conflict dynamics, like an onion, can be peeled layer by layer to expose everything (Rama et al., 2018). Hence, the Onion Tool is one of the essential CSJ Tools that can help establish the entire study. The researchers use this tool to reveal or divulge the hidden sentiments of the characters and participants involved in the study. This tool also answers the question, *What drives or motivates these citizens to participate and become woke in the sociopolitical spectrum?*

Another Conflict-Sensitive Journalism Tool (CSJ) used to support the study is the Timeline Tool, which helps chronologically review and sort significant events. Thus, the researchers can visualize the study's narrative from its origin and involvement to its current status in modern society. Timeline Tool further explains the gaps of the study as it also curates the events of the woke culture along the way and how human society perceives it from time to time (Rama et al., 2018).

Ethical Consideration

The researchers collected necessary information from a social scientist, a journalist, and students/youths to create the documentary. They were informed of the purpose of the study, their responses to our questions that will be used, and who will have passage to its outcome. Hence, permission and informed consent were secured by the researchers. Hence, the voluntary participation of the participants was ensured in any part of the study or documentary. The researchers were keen enough to conduct the study to avoid liability for any loss or damage upon having this reliable information when something untoward may happen. Besides, the researchers have followed the university rules and guidelines provided by the Dean of the College, the Program Head of the Communication Department, the thesis adviser, and the research coordinator.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interviewed participants in this documentary were provided with questions about the woke culture. The documentary started with a voice-over of the history of woke culture, explaining its origin and spread across spaces. The title was revealed at the end of the Opening statement and then trailed by an opening on-cam spiels of the host where woke culture in the Philippines was introduced. As the creative work advances to reach the gist of its story, it then showcases the different answers of the interviewees to each question. They remain to be interviewed with all honesty and no personal biases to have a transparent investigation. The documentary ends with a CBB with an-on cam final spiel from the host wherein the answers are dissected, scrutinized, and evaluated to make a firm conclusion.

The researchers presented four research questions, each with a corresponding identifying question and probe questions related to the research questionnaires. The researchers provided some national discourses presently discussed in this woke culture and connected to the questions.

The first research question highlighted the perception of the Filipinos in the woke culture that originated long ago. According to Alec Gabrielle Gonzales and Rigo Babas, woke culture deals with active engagement in social and political discourses. However, Gonzales stated that she never delved into the culture though she was just aware of the political situation. Meanwhile, Babas addressed its stereotypes; the term is mainly associated with blatant and later on called "pa-woke."

"I have never really like delved into the woke culture, and I don't consider myself being woke; it is just that I am active and aware of engaging in our current climate, but when one of my cousins has said, "your generation is full of woke people," and I am like, oh my god, is it a bad thing or a good thing."

"For me, the woke culture is mostly about the sort of generalization and categorizations to those who are vocal, whether it be against or in accordance with the administration. Most of the time, the term woke is associated with those who always complain. That is why they are

called "pa-woke." It just became a stereotype for people who are very vocal to the administration or those with different opinions regarding national concerns."

For the second identifying question, which discusses the neo-colonialism linked to this culture, Christianne Kelsey Hadjirul also emphasized that this culture is deeply rooted in societal issues.

"If there is a social issue that is going on, that is where the term comes from; that is what I see."

On the other hand, two participants shared their beliefs on the identifying question, highlighting the evolution of this denoted term. Rigo specified that the woke culture evolves by becoming more public. Min Soo Kim also claimed that social media holds significant power in the evolution of this culture.

"It has evolved throughout the years by becoming more public. It became more sort of diverse and very flexible unlike before when social media was only used for gaming, sharing, asking for requests, now it became a medium to express, to market, to vent out."

"Before social media, people just went and protested because there were no social media - there was no medium for them to express themselves. They just really protested, and protesting has a limited scope – it is just within themselves, within their area, within their region. So since social media is here, they could spread worldwide."

For the last identifying question, Kelsey pointed out that the world has become too politically correct and sensitive due to the woke phenomenon. She also discussed that the said culture somehow brings positive results since social issues have been acknowledged and discussed.

"I feel like because, in the woke culture, we become more open to discussion because many people have been voicing out their opinions. It is also very good because we have social issues that are already being discussed."

In addition, given that woke culture is usually observed in digital spaces, especially on Twitter, and the chosen respondents actively participate in such socio-political discourses, the second research question intends to recognize how confident they are in their opinions. Min Soo stated that whenever he discusses an issue with someone, it is not just his emotions; he would first study it and read different references about it.

"Yes, because whenever I discuss it with someone, I would really study it beforehand. I have lots of references here. Lots of books, because I make sure that if I were to speak out my opinions, it's not just purely opinions, it's not all emotions, it also comes from other references."

There is a climate of opinion as people engage in social and political issues. So, the researchers want to know how the various opinions of other people affect their stance. According to Rigo, this "cognitive bias" is a systematic error in thinking that occurs when people are processing and interpreting information in the world around them and affects their decisions and judgments. So, he is willing to listen to other people's opinions. Meanwhile, according to Min Soo, he ensures that he is not peer pressured by engaging in such discourses with people who have their views.

"It also affects my stance because I also want to hear from the other side because ours in psychology – there is a term called "cognitive bias" where we just want to see what we want to hear; what we believe is what we believe in."

"I make sure that I'm not peer pressured by a lot of things."

As the respondents participated in the different current sociopolitical issues stated in this paper, they were asked if such action is a manifestation of being aware. Based on the answer of Min Soo, it is a manifestation of being aware when someone is well-informed about his or her political environment, though he added that it is not enough if you are just aware; you also need to take action.

"The fact that you were knowledgeable about your political surroundings is very much a manifestation that you are aware; however, it's not enough that you only know it. You have to also participate in civil groups in civil activities."

As the researchers asked the respondents if they received any harmful comments and fallacies from people who relived their belief, all five answered "yes." According to Rigo and Kelsey, they often experience harmful comments or backlashes. Likewise, Rigo said that frequently on Twitter and even on Facebook. Also, Alec stated that consequences are anticipated as she participates in socio-political discourses. Chad Errol Booc noted that many naysayers are red-tagging, and mostly it comes from trolls.

"Being a UP student itself is already a death world."

"Engaging in this field, we are already fully aware of the consequences of red-tagging."

"Always"

"A lot of times, especially on Twitter"

"I get mocked a lot of times, even on Facebook, from my friends."

"Most of the time"

"Yes, there are a lot of naysayers red tagging, but my observation is most of them are from trolls."

Some people continually block the political beliefs and opinions of the respondents; they state how they handle such reproaches from those people. Rigo explained that when he started to engage in the discourses, he did not know how to react or respond because many people were attacking him in the digital spaces.

"Back then, when I was so threatened or when I was affected by all the backlash, I just remained silent. I didn't know how to respond. I didn't know how to how to start a debate because there was actually too many. "

Given that it is the constitutional right of a Filipino citizen to participate socially and politically, the participants explained what drives them to engage in the current issues. Alec explained that what drives her is that she wants to be the people's voice, especially those who are oppressed and vulnerable.

"I really want to be a source of not just information but the voice of every Filipino, especially those who are marginalized and those who do not have any platform. Also, I also want to be a catalyst of positive societal changes."

Additionally, when asked about woke's positive and negative sentiments as part of the last research question, Rigo expressed that positive wokeness comes from a healthy discourse while negative wokeness is about normalizing and raising false information.

"It would be a positive wokeness if people would be willing to listen and change their opinion or have a proper discourse with other people and it would be a negative wokeness if people would be so stubborn with their opinions or share information that is not correct."

According to Kelsey, woke culture brings more positive changes as it helps more people become more aware; this culture has collective camaraderie.

"And I also saw that sometimes, especially when you are privileged, that you don't experience what other sectors are experiencing, those social issues are distant from you - you tend not to care, but because of the woke culture, because of the collective unity of other people, they become aware of various social issues that also help them to care, speak, and intensify gradually. So that's what woke culture really did for me."

For the last identifying question, all respondents rate themselves based on the level of their wokeness. The researchers asked about their awareness, and these were their answers:

"Yes, I am woke enough to represent the woke culture, but it does not mean I am aware of every issues present in our society but I am trying to stay educated and educate the public."

Mine currently would be nine because I am under a lot of organizations and movements right now. Here in Davao, we are volunteering. We have been coordinating with other people to campaign for our presidential candidates. I say it is nine because currently, I am actually very active with people in higher positions.

I think I am really aware not only of social media but also of recognizing and seeing the concrete that is happening in the country. As much as possible, I try to engage on all platforms, whether on the streets, in schools, in various communities, with relatives and friends, and so on.

"If we define woke as something that has a connotation, especially if it is negative expressing whatever your feelings, attacking other people I hope I am not politically woke. I just really love discourses that really gives you history, facts and trivia - that's the wokeness I like."

During the entire course of this study, a social scientist in the name of Michael Charleston "Xiao" Chua, a public historian and Associate History Professor at Dela Salle University-Manila, and Janella A. Eugenio, a journalist at Summit Media Philippines, were invited to share their standpoints on this existed culture. Identifying and probing questions were provided as long as they connected to the central ideas of the research questionnaires.

Having the perspective of a social scientist when it comes to woke culture strengthens the aims of this Research. Charles Chua defined woke culture by how it is defined in contemporary society – being woke is being aware of the issues happening. However, he noted that there is a problem with the said culture wherein being woke or woke is more claimed and identified through the democratic party while un-woke are those who are Republicans.

"I will define it in how society defines it now. Being woke for some people it is being aware of the issues, thus woke. But there is a problem; woke is like being claimed at least by a certain sector of the people, especially those we call liberals, not a liberal party but liberals. Basically, these are the people, well they also advance human rights, and democratic rights, including

the different sectors who believe in liberalism than those we call conservative. So, woke is more on the democratic country. Woke is more identified in democrats while those who are not woke are supposedly republicans."

For Ms. Ara, woke culture is about being aware of particular issues and being open to the social realities present in our environment. Her viewpoints on the culture made her realize that the term has been widely used due to our political climate.

"For me, woke culture is like, I guess, in a basic sense, perhaps being woke, in particular, is being open to social realities that we have. It means you are awakened; you are already open to what is happening around you, which during this time, given our political climate - that's such a loaded term."

Furthermore, Charles Chua also added another point of the problem of being woke is that there is a certain condescension whenever someone calls himself or herself woke; it appears that those people who are not educated are not woke.

"To be honest, at first, woke seems okay, but my problem is, although I am really for political correctness, there is a certain condescension that I feel every time someone calls himself or herself woke because sometimes it comes off that most of the woke have the condescension to those people who were not able to go to school. What happens is you are woke, and others are not."

In the modern world, there are different forms of ostracism, and one of them associated with woke culture is the cancel culture, which Charles Chua also mentioned. As he explained, cancel culture is when the action or attitude of someone is different or unacceptable by others, that person is rejected, and people no longer support him or her.

"One correlation to woke is cancel culture wherein you cancel someone who does not agree or is accustomed to your liberal attitude based on belief and life experiences."

In addition, Filipinos have this toxic trait where they will attack the person and resort to ad hominem arguments once their opinion is unheeded. Charles Chua was asked if the Filipinos have the right to do it even though they are on the right side. His opinion about this does not support the said fallacy. He mentioned that Filipinos have rights, hence freedom of expression. However, it is not the right thing to do because personal attacks do not address the argument in any issue.

"They have all the right because of freedom of expression, but is it right? Is it proper? I don't think so. Because ad hominem triggers irritation and if the person is already irritated about who you call and attacks thru ad hominem, the discourse ends."

A lot of people proclaim themselves as woke. The researchers asked Charles Chua if it is okay to proclaim wokeness to oneself. According to him, he has discomfort for those people who do so because if someone proclaims that he or she is woke and others are not, then there is this treatment or labeling of people differently, and the latter seems to be inferior to those woke people.

"That is when I have discomfort because, like, when we say that we are woke, or you should be woke, it is a reminder that you should just be aware. But, once you proclaim wokeness, then you are woke, and others are not, and so there is othering that is happening."

Charles Chua also added that being condescending will not work in today's society. There is a need for radical empathy and creative resistance to have an effective conversation.

"We need radical empathy and creative resistance. We just don't fight, we have to be effective in our messaging, and this is the battle of the narrative now. So being condescending is not allowed because nobody will listen to you."

In the second research question, the researcher asked her about delivering stories or framing in writing. Ms. Ara further concluded that her personal biases are often evident in her articles.

"Of course, you try as much as you can to be objective, and that means getting all sides as possible, but framing is really informed by the point of view or where does the writer come from in particular. I consider myself as progressive in terms of what views I support and that I think is evident in my stories."

Finally, since there is this entrenched culture from Spaniards where "youths" are forbidden to meddle in adult topics, Ms. Ara said that there is a reason why her beat as a journalist is to explore the experiences of young generations. For Mr. Chua, youths are welcome to the adult table, which infers one's openness.

"Well, in my work, in particular, I usually talk about the experiences of Gen Z, so these are young people aged 26-year old. I think there's a reason why I'm in this beat, and I feel fulfilled to be really here. At the end of the day, we - its young people who will, like, inherent those or whatever comes from our decision today. Older people always say that they are older and so they know better."

"I am welcoming it. It's good that people are being open. What I do not like is that you tend to disregard humility in your opinion, and you think you are the only right person in the room. And many times, a lot of woke people are like that, but a lot of the woke are like that thinking they are right. We have to give leeway to the other side to understand why they think that. And we cannot just say this 'self-righteousness' that I am woke. So what? We must talk about what things we can do together to better our country."

4. EVALUATIONS

After thoroughly investigating and analyzing the proponents, the participants' answers manifested that the said culture arose from societal issues. As people learned to talk and resist openly, it became more public throughout the years. The influence of social media has made every sociopolitical issue spread to a larger audience, and some even circulated worldwide. Moreover, the participants' wokeness is based on the actual events and issues painted in our mainstream media. The participants' awareness is not solely because of peer pressure, looking edgy, and having society's approval. In the study, the researchers identified the wokeness of the Filipinos and, contrary to the popular notion, is not the parameter to measure one's intelligence; instead, it only manifests one thing - these participants are aware of what has been happening around their society.

Further, to break down the general findings weighed by the researchers, these students perceived themselves as woke due to the nature of their background and participation in their community. Though they are active in digital spaces, their answers emphasize that being woke does not only mean being active in social media; a woke person must do more in engaging in civic group activities to ignite impact, development, and changes. They use digital spaces such as Twitter and Facebook, drawing a larger audience to disseminate informative information on particular issues. They have a significant following on social media, so they try to make their information more comprehensive, refined, and articulated.

In this culture, it is expected that negative views would foster. When your opinion cannot be submitted to another side of political affiliations, the former would call you out and frequently lead to "cancel culture," which is a modern form of ostracism where someone is shoving out of social circles – whether it be online, on social media, or in person. The respondents have all received different cancellations or backlashes from those who disagree. However, the only commonalities they have shared were that they treat counterattacks as usual insults (*e.g., political labeling, pa-woke, nuisance, pro-admin, and anti-admin*), considering that woke culture has been like that. Instead of arguing with them, they tend to be more professional by enlightening them on particular issues. The respondents are woke enough to engage in socio-political discourses, but when asked about the constructive ideas of this culture, respondents said that people are now becoming aware.

In addition to its positive impact, woke culture tells us that many more issues need to be discovered and re-discovered, and they recognize this practiced culture for awakening many people who isolated themselves in a dark castle of ignorance.

They are willing to be labeled as woke but do not want the woke culture to disparage or backbite them. They tried to be acquainted with the problems surrounding our present realm by reading books, knowing the real root of the issue, utilizing grassroots to engage with their community, dealing with people, and identifying the needs of minorities by organizing causes. They classify the term as a good thing if it is being used in an exemplary manner, but if it is being used to silence them, why would they decide to be open in the first place. Finally, these respondents opted to be in the pitfalls of woke culture. Not engaging in healthy discourse diminishes open, enriching political discourse, and it is the harmful side of this culture - for they believe that each other's opinion though they are different, it is more admirable if we start to consider them as valid.

The professionals, Mr. Chua and Ms. Ara, both had the same explanation or perception of woke culture: being aware and open about the surrounding issues. However, aside from the mentioned criticism and counterattacks of this culture, it is also anchored with a patronizing attitude wherein the so-called woke people have the condescension to those who are not well-educated or those who do not profoundly criticize and engage in the sphere of sociopolitical issues and discourses. This then discomforts Charles Chua. For him, you can be woke in such issues but learn to be humble when giving an opinion because, sometimes, wokes are not like that. This belief held by wokes should not be praised, thinking that if one is attentive, they are more intelligent and more informed, while uneducated if you do not practice being "woke." Instead of arguing with each other, he added that individuals must discuss good things for a

progressive nation. According to both of them, perhaps a good attitude toward this culture is being sensitive or politically correct while considering another person's point of view to connect more deeply with them.

Additionally, for the professionals, youths of today are very much welcome to participate in adult discussions where social injustices, political matters, and other societal issues are served at the table. On a serious note, Ms. Ara is glad to be in her current journalism beat, where she did cover pop culture in politics and the experiences of generation z or youths. For her, it is a positive move that young people are continuously engaging in discourses because these youths know the future of our society. As the old adage goes: "*Papunta palang tayo, pabalik palang sila*". Such language usage is merely an example of rampant political polarization in other countries and the Philippines. Filipinos in this era still assume that people who do not blend themselves in trends like this are misinformed or downright idiotic, which is the downside of woke culture. There are still Filipinos who restrict the definition of this to activism and intelligence. Perhaps, we can broaden the definition of woke by including virtuous characteristics such as "respecting opinion" from both sides of the political spectrum.

5. IMPLICATION

Political polarization is apparent in woke culture. The evidence can be traced back to its beginning, what is more when the word surged its fame in the digital ecosystems. You can see people combative against each other - for their beliefs and slashing someone for disagreeing with their ideology. This term has a common conception: on the left wing or the believers of democracy, social equality, and egalitarianism, to be woke means identifying themselves as devoted social justice activist keen on investigating contemporary political concerns. On the other hand, the right woke speaks undesirable volumes. They speak nothing but political correctness, performativity, and phony, which were weaponized by the conservatives to silence these progressives later on. However, in this study, researchers found that heaving reproaches and fallacies are used by the woke critique and are familiar to those with progressive views. They are canceling each other because of their political spectrum, calling out nomenclatures because they are divided into their goals.

In the Philippine setting, woke culture is further evident in left-wing parties. They are social justice advocates and activists who mostly conduct grassroots activism in the street, protest against the government, and promote social media activism. Filipino slang is currently buzzing in the Philippine media landscapes, especially on Twitter, after this anti-wokeness or anti-progressives pigeonholed them as a slang word used to silence their vocal standpoints on social and political mantras. Woke culture's critics described elitist individuals with a superiority complex and hypocrisy. They are more into logical fallacies when discoursing, and anyone who disagrees with them thinks that their words are the truth that will enlighten anyone in the dark. More so, they are always the subject of these anti-intellectualism words, such as for sharing their sentiments; in effect, when they receive this, they tend to cancel culture – canceling everyone who tries to relive their belief. The haters of Woke see this culture as toxic or vicious as the supporters of this perceived themselves as suitable, which triggers the former.

The silent problem in woke culture is that people cancel each other. As time passes, they get selective, especially when everything does not favor their opinion. Today, as the culture is exposed to the mainstream, more people will acknowledge it, and if they let their pride drip on how they perceive things, people cannot be united. The political division will always have a domino effect; from this, woke culture will be painted as negative and positive.

The importance of this study focuses mainly on the socio-political wokeness of Filipino citizens in the current political system. Its intent includes analyzing the wide-ranging concept of woke culture in the Filipino society; examining the sentiments of wokeness to society. The researchers created a documentary output that will serve as the backbone of this study; therefore, all gathered information from the respondents will be projected in the news magazine documentary. Although the label of wokeness can be seen in social media, especially applied nowadays to activists, many of whom are embracing the clicktivist lifestyle, there are still no recent related studies about woke culture in the Philippines, and that is the main reason why researchers are fervent to discuss the culture in the round table.

6. INSIGHTS

The term woke culture is familiar to the researchers, considering they are more active in digital media spaces. Tweeting that supports causes is close to being woke. Meanwhile, reposting publication materials with the progressives and anti-progressives' views on it manifests awareness, and sharing stories by other people's experiences may be about political chants implies engagement in the culture. The researchers already executed these given situations, thus conducting this study entitled "Wokenam: New Dogma."

By the title, woke, a slang term equivalent to western neologism, was created by Filipino netizens to describe the Filipino wokes who have extreme views on political and social injustices. The word is the national personification of the country, often used to represent the Filipino everyman. The word dogma denotes belief or a set of ideologies normalized by many. To puzzle out the words being introduced and expand them, woke culture has been in the system even before the neo-liberalism colonized the people's mentality; however, the term connotes different meaning, and the expression *wokenam* has entered the chat which the Filipinos are normalizing in every discourse either to insult someone or to commend themselves for their consciousness.

The desire to learn pop culture and political journalism topics has pushed the researchers to continue this study where only sociologists, political journalists, social scientists, and students who are mainly acquainted with this ongoing culture were tapped to answer the well-detailed questions connected to the concept. They were interviewed via Zoom and communicated via Google Mail, Twitter and Facebook. The researchers asked them to share some information about their general background, and they did not hesitate to provide it. Further, this insight is supplemented with the level of their wokeness, which is the core objective of this study.

We first communicated with Alec Gabrielle Gonzales of the University of the Philippines, Mindanao, where she studies Communication and Media Arts. She has been active in raising her opinion on Twitter against the present administration and believes that being woke is good as long as we try to use it effectively. Second, Rigo Babas, a Psychology major at San Pedro College of Davao City, was once a target of "smart-shaming" and "cancel culture" for being a critique of the government. However, he then realized that it is his responsibility as a youth to amplify voices for the country's common good. He is an active member of the city's external organizations and grassroots movements and currently supporting a presidential candidate for the 2022 National Elections. Third, we have Christianne Kelsey Hadjirul, a student at Miriam College, Manila, currently working as Save San Roque's main organizer. This community organization supports the poor urban community of San Roque. Her perception of woke culture is somehow insightful. She tries to be woke in social media and the outside world by engaging with communities. Fourth, Chad Errol Booc is a Human rights defender, environmentalist, and Student-Lumad Teacher based at the University of the Philippines – Diliman. Mr. Chad did not want to classify himself as a politically correct individual, but he acknowledged the significant changes made by being aware. For the fifth respondent, we have Min Soo Kim, a 3rd year Foreign Service student majoring in Diplomacy at Lyceum of the Philippines University-Manila, College of International Relations. He is woke enough of his political and social surroundings because he is more into digging into issues by supplementing his mind with books. However, he did not want to be called woke if such culture presages negative meanings.

Moreover, a particular social scientist, public historian, and Associate History Professor, Michael Charleston "Xiao" Chua of Dela Salle University, was present in this study to debunk and educate us further on the derivation of this culture. His participation only shows that he is interested in talking about this culture. He firmly believes that wokeness is now a symbol of "intellectualism," which should not be. He concluded the interview by informing the youths of today to be more engaged in social and political discourses but to never resort to violence.

On the other hand, Journalist Janella Ara Eugenio of Summit Media Philippines also shared her views on this debatable matter. Ms. Ara, a journalist who mostly shares her articles on pop culture politics, reasoned that objectivity in journalism is a myth. When she produces articles, her personal biases are sometimes evident in her stories – informative biases that can help people be well-informed on the subject she frames. Ms. Ara also told the researchers that wokeness signifies that one is aware of the happenings, and there is nothing wrong with that.

This study will be beneficial for the researchers. The researchers learn to understand each other's ideas and stances in the woke culture. It was not just a simple interview but rather a fiery one because the respondents answered the researchers' questions straightly. There is nothing to be ashamed of being woke or aware of. It only worsens when people start to

weaponize this when they continue to use it to slash someone due to his intellect in systemic oppression, injustices, and politics.

Furthermore, the researchers believed that every Filipino has the right to submit their opinionative side as long as their statements will not create disarray and foster more healthy discourse. The Philippines, as a democratic country, should allow woke culture to be practiced or performed. However, constituents should learn how to raise their political stance or express their views on an issue that they think caused dysfunctions, particularly on the internet. Political affiliations are not the problem because we all decide how we perceive things. In fact, despite the political stance of the respondents interviewed for their study, they still believe that wokeness is vital because it is an indicator of being aware of our surroundings, but it should not be used to affront someone just because they practice the latter.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Future researchers can create advocacy, promote social awareness, and educate the public on social issues that have been happening in the country. They can give importance to the development of this culture from traditional to its ubiquitous status in the mainstream media.

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