

**THE IMPORTANT FACTORS INFLUENCING THAI
FIRST-TIME VOTERS AND OLDER VOTERS TO VOTE FOR
THE POLITICAL PARTY IN THAILAND**

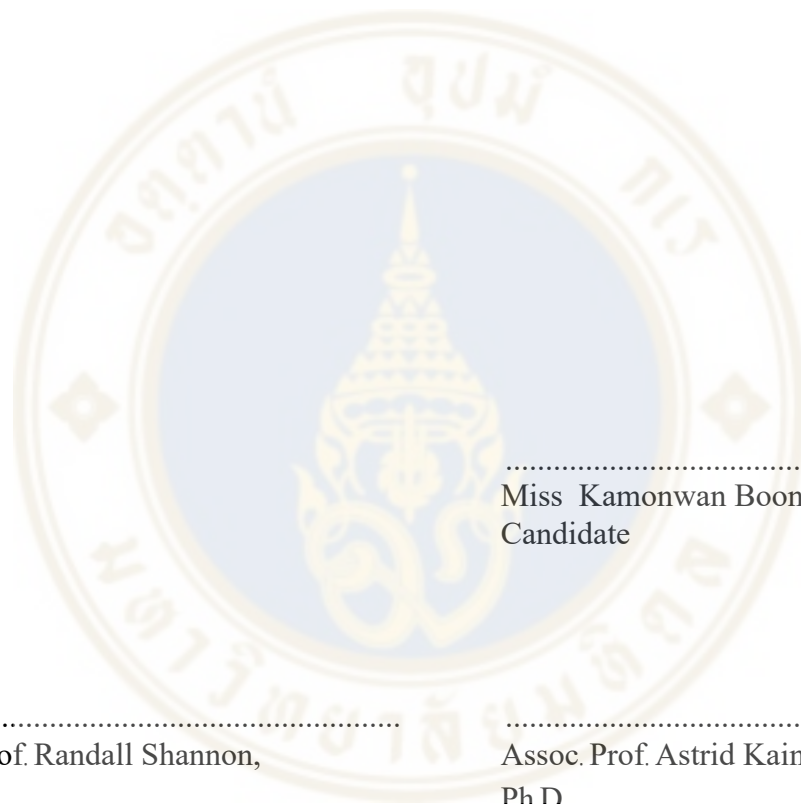


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Thematic paper
entitled
**THE IMPORTANT FACTORS INFLUENCING THAI
FIRST-TIME VOTERS AND OLDER VOTERS TO VOTE FOR
THE POLITICAL PARTY IN THAILAND**

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Kamonwan Boonrat



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THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

This study illustrates the important factors influencing Thai first-time voters and older voters to vote for the particular political party in Thailand. Identifying the five potential factors from the past studies and tested it with 117 respondents who age between 18-25 years old and 45-60 years old. The five potential factors consist of Trust, Political Party's Policy, Political Socialization, Political Candidate's Messages, and Political Party's Brand Image. After analyzed the result, we found that all five factors have significant effects on voter decisions. This study also provides a discussion about the behavior of two voter groups in accessing political information.

KEY WORDS: Trust/ Political Party/ Brand Image/ Political Socialization/ Political
Message

55 page

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Election is the group decision process that induced the participation of the citizens to select the best government team. The election is not related only in the political perspective, but it also builds impact to the overall country. There are many past studies about the relationship between the quality of politics and citizen's satisfaction which expressed that the satisfaction on politics can influence citizens to participate in political activities including election (Ezrow & Xezonakis, 2011). However, not only the satisfaction that builds impact to the voting behaviors, but there are also the other various factors that have been justified the effect to voting behavior such as trust, political socialization and so forth.

In Thailand, people in Thai citizen who age over 18 years old can participate in voting of the Thai general election. This country conducted the general election since 1993 and until now there are 28 general elections occurred ("Elections in Thailand," 2019). The recent election was conducted on March 24, 2019 which was the very outstanding election that gained a lot of attention from many people around the world because it is the first election in Thailand after the Thai coup d'état in 2014. This long election break after the year 2014 impacted the number of first-time voters age between 18-25 years old that become the larger group. In 2011, the number of first-time voter was only 1.96% of total voters but in 2019, the percentage of first-time voters raised up to 13.74% (Lawattanatrakul, 2019). The rest proportions represent the other group of voters that the older voters are included. Although the first-time voters were raised up significantly but the proportions were still low compared to the group of older voters who now dominate the Thailand politics (Jotikasthira & Sabpaitoon, 2018).

As the election is about the individual preference therefore, there is always the difference in voting behavior among the citizens. There are various factors influencing the difference in voting behavior. Campbell, Green, and Layman (2011) founded that the party identification, party image, and candidate's social characteristics can influence voting behavior. Whilst, there are the other studies expressed that the political candidate's message is also the one factor that encourages positive voting intention (Kim, Rao, & Lee, 2009)

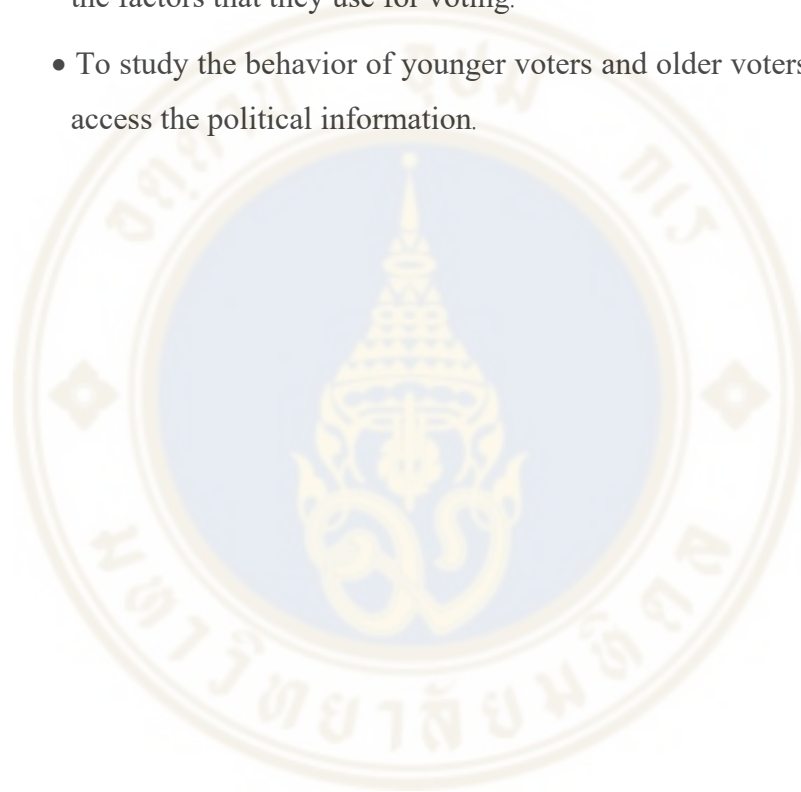
According to the different results of the above past studies, it can be implied that the factors affecting to the voting behavior for each citizen could be different and it can create conflict between voters.

1.2 Problem Statement

Nowadays, the degree of political disagreement is continually increased in Thailand especially after the latest Thai general election. We can notice in the social media such as Twitter that the younger voters mostly use to spread the political information and express their opinion. Many hashtags related to election were created which many people engaged their positive and negative opinions on that (Lawattanatrakul, 2019). Some people argued on those hashtags until they came to unfriend. The gap between the age of first-time voter and the older voter become larger when they talk about politics. Some families are facing this problem when the parents try to convince their kids to vote for the persons who considered as the good guys, but those kids reject their parent's thoughts. Not only in the family but also in the workplace or even in the social media where people expressed a numerous comment on political topics which become the argument later on.

Hence, to understand more about the difference in voting behavior, this research will study about the important factors that impact the first-time voters or called younger voters age between 18-25 years old and older voters age between 45 – 60 years old to vote for the political party in Thailand. The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To find what are the most important factors that impact younger voters and older voters to vote for the political party.
- To find out the difference between younger voters and older voters about the factors that they use for voting.
- To study the behavior of younger voters and older voters about how they access the political information.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Influence Theory

Kelman (1958) stated that the social influence refers to the individual that induced to change the behavior or attitudes by other persons. Kelman (1958) also explained that the internalization is one of the influence stages when individual accepts induction because the contents used for induction are in line with their existing values.

It can be implied that the high level of internalization means that the new aspects, behavior, attitudes of the influencer are much consistent with the existing personal values of the individual. There is the past study about the Social Networking Sites (SNS) behavior which found that the group students favor to participate SNS due to their goals and personal values toward the SNS were congruent, therefore, they decided to adopt SNS which became their new behavior (Yushi, Naqvi, & Naqvi, 2018).

2.2 Social Media Framework

Internet is the interconnection between networks that link the devices together worldwide. It is the basic thing for driving development in an online virtual community (Olsen, 2014). Many online platforms nowadays are developed by having the internet as the basic structure. The people of all age can access the information whenever and wherever they want. The social network site (SNS) is also one of the virtual online community that designed in form of the various applications which are the place for people in creating online content, sharing, posting, and editing (Watanabe, Yan, & Soebbing, 2015). In the political context, most political candidates currently use SNS to communicate with the citizens. The speed and quality of content created by the political

candidate become the significant factors that impact the candidate's image and potential of persuasion (Pérez & Limón, 2019).

2.3 Trust

In the political context, trust is considered as the main factor that effects the political movement. Trust in politic refers to the degree or level that the citizens believe that the government will generate an outcome or result that fulfil their expectations (Weinschenk & Helpap, 2015). There is the past study about the relationship between trust and political efficacy. Campbell, Gurin, and Miller (1954) indicated that the political efficacy is the self-ability of people who believe that they can influence politics. It was discovered that trust in government and politics can lead people to have more confident to participate in political activities e.g. election and political rally and also effect the increasing in political efficacy (Chao, Yuan, Li, & Yao, 2017).

In view of the political party, trust is also an important factor that impacts the political party's success. In general, one political party will mainly consist of the a) party's leader who takes and controls the party's decision and direction, b) the political candidate or party's member who represents the party and competes for the election ("What are the main components of a political party?," 2018). There is the past study which discovered that trust between the political party and political candidate are almost the same because in reality, the political candidate is a part of the political party (Hooghe, 2011). Therefore, trust in the political candidate and trust in the political party are the two solid factors that encourage voters to vote for the political party.

2.4 Party's Policies or Manifestos

Bara (2005) described that the political party's manifesto is the statement of intention or promise or goal that the party creates in order to appeal voter and get

support. The attractive manifestos will appreciate the citizen's mind. Meguid (2008) had indicated the relationship between the citizen's satisfaction and political party's manifestos. The party will gain more votes if it launched the practical and realistic manifestos (Meguid, 2008). The extremism policy can cause the dissatisfaction of citizen and impact the decreasing in citizen's supports (Ezrow & Xezonakis, 2011). According to the above studies, the citizen's satisfaction toward the political party's manifesto is also considered as one of the potential factors that is able to build the positive impact on the voter's mind.

2.5 Political Socialization

Political socialization is the popular factor that many people like to use in the political context. It is the situation that parents, peer, and school act as the agent to shape young citizen's political attitude (Gotlieb, Kyoung, Gabay, Riddle, & Shah, 2015). The past study shows that the socialization starts early at home when the young citizen stays with their parents and family (Gotlieb et al., 2015). The parents can play the dominant role to guide their children to know and understand who are the good politicians and who is the bad ones. This parent's guiding can impact the first-time voters when they decide to vote for the political party and candidate (Dinas, 2014). However, when the children go to school, they will have a new society. Some schools include the political contents to the education program with the purpose to encourage political participation and future engagement. Bennett (2008) explained that applying the civic and political education to the learning program will benefit to the young citizens who seek for the opportunity raising their voice. Moreover, in the peer group, Lee, Shah, and McLeod (2012) indicated that the interaction with peers about political issues can stimulate young people to learn and consume new political contents. This creates the opportunity to the young people in developing their political attitudes. The above past

studies express the impact of political socialization toward voting choice. The attitudes developed inside of citizens will affect the political party's scores in the election.

2.6 Political Candidate's Message

The political candidate's message refers to the statement or word that the political candidate communicates to the citizens. Kim et al. (2009) founded that the political candidate's message can affect voter's mind. The message that constructed with low - level and action - oriented will attract the citizens when voting is nearly coming (Kim et al., 2009). The positive and negative message can impact voting scores of the political party. The past study discovered that the positive message can encourage voting support for the political party and will decrease when the message is delivered in the negative way (Ruben, Petrova, & Zhuravskaya, 2011). According to the above information, it can determine that the political candidate's message is also the one factor that influenced voter's decision.

2.7 Political Party

Normally, when people think about brand, they will think of products and services. In fact, the political party can be considered as a brand in term of marketing. The political party creates the actions to increase the citizen base who considered as the customer. According to the poll conducted by Smith (2001), it was discovered that the image of political party can influence voting intention of the citizen. The brand image is considered as the big factors that impact voting scores (Smith, 2001). According to the past study of Nielsen and Larsen (2014) about the relationship between the political party brand and voting behavior. The result showed that the political brand can shape voting behavior (Nielsen & Larsen, 2014). According to the above studies, it can imply that brand image in political perspective can impact to the voter's decision.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Primary Data Collection Method

This result of this study was analyzed through the survey with the type of quantitative research. From the previous chapter - Literature review, we studied the potential factors that possible to make an impact to voter's decision. We defined the potential factors from the literature review and tested whether these factors really affect the Thai voter's decision or not by measuring the factors that got the highest score from participants. The survey method was the tool that assist us to find the answer.

In this study we analyzed the five different factors that impacted the decision-making process of young voters and older voters to choose the political party. The different factors are as follows:

- Trust
- Political party's policy
- Political socialization
- Political candidate's messages
- Political party's brand image

We also defined thirteen sub-factors that have the relationship with the main five factors above. The relationship between sub-factors and main factors are shown as follows:

Sub-Factors	Main Factors
Credibility of political candidate	Trust
Credibility of prime minister candidate	
Credibility of political party	
Clear and well written political party's policies	Political Party's Policy
Policies that benefit to the citizens and societies	
Practical and Realistic policies	
Similarity to friend's preferences	Political Socialization
Similarity to parents or family's preferences	
Similarity to voter's attitude	
Positive political candidate's message	Political Candidate's Message
Well written political candidate's message	
Consistent with voter's self-image	Political Party's Brand Image
Word of mouth	

3.2 Survey Method

We used the survey method as a tool for data collection. We developed a questionnaire that related to what we are studying. The questionnaire assisted us to gather the various data with the target people. Below clarification expressed the survey method.

3.2.1 Sample Size

The purpose of this study is to find factors influencing decision making of two group voters: young voters (First-Time Voters) and older voters. Therefore, in this study, our sample was mainly consisted of two group of people. 62 members are the people between the age of 45-60 years old who have Thai citizen and full right to vote in the Thai general election. Another group of 55 members are the people between age of 18 -25 years old who was the first-time voter in the last Thai general election that conducted on March 24, 2019. The total is 117 participants. The target area is Bangkok. These participants will receive the questionnaire link through social media such as Facebook, Line and other available social applications. The participants are able to invite their colleagues, friend and parents to join this survey

3.2.2 Develop Questionnaire

After identified the survey method, we developed the questionnaire via Google Form as we think that this is the most convenient way for the participant to easily complete the questionnaire online. The questions are separated into three sections.

- First section: This section mainly related to the demographic questions such as age, gender, sex, and education.
- Second section: This section mainly related to the politic interest of participants and their behavior in accessing the political information.
- Third section that asks the participants to rate the potential sub-factors that could lead them to vote for the political party.

3.3 Hypothesis

One of the purposes of this study is to identify the different factor two group of voters take to make voting decision. To determine the different in mean of each sub-factors that between two sets of sample group, we had applied the statistic tool called

the dependent sample t-test to this study. There are two main hypotheses were defined including the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis. The null hypothesis (H_0) assumed that there is no difference in mean between two group of voters and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) assumed that there is the significant difference in mean between two group of voters. For each sub-factor, we set the hypotheses to study the significant difference in mean of each sub-factors between the two samples group.

After we set the hypotheses, we analyzed the results from the 117 questionnaires completed by the respondents through t-test method. The below table described the details of hypotheses and results. For more details about result that included t-value and significance level, all information is clarified in Chapter IV- Data Analysis.

Table 3.1 Hypotheses of each sub-factor

Sub-factor	Hypothesis	Result
Credibility of political candidate	<p>H₀: There is no difference in mean scores of credibility of political candidate between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>H_a: There is the significant difference in mean scores of credibility of political candidate between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>H₀: There is no difference in mean scores of credibility of political candidate between first-time voters and older voters</p>
Credibility of prime minister candidate	<p>H₀: There is no difference in mean scores of credibility of prime minister candidate between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>H₀: There is no difference in mean scores of credibility of prime minister candidate</p>

Table 3.1 Hypotheses of each sub-factor (cont.)

Sub-factor	Hypothesis	Result
Credibility of prime minister candidate	Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of credibility of prime minister candidate between first-time voters and older voters.	between first-time voters and older voters.
Credibility of political party	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of credibility of political party between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of credibility of political party between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of credibility of political party between first-time voters and older voters.</p>
Clear and well written political party's policies	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of clear and well written political party's policies between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of clear and well written political party's policies between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of clear and well written political party's policies between first-time voters and older voters.</p>

Table 3.1 Hypotheses of each sub-factor (cont.)

Sub-factor	Hypothesis	Result
Policies that benefit to the citizens and societies	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of policies that benefit to the citizens and societies between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of policies that benefit to the citizens and societies between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of policies that benefit to the citizens and societies between first-time voters and older voters.</p>
Practical and Realistic policies	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of practical and realistic policies between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of practical and realistic policies between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of practical and realistic policies between first-time voters and older voters.</p>
Similarity to friend's preferences	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of similarity to friend's preferences between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Reject null hypothesis</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of similarity to friend's</p>

Table 3.1 Hypotheses of each sub-factor (cont.)

Sub-factor	Hypothesis	Result
Similarity to friend's preferences	Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of similarity to friend's preferences between first-time voters and older voters.	preferences between first-time voters and older voters.
Similarity to parents or family's preferences	Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of similarity to parents or family's preferences between first-time voters and older voters. Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of similarity to parents or family's preferences between first-time voters and older voters.	Reject null hypothesis Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of similarity to parents or family's preferences between first-time voters and older voters.
Similarity to voter's attitude	Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of similarity to voter's attitude between first-time voters and older voters. Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of similarity to voter's attitude between first-time voters and older voters.	Accept null hypothesis Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of similarity to voter's attitude between first-time voters and older voters.

Table 3.1 Hypotheses of each sub-factor (cont.)

Sub-factor	Hypothesis	Result
<p>Positive political candidate's message</p> <p>Positive political candidate's message</p>	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of positive political candidate's message between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of positive political candidate's message between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of positive political candidate's message between first-time voters and older voters.</p>
<p>Well written political candidate's message</p>	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of well written political candidate's message between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of well written political candidate's message between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of well written political candidate's message between first-time voters and older voters.</p>
<p>Consistent with voter's self-image</p>	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of consistent with voter's self-image between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Accept null hypothesis</p> <p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of consistent with voter's self-image</p>

Table 3.1 Hypotheses of each sub-factor (cont.)

Sub-factor	Hypothesis	Result
	<p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of consistent with voter's self-image between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>between first-time voters and older voters.</p>
Word of mouth	<p>Ho: There is no difference in mean scores of word of mouth between first-time voters and older voters.</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of word of mouth between first-time voters and older voters.</p>	<p>Reject null hypothesis</p> <p>Ha: There is the significant difference in mean scores of word of mouth between first-time voters and older voters.</p>

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

This part is about data analysis which is mainly about the expression of results that we discovered after launching questionnaires. As per our clarification on chapter III, the method utilized in this study is the survey method. This method helped to examine the factors that we concluded from the past studies to see how it important to Thai voters' behavior. As indicated in the previous chapter that this study will focus on two groups of people composed of first-time voters and older voters. Therefore, the respondents of our survey are mainly a group of people who age between 18-25 years old and another group contained the people who age between 45 – 60 years old. This study will categorize the result to three main parts consisted of:

- 4.1 Characteristics of respondent
- 4.2 Behavior of using media channels to access political information
- 4.3 Important factor influencing voter to vote for political party

4.1 Characteristics of respondent

There were 125 respondents in this study. According to figure 4-1, it shows that 68 respondents (54.4 percent) are male and 57 respondents (45.6 percent) are female. For age of respondents, there were 55 respondents (44 percent) who age between 18-25 years old and 62 respondents who age between (49.6 percent) 45-60 years old. Moreover, there were 8 respondents (6.4 percent) who age in the range of 26-44 years old and more than 60 years. The chart of respondent categorized by age is shown in figure 4-2. In this survey, we will focus on two groups of respondents who age between 18-25 years old called the first-time voter and 45-60 years old called the older voters.

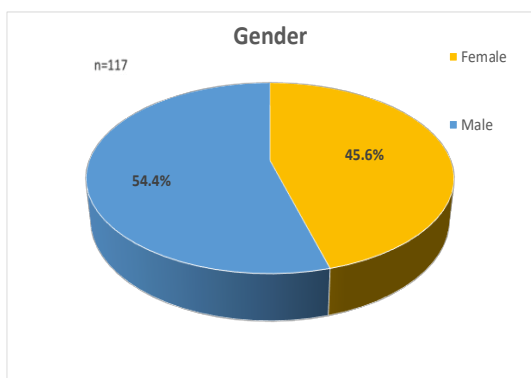


Figure 4.1: Gender of respondents

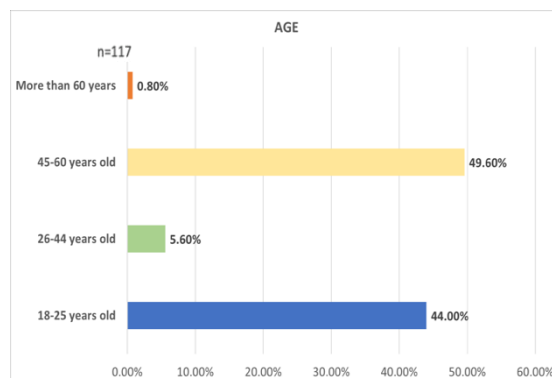


Figure 4.2: Age of respondents

In terms of occupation of these two groups of respondents, it could be classified that the respondents age between 18-25, most they are the student and full-time employees as represent in the chart figure 4-3. While the respondents age between 45-60, most of them are full-time employees and some of them are the part-time employees and unemployed as represent in figure 4-4.

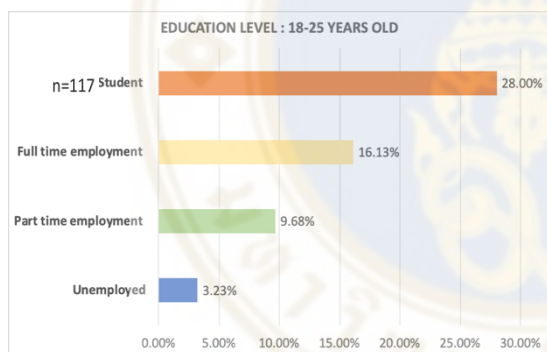


Figure 4.3: Occupation (18-25 years old)

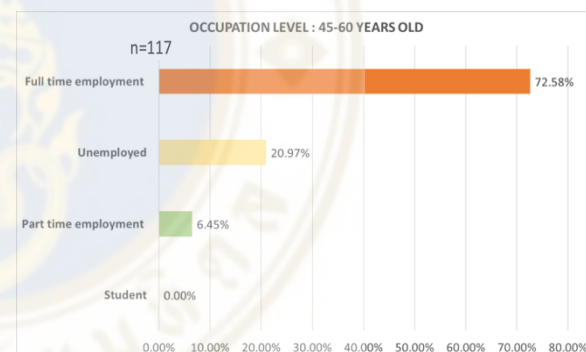


Figure 4.4: Occupation (45-60 years old)

Concerning the education level, as described in figure 4-5, the majority of the respondents age between 18-25 years old graduated high school. Also, some part of them around 36 percent of respondents graduated the bachelor's degree and a few of them graduated the elementary school and master's degree. For people age between 45-60 years old, it is seen from the figure 4-6 that the majority of this group graduated bachelor's degree and the rest graduated high school, master's degree, and elementary

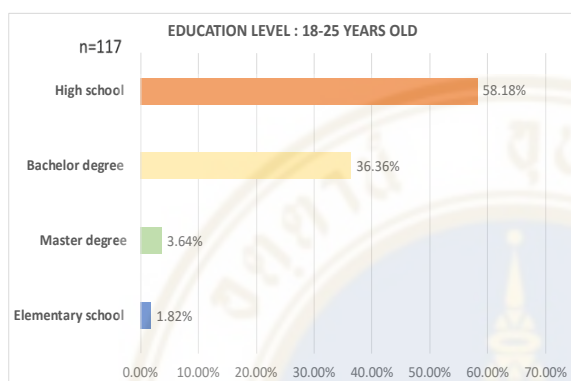


Figure 4.5: Education level (18-25 years old)

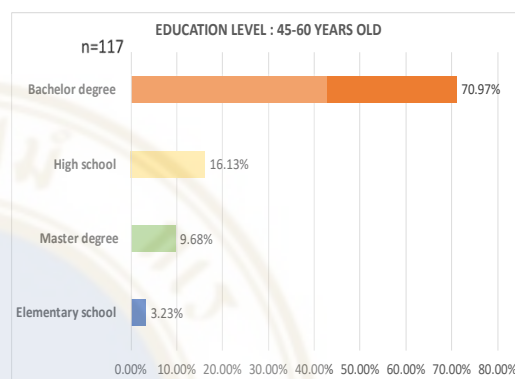


Figure 4.6: Education level (45-60 years old)

4.2 Behavior of using media channels to access political information

Apart from the characteristics of respondents, we included some questions regarding the interest and behavior of the respondents in accessing political information. The result shows that 74.5% of first-time voters and 59.7% of older voters have a high level of political interest as observed from the figure 4-7 that the majority of these two groups pay attention to the politics at the “interested level” and “very interested level”. Though there are the various levels of politic interest but when we gathered the voter turnout for the Thailand general election on March 24, 2019, the result shows in the figure 4-8 that more than 90% of the first-time voters and older voters showed up to vote.

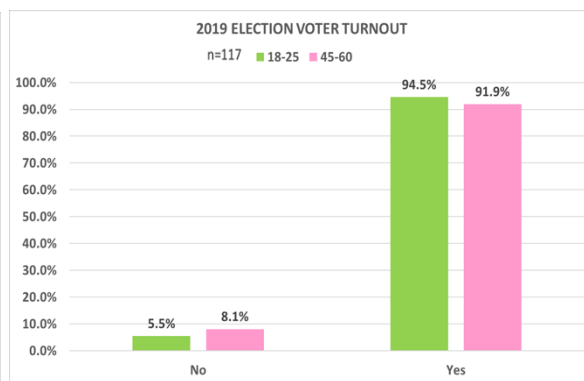
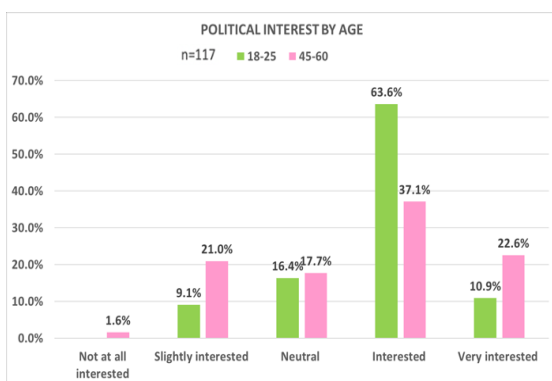


Figure 4.7: Political Interest by Age

Figure 4.8: 2019 Election Voter Turnout

To study the tools that these two groups mostly used to access the political information, we asked voters to rate the score to the media channels that they used most to access the information. In figure 4-9, the result is showed that 81.8% of first-time voters mostly use social media to search for the political information. The second rank is the online website following by the radio, newspaper, and TV respectively. It is seen that none first-time voters access the political information through television. This is opposite from the older voters which 27.4% of them use television as the tools to access political information. The first channel that is used most is social media following by online website, television, radio, and newspaper respectively.

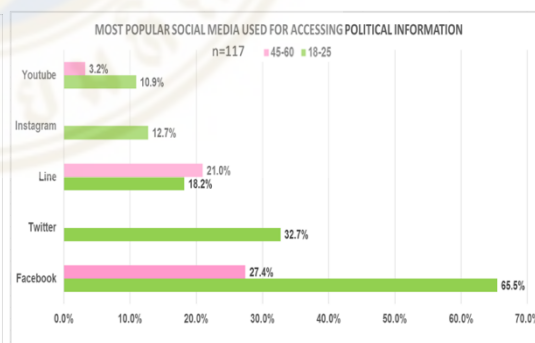
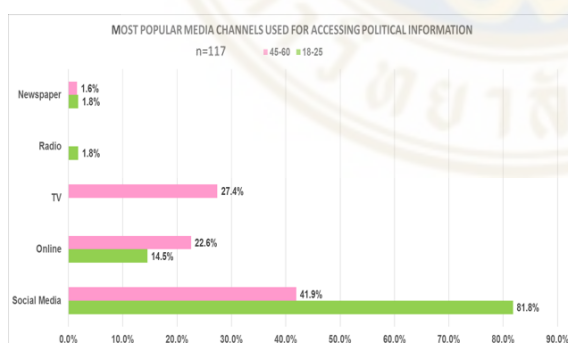


Figure 4.9: Most Popular Media Channels

Figure 4.10: Most Popular Social Media

As the social media is the most popular channel of both group of voters therefore, we created the questions that asked more about the social media that most popular used among these voters. The result is showed in figure 4-10 that the first-time

voters mostly access the political information through Facebook following by Twitter, Line, Instagram, and YouTube respectively while the majority of older voters also voted for Facebook following by Line and YouTube.

We can conclude that Facebook is the most popular social media that two ages of people used for accessing political information.

However, we also asked the respondents to advise the average time spending in consuming the political information and the result showed up in figure 4-10. It is seen that 70.9% of first-time voters tend to consume political information not exceed 15 minutes per time while 90.3% of older voters consume the political information more than ten minutes.

When we asked the respondents about the reason why they access the political information, the result showed that more than 90% of both group of voters consume the political information because they want to update the information. This is their main purpose while a few of older voters consume the political information with the purpose of relaxation and killing time as described in figure 4-11.

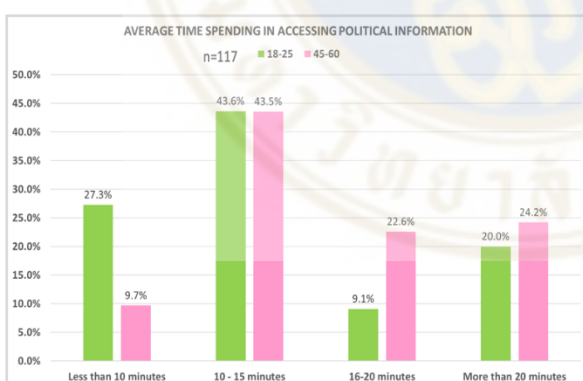


Figure 4.11: Average Time Spending in Political Information

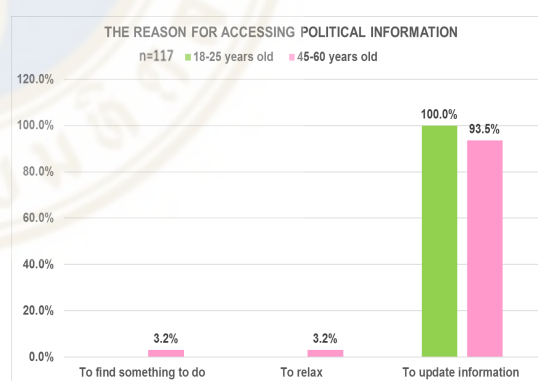


Figure 4.12: Reason for Accessing Political Information

To study the behavior of both group about political issues, we asked the respondents to rate the agreement level to the set of questions that mainly separated into four parts consisted of political expression on social media, political discussion

behavior, political candidate's message and policy and credibility of political candidate and party. The result for each part is as follow:

4.2.1 Political expression on social media, according to figure 4.11, the result is expressed that more than 50% of the first-time voters agree to express their opinion on social media and tend to follow the political pages, political candidate and political party on social media while the majority of older voters like to follow the political pages, political candidate and party on social media as well but only 29.1% of them agree to publicly comment and share the political opinions.

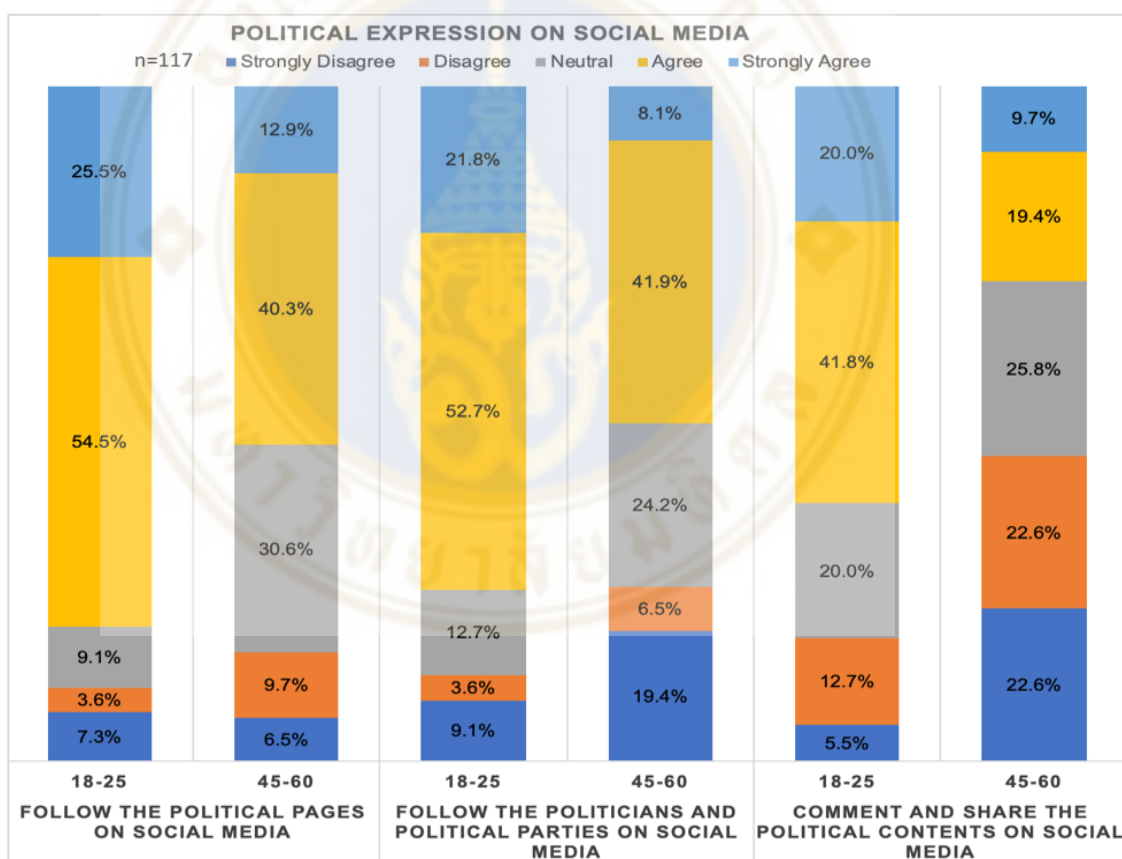


Figure 4.13: Political Expression on Social Media

4.2.2 Political expression behavior, we asked the respondents to rate their agreement to the four activities consisted of discuss political topics with friend, vote for the political party which matched with friend's preference, discuss political topics with parent, vote for the political party which matched with parent's preference). For the first-time voters, the mean scores of these activities are 2.55, 2.38, 2.38 and 2.31 respectively and 50% of older voters are in the disagree and strongly disagree level as described in figure 4-12. From this information, we can conclude that the first-time voters are likely to not discuss about the political topics with their friends and parents as well as do not take the parent and friend political preferences into account when deciding to vote. For the older voters, the means scores of these activities are 3.16, 2.69, 2.95, 2.87 respectively. When we reviewed the frequency of each activity and compared with the mean scores, it can conclude that the majority of older voters like to discuss the political topics with their friend rather than the parents and the level of interesting in friend's political preferences in voting decision is in the neutral level. However, for the parent's preferences, the result is showed that most older voters agree to consider parent's political preference during voting decision.

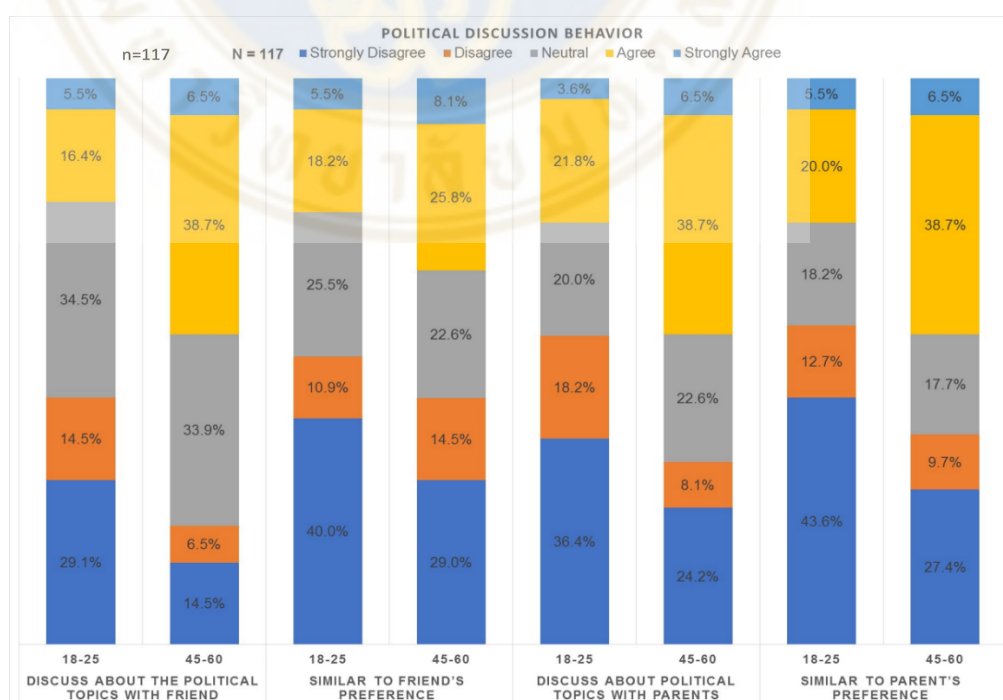


Figure 4.14: Political Discussion Behavior

4.2.3 Political candidate's message and policy, we asked the respondents to rate their agreement to the four activities that affect their voting behavior (well-written policy, the benefit of the policy, political candidate's message and the appropriate language of political candidate's message). For the first-time voters, the mean scores of these activities are 3.96, 4.11, 4.07, and 4.07 respectively while the mean scores of the older voters toward these activities are 4.10, 4.06, 4, and 3.94 respectively. From figure 4.13 the majority of both groups are in the agree and strongly agree level. From this information, we can conclude that the well-written policy and the political candidate's message in appropriate language affect the voting decision of the majority of first-time

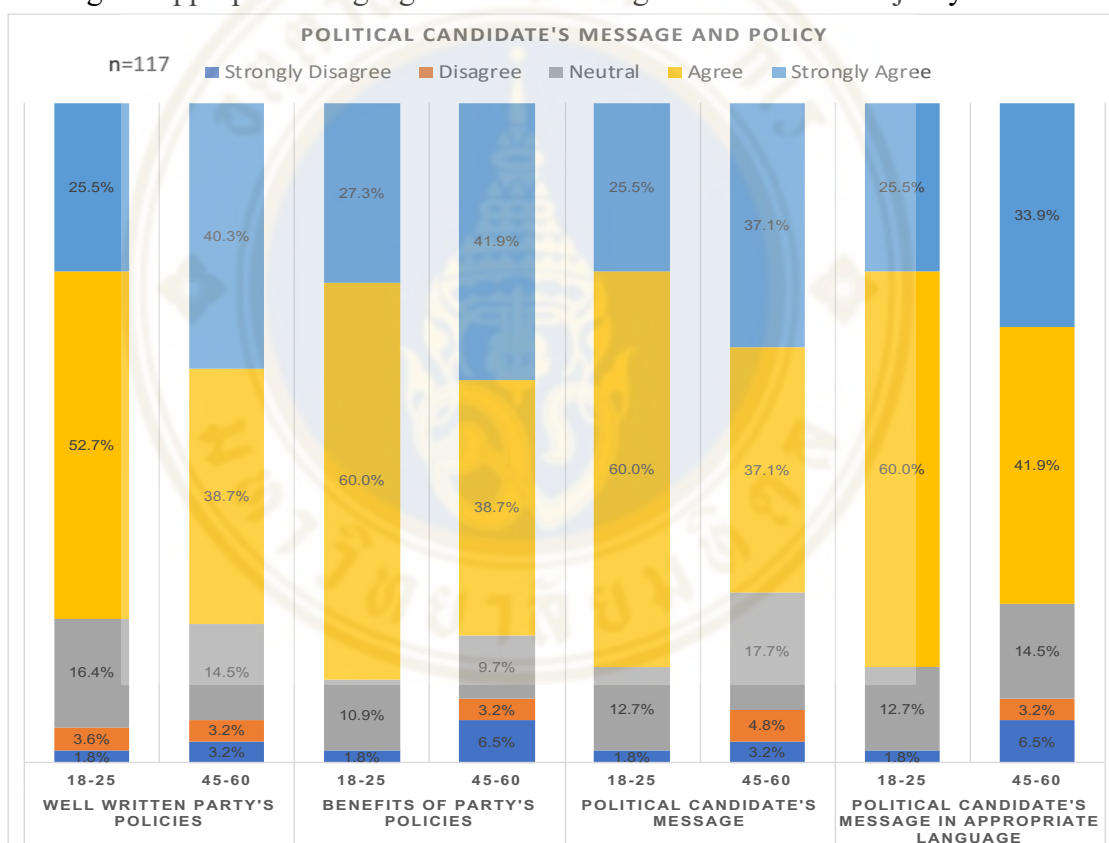


Figure 4.15: Political Candidate's Message and Policy

4.2.4 Credibility of political candidate and party, we asked the respondents to rate their agreement to the five activities that affect to their voting behavior (the credibility of older political and younger candidate, the experiences of political candidate, the preference on young political candidate, the credibility of prime minister candidate, the ability of political party to keep their promises). For the first-time voters, the mean scores of these activities are 2.45, 3.24, 4, 4.24 and 4.18 respectively while the mean scores of the older voters toward these activities are 3.47, 3.68, 2.56, 3.84 and 4.06 respectively. When we compared the frequency in figure 4.14 with the mean scores, we can conclude that the majority of first-time voters disagree that the older political candidate will have more credibility than the younger candidate and they have more preference to the younger political candidate. Moreover, the political candidate's experience, the credibility of prime minister candidate and the ability to keep promise of the political party also affect their voting decision. For the older voters, we can conclude that their majority believe that the older political candidate will have more credibility than the younger candidate and they prefer the younger political candidate in the neutral level. For the other aspect, they have the same belief as the majority of first-time voters in the political candidate's experience, the credibility of prime minister candidate and the ability to keep promise of the political party.

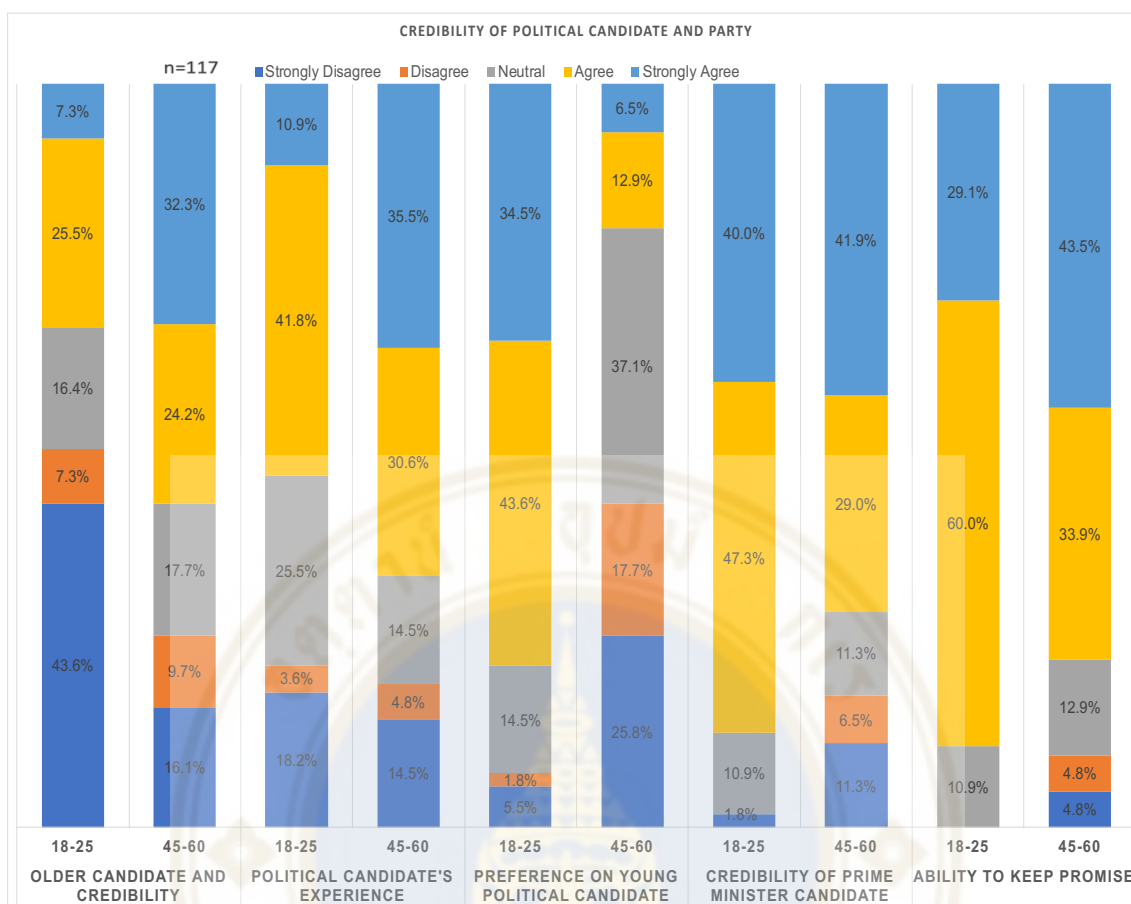


Figure 4.16: Credibility of Political Candidate and Party

4.3 Important Factor Influencing Voter to Vote for Political Party

To determine the factors influencing voting decision of both groups which is also the purpose of this study, we asked the respondents to give the scores to each sub-factors and analyzed to identify which sub-factors could make an impact to the main five factors that we collected in the literature review part. The main five factors consist of trust, political party's policy, political socialization, political candidate message, and political party's brand image. The results of each main factor are described hereunder

4.3.1 Trust, we asked the respondents to rate the important level on the three sub-factors including the credibility of political candidate, credibility of prime minister candidate and credibility of a political party. The result is expressed in figure 4.15 that

all these three sub-factors are important for the majority of first-time voters and older voters to make a decision in political voting. The importance of credibility can make trust become important for voting decision. To analyze the difference in mean score of both groups, we applied the t-Test method to find out the significant difference in the mean scores of each sub-factor among two groups. The hypotheses have been set as hereunder with 5% significance level.

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

From the t-test scores below, as the t values of all sub-factors are in between $-t_{\text{Critical two-tail}}$ and $t_{\text{Critical two-tail}}$. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the average important levels of three sub-factors between first-time voters and older voters do not differ significantly.

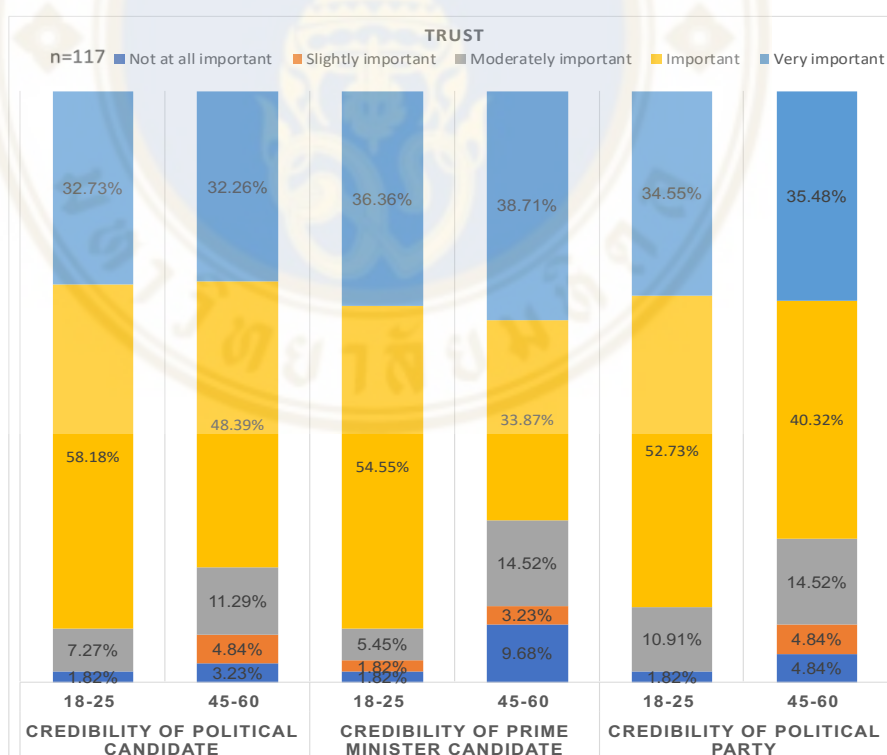


Figure 4.17: Trust

Table 4.1: t-Test result for credibility of prime minister

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Credibility of prime minister candidate		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.218	3.887
Variance	0.618	1.544
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	104	
t Stat	1.741	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.042	
t Critical one-tail	1.660	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.085	
t Critical two-tail	1.983	

Table 4.2: t-Test result for credibility of political party

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Credibility of political party		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.182	3.968
Variance	0.596	1.146
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	111	
t Stat	1.250	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.107	
t Critical one-tail	1.659	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.214	
t Critical two-tail	1.982	

Table 4.3: t-Test result for credibility of political candidate

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Credibility of political candidate		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.200	4.016
Variance	0.533	0.934
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	112	
t Stat	1.168	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.123	
t Critical one-tail	1.659	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.245	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

4.3.2 Political Party Policy, this is the second factor that we gauged the important level on the three sub-factors including the clear and well written of political party's policies, the benefit of policies to the citizen and societies and the practical and realistic of the policies. The result is expressed in figure 4.16 that all three sub-factors are important for the majority of first-time voters and older voters and this leads the policy created by a political party is an important factor. We also applied the t-Test method to test the difference in mean score of each sub-factor among two groups. The hypotheses have been set with 5% significance level.

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

From the t-test scores above, as the t values of three sub-factors are in between $-t$ Critical two-tail and t Critical two-tail. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the average important levels of three sub-factors between first-time voters and older voters do not differ significantly.

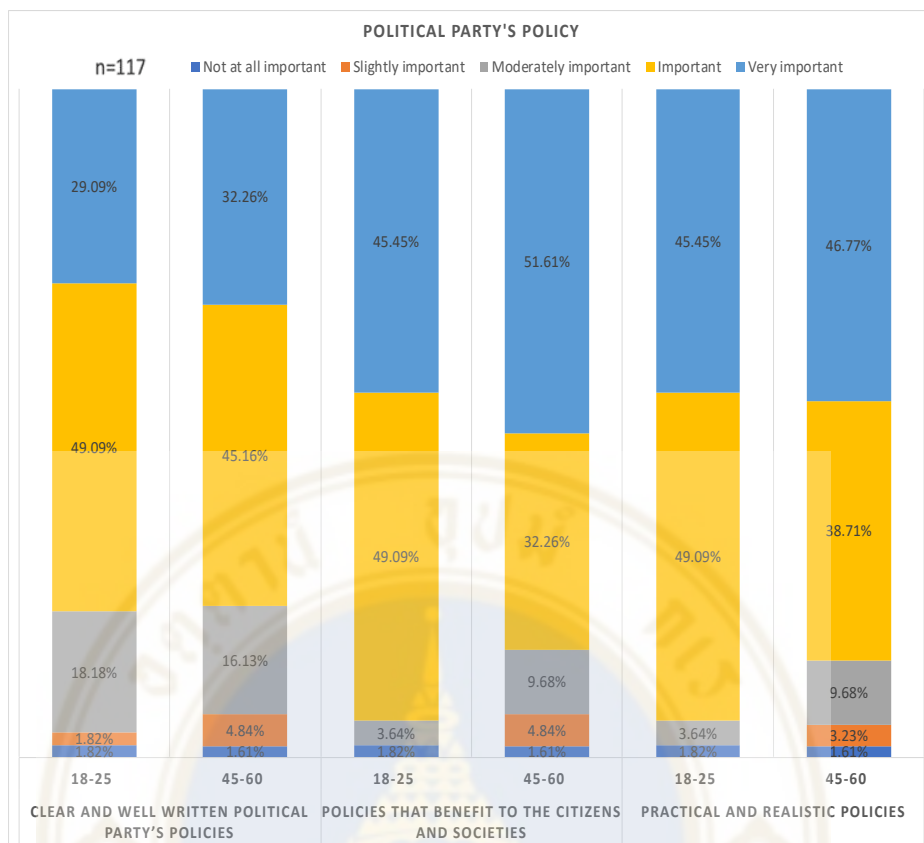


Figure 4.18: Political Party's Policy

Table 4.4: t-Test result for clear and well written political party's policies

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Clear and well written political party's policies		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.018	4.016
Variance	0.722	0.836
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	115	
t Stat	0.013	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.495	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.990	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

Table 4.5: t-Test result for policies that benefit to the citizens and society

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Policies that benefit to the citizens and society		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.364	4.274
Variance	0.532	0.891
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Di	0	
df	113	
t Stat	0.577	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.283	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.565	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

Table 4.6: t-Test result for practical and realistic policies

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Practical and realistic policies		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.364	4.258
Variance	0.532	0.785
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	114	
t Stat	0.706	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.241	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.481	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

4.3.3 Political Socialization, we also measured the important level on the three sub-factors that including the similarity to friend preference, similarity to parent preference and similarity to voter's attitude. The result is expressed in figure 4.17 that the parent and friend's preference are not the important sub-factors that impact to the voting decision of most first-time voters. From the graph, more than 50% of them disagree to treat other people's preferences as an important factor. They will only select the political party if it is consistent with their attitude as represent in the chart. For the older voters, we can conclude that mostly this group considers the parents or family's political preference as the importance factor in moderate or neutral level as the mean score is 3.13 and same as the friend's political preference which the mean score is 2.74. For the voter's attitude, this group treats it as the important factor. Below are the hypotheses to test the difference in mean scores of each sub-factor among two groups with 5% significance level.

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

From the t-test scores above, as the t values of the first two sub-factors i.e. similarity to friend's preference and similarity to parents or family's preference are less than -t Critical two-tail and t Critical two-tail. Therefore, we rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that the average important levels of both sub-factors between first-time voters and older voters differ significantly. For the last sub-factor, similarity to the voter's attitude, there is no difference in average important level as t value is in between -t Critical two-tail and t Critical two-tail.

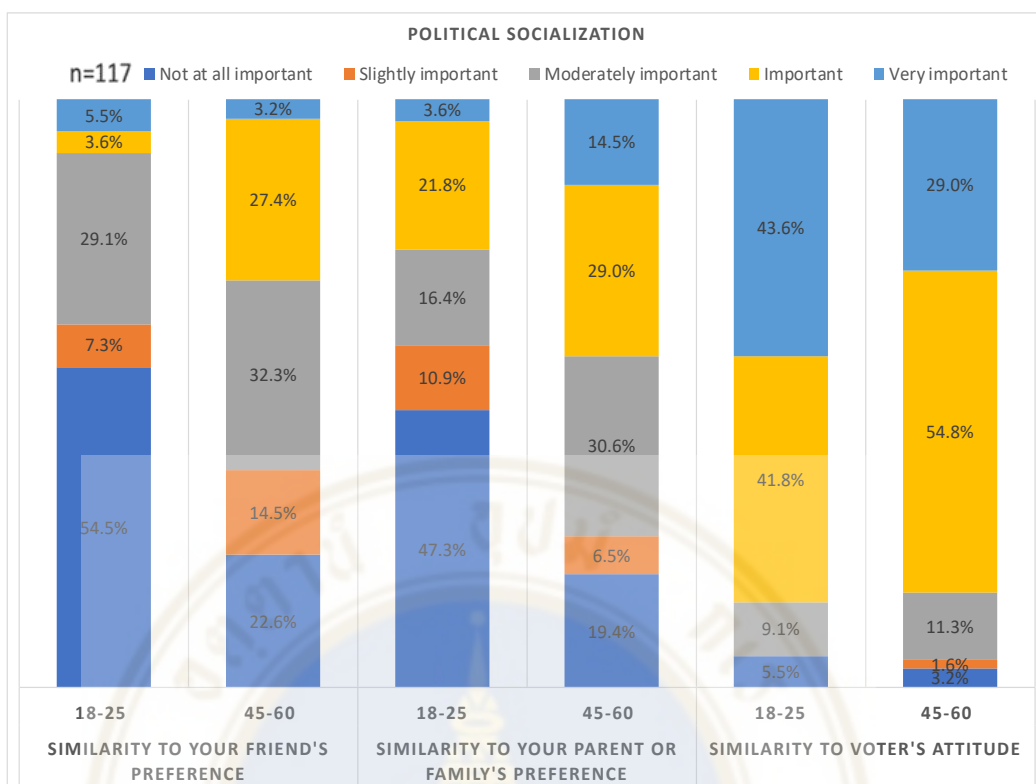


Figure 4.19: Political Socialization

Table 4.7: t-Test result for similarity to your friend's preference

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Similarity to your friend's preference		
	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	1.982	2.742
Variance	1.500	1.408
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	112	
t Stat	-3.400	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000	
t Critical one-tail	1.659	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.001	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

Table 4.8: t-Test result for similarity to your parent or family's preference

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Similarity to your parent or family's preference		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	2.236	3.129
Variance	1.813	1.721
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	113	
t Stat	-3.622	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

Table 4.9: t-Test result for similarity to your voter's attitude

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Similarity to voter's attitude		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.182	4.048
Variance	1.003	0.768
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	0.762	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.224	
t Critical one-tail	1.659	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.447	
t Critical two-tail	1.982	

4.3.4 Political Candidate Message, this is the fourth factor that we measured the important level of both sub-factors including positive political candidate's message and well written political candidate message. The result is expressed in figure 4.18 that both sub-factors are important for the majority of first-time voters and older voters. The hypotheses have been set with 5% significance level to test the difference of mean scores.

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

From the t-test scores above, as the t values of two sub-factors are in between $-t_{\text{Critical two-tail}}$ and $t_{\text{Critical two-tail}}$. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the average important levels of both sub-factors between first-time voters and older voters do not differ significantly.

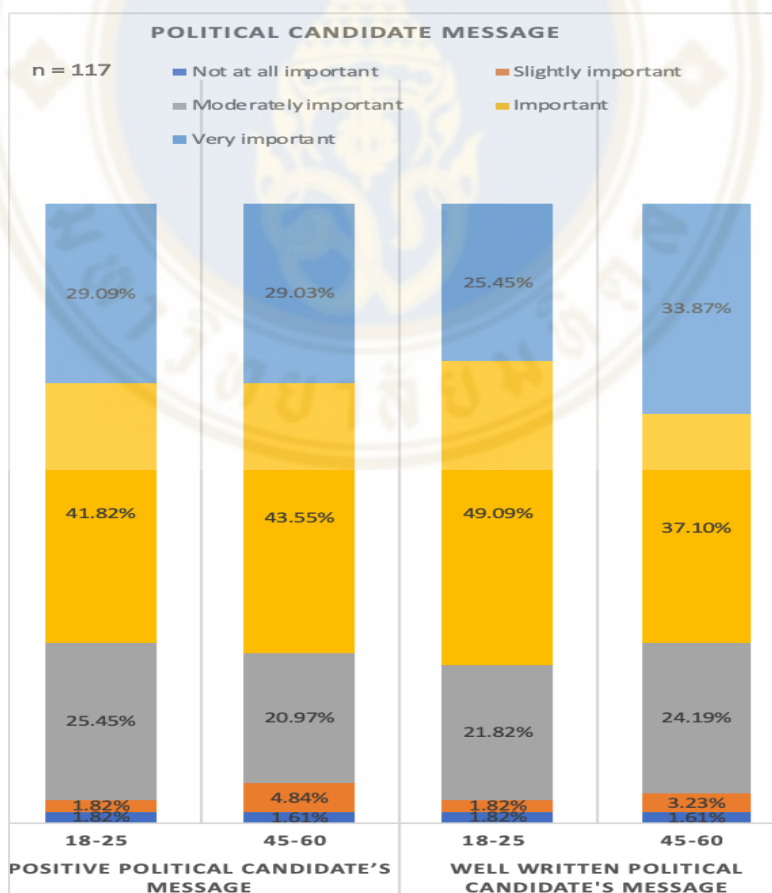


Figure 4.20: Political Candidate Message

Table 4.10: t-Test result for positive political candidate's message

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Positive political candidate's message		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	3.945	3.984
Variance	0.719	0.869
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	115	
t Stat	-0.233	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.408	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.816	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

Table 4.11: t-Test result for well written political candidate's message

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Well written political candidate's message		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	3.945	3.935
Variance	0.793	0.848
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	114	
t Stat	0.059	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.476	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.953	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

4.3.5 Political Party's Brand Image, this is the last factor that we want to find out the important level of both sub-factors including consistency with voter's self-image and word of mouth. The result is expressed in figure 4.19 that it is important for more than 50% of first-time voters and older voters to consider whether the party's brand image is consistent with their self-image or not. However, the majority of first-time voters do not pay attention to word of mouth while the older voters treat word of mouth as an important factor. The hypotheses have been set with 5% significance level to test the difference of mean scores.

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

From the t-test scores above, the t value of the first sub-factor, consistency with voter's self-image is in between -t Critical two-tail and t Critical two-tail. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the average important level of this sub-factor between first-time voters and older voters do not differ significantly. In the meantime, the t value for word of mouth is less than -t Critical two-tail therefore, we rejected the null hypothesis and conclude that the average important level this sub-factor between first-time voters and older voters differ significantly.

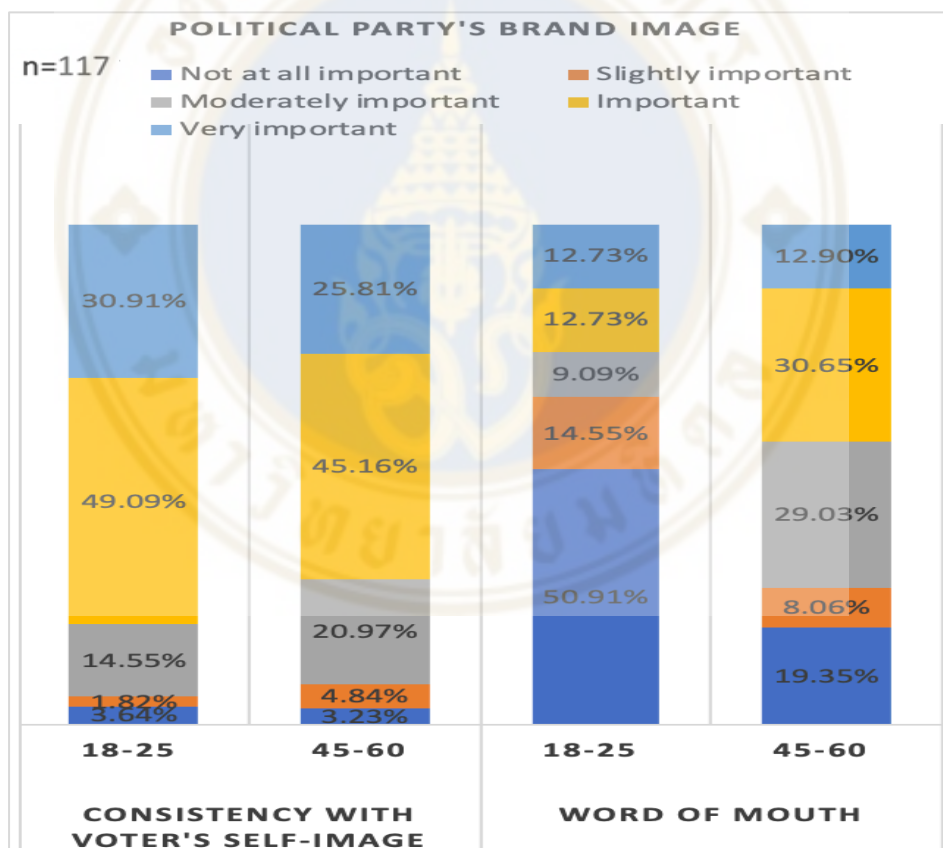


Figure 4.21: Political Party's Brand Image

Table 4.12: t-Test result for consistency with voter's self-image

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Consistency with voter's self image		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	4.018	3.855
Variance	0.870	0.946
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	114	
t Stat	0.927	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.178	
t Critical one-tail	1.658	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.356	
t Critical two-tail	1.981	

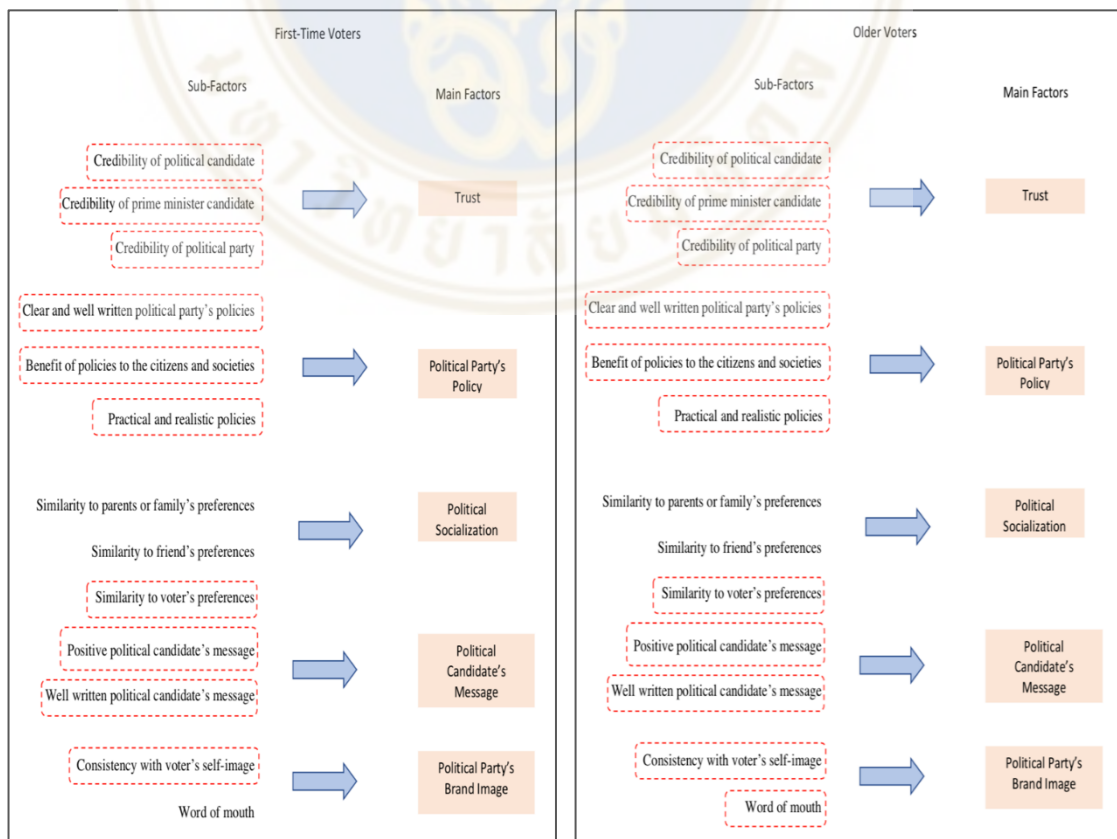
Table 4.13: t-Test result for consistency with word of mouth

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
Word of mouth		
	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	2.218	3.097
Variance	2.248	1.695
Observations	55	62
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	-3.364	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.001	
t Critical one-tail	1.659	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.001	
t Critical two-tail	1.982	

CHAPTER V RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

The purposes of this study are mainly about identifying the most important factors influencing first-time voters and older voters to vote for the political party and find out the different factors that first-time voters and older voters use to complement their voting decision. Apart from identifying the important factors, this study also aims to investigate the behavior of first-time voters and older voters in politics and how they access the political information. The factors used to test in this study were defined from the past studies as clarified in chapter II - Literature Review. There are the main five factors with thirteen sub-factors. The main five factors consist of trust, political party



policy, political socialization, political candidate message, and political party's brand image. We tested these potential factors by constructing the survey and passed it to the 117 respondents who age between 18-25 years old and 45-60 years old. After analyzed, we found out that the important factors that two groups of voters consider during voting decisions are as hereunder.

From the chart above, we discovered that for the first-time voters, there are eleven sub-factors that the frequency level and mean scores are in the important level or above. From this information, we can highlight that all main five factors i.e. trust, political party policy, political socialization, political candidate message, and political party's brand image are the most important factors that first-time voters use when making decision. In the meantime, we found that there are twelve sub-factors that the older voters treat as the important sub-factors influencing their voting decision. However, there is one sub-factor that older voters consider differently from the first-time voters. The older voters determine "word of mouth" as the important sub-factor while the first-time voters consider it as an unimportant sub-factors. Wallace, Walker, Lopez, and Jones (2009) stated that word of mouth is the traditional way of advertising that includes the conversation related to brand. The older consumers might already be habituated with the traditional way of word of mouth as they grew up before the arrival of the internet (Wallace et al., 2009). From this past study, we can conclude the reason that older voters are likely to determine word of mouth as the important sub-factor.

However, after identified the important factors, we also investigated two sub-factors consisted of similarity to parent or family's political preference and similarity to friend's political preference which considered as the unimportant factors. After reviewed the mean scores, we found that the majority of first-time voters do not pay attention to other people's political preferences. They mostly focus on their attitude toward a particular political party. While the majority of older voters determine the importance of parent or family and friend's political preferences in a neutral level which can imply that they pay attention to this sub-factor but not significantly high. From this

analysis, we can conclude that the difference between these sub-factors can affect the difference in voting behavior that could lead to the political conflict which normally happens nowadays.

In conclusion, refer to the question of this study “What factor that impact younger voters and older voters to vote for the political party?”, we can answer that the most important factors are consisted trust, political party policy, Political Socialization, Political Candidate Message, and Political Party's Brand Image. Moreover, to study the difference between first-time voters and older voters about the factors that they consider during voting, we found out that the parent or family and friend's political preferences are the main things that can make the difference in voting decision among both groups.

Also, we analyzed the behavior of first-time voters and older voters in politics and how they access the political information. The result shows that the majority of both groups access the political information through social media and Facebook is the most popular social media application for the political information accessing. The average time for consuming the political information is in range of 10-15 minutes and the purpose of accessing political information is mainly to update information.

5.2 Recommendation

The political party is compared as the brand that stands in the political market. The core target of the political party is to win the citizen's mind. Therefore, studying voting behavior and factors that impact the citizen in voting decision are necessary to many political parties. This study is mainly discussed in perspective of political behavior and expectation. It describes the potential factors that Thai citizens including young people and old people use to construct the decision-making process and characterizes the relevance politic behavior. From this study, it is clearly justified that there is the incremental of young voter's attention toward Thailand politics. They increase the degree of awareness in political issues and eager to spread their public

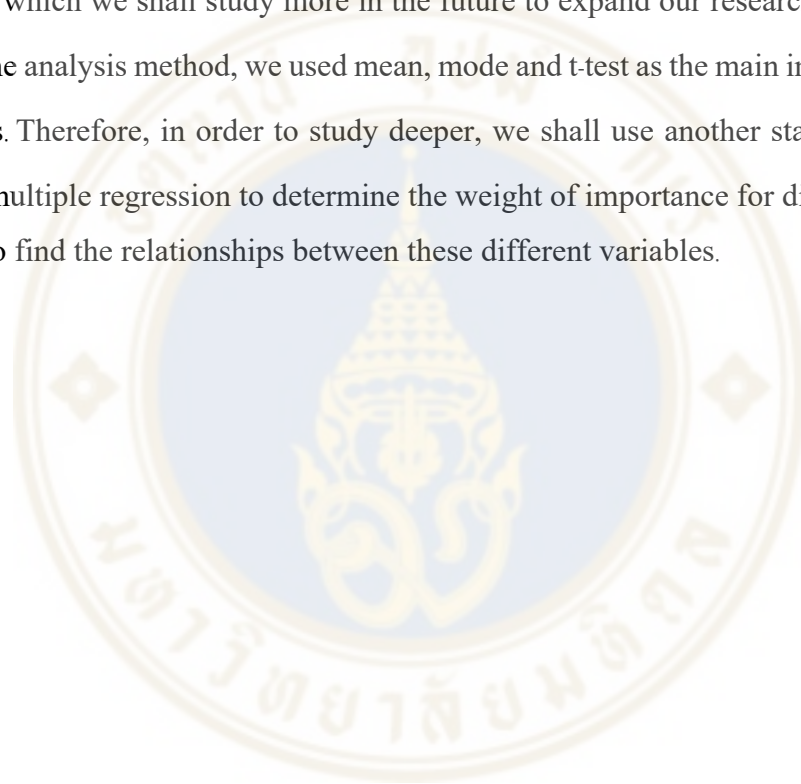
opinion through social media which currently become the major role for broadcasting political information. It is the new change in Thailand when we notice a lot of young voter care more in politics and try to move beyond red-shirt and yellow-shirt protests. The potential factors represent voter's expectation that the political parties should make use of to plan the strategy and political marketing that fit with the target citizens. The factors exposed in this study could help the political party and candidate to catch up political trend among voters. Especially the young voters who is soon-to-be the majority part of eligible voters, if the party and candidate could well perceive their need, it will create the competitive advantage that can help to overcome their competitors. Moreover, to focus itself in the right position, it is important for the political party and political candidate to realize the expectation of the citizens. However, not only applying to the politics industry but this study can also be applied to other business that related to politics such as the advertising company and public relation agency. Nowadays, advertising company and PR agency play a major role in communication with the citizens during the election period. Many political parties nowadays need these advertising and PR consultants to help them conduct the political campaign that maximize voter's attentions. Therefore, empathy in voting behavior of citizens can assist the company to plan wisely how to set the efficiency advertisement and campaigns that fulfils the citizen's desire.

5.3 Limitation and Future Research

There are some limitations of this study that should be addressed. First is about the limitation of sample size. We got the good collaboration from 117 respondents who live in suburban area to share their various thoughts and attitude through answering the questionnaire. When we firstly launched our questionnaire to those respondents, they informed that they have never been asked this kind of political questions before. This is their first time to complete the political questionnaire and they preferred it. This signal

that in fact there are many people who would like to share and exchange the political opinions.

If we could approach the whole population to join our survey, it will help to increase the reliability of our study and reduce the bias degree. The second limitation is about the number of factors influencing voter's decision. In this study, there are only main five factors with thirteen sub-factors which selected from the past studies. We assumed that there might be the other interesting factors and sub-factors related to the politics which we shall study more in the future to expand our research. The last one is about the analysis method, we used mean, mode and t-test as the main indicators for data analysis. Therefore, in order to study deeper, we shall use another statistics technique called multiple regression to determine the weight of importance for different variables and also find the relationships between these different variables.



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Appendix A: Questionnaire

Part I: General Information

1. Are you the Thai citizen?

- Yes
- No (End : Thank you for your kind participation in this questionnaire)

2. Have you ever voted in the general Thailand election?

- Yes
- No (End : Thank you for your kind participation in this questionnaire)

Part II: Accessing Political Information Behavior

1. How interested are you in the Thai politics?

- Not at all interested
- Slightly interested
- Moderately interested
- Interested
- Very interested

2. Did you vote for the latest Thailand election on March 24, 2019?

- Yes (go to question no.5)
- No (go to question no.6)

3. For the Thailand election on March 24, 2019, was the political party you voted similar to your parent or family's preference?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

4. Please advise the frequency of accessing political information

- Everyday
- Almost everyday
- 2-3 times a week
- Occasionally

5. Please rate the score to media channels that you mostly use to access political information (5 = most frequently used, 1= rarely used)

- Television
- Radio
- Newspaper
- Social media
- Online website

6. Please rate the score to social media that you mostly use to access political information (5 = most frequently used, 1= rarely used)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Line

7. Please choose the average time you spend in reading political information (per time)

- Less than 5 minutes
- 10-15 minutes
- 15-20 minutes
- More than 30 minutes

8. Please choose the reason why you access the political information

- To update information
- To relax and entertain
- To find something to do
- Other

9. For each item below, please check the box that most represent your level of agreement

Items	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I actively engage in political discussion by showing my opinion on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Line)					
I follow many pages on social media that discuss about politics					
I comment and share political contents on social media					
I follow some politicians and political parties on social media					
I discuss the political topic with parents					
I discuss the political topic with friends					

Items	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree 4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I shall vote for the particular political party if it is similar to my parent's vote					
I shall vote for the particular political party if it is similar to my friend's vote					
I shall vote for the particular political party if its policies are easy to understand and well written					
I shall vote for the particular political party if its policies benefit to me					
I feel that the political candidate's message can influence me to vote for particular political party.					
The political candidate's message that is well presented in the appropriate language can influence me to vote for particular political party.					
I shall vote for the particular political party that seems to have the ability to do what it promises.					

Items	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I believe that the older political candidate seems to have the higher credibility than the younger political candidate					
I believe that the high experience of political candidate can increase the level of candidate's credibility					
I shall vote for the particular political party that contains many young political candidates.					
I think that the prime minister candidate can increase trust to the political party					

10. For each factor below, please rate the factors that important for you to make decision on voting political party

Factors	Not at all important (1)	Not important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Important 4)	Very important (5)
Credibility of political candidate					
Credibility of prime minister candidate					
Credibility of political party					
Clear and well written political party's policies					
Policies that benefit to the citizens and society					
Similarity to your parents or family's preferences					
Similarity to your friend's preferences					
Similarity to your attitude					
Positive political candidate's message					
Well written political candidate's message					
Consistent with voter's self-image					
Word of mouth					

Part III: Demographics**1. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female

2. What age are you in?

- 18-23 years old
- 24-44 years old
- 45-60 years old
- More than 60 years old

3. What is your occupation?

- Student
- Full time employment
- Part time employment
- Unemployed

4. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Other

5. Please advise your highest level of education

- Elementary School
- High School
- Bachelor Degree
- Master Degree
- Doctorate Degree