

2022



GENERAL ELECTION

Pre-Election Voter Survey Report



Fijian Elections Office
My Election. My Fiji

This Report has been developed by the Fijian Elections Office [**FEO**] to assist both the FEO and other stakeholders in understanding the electoral landscape from the voter's point of view. The FEO does not take liability for any incorrect representation or use of the data/ information contained therein. The results tabulated in the report are derived from survey conducted by field staff for a select period of time and may be relevant for reference to that specific moment in time. The FEO will not be liable for misuse of the information contained in this Report.

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ISBN: 978-982-9176-39-4



Fijian Elections Office

My Election. My Fiji

2022 General Election Pre-Election Voter Survey Report

VISION

Our vision is to be recognised as a professional institution that conducts fair and credible Elections broadly representing the will of the Fijian people.

MISSION

Our mission as Fiji's election management body is to implement internationally recognized election best practices in accordance with the law, effectively regulate political parties and efficiently register eligible Fijians to ensure that we deliver the highest quality of election services under the supervision of the Electoral Commission.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Right to vote

Every citizen over the age of 18 years has the right to vote by secret ballot.

One person, One vote, One value

Every voter has one vote, with each vote being of equal value.

A credible single National Register of Voters

Every registered voter shall be listed on a single National Register of Voters.

Independence, Impartiality and Neutrality

The Fijian Elections Office is an independent body and shows no preference in either speech or action for any individual candidate or political party.

Excellence in Service Delivery

Provide highest quality of electoral services to all Fijians in a professional, effective and timely manner.

Good Governance

The Fijian Elections Office values accountability, honesty, integrity and transparency in all its transactions and will ensure that all legislative disclosures are properly and adequately done.

Participation

Empowering every Fijian to take ownership of the election through active involvement.

Innovation

Strive towards continuous, innovative and practical solutions to contribute towards the evolution of electoral practices in Fiji.

Verifiability

In elections, to mechanise Fijian Elections Office processes so that given the same data and assumption, an independent and impartial Observer can produce the same results.

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Foreword by the Supervisor of Elections

Bula Vinaka

It gives me great pleasure to present this first ever pre-election survey conducted in Fiji by the Fijian Elections Office [**FEO**]. This survey was born from the FEO's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan where the FEO has heavily emphasized on initiatives to enhance voter participation in the 2022 General Election.

While voter participation in an election is dependent on many factors, there is a lack of scientific statistical data on the knowledge, views and understanding of voters. There are several commentaries and claims that surface in discussions relating to participation in elections. One must keep in mind that since the introduction of voluntary voting in Fiji, the number of invalid votes has not risen above 1% in comparison to 6.4% in 2006, 11.7% in 2001 etc.

This survey builds on the survey that was done in 2020 to understand the voter knowledge, views and understanding of voters when it comes to elections. The survey report provided, for the first time an opportunity to develop familiarity with the behavior, perceptions and aspirations of the most important stakeholder in the election, the voter.

The direct results from this survey were presented to the FEO senior management prior to the commencement of the FEO's 'Know Your Election' [**KYE**] campaign. The data assisted the operations team as well as the awareness team in formulating the awareness drive in terms of the reach, access and coverage. The type of information that the FEO has to take to the voters was also formulated based on the responses in the survey.

The FEO also used results from this survey to organize the information dissemination program. The type of media that is used for marketing was determined through the survey results. The survey also allowed the FEO to understand the extent to which fake news, misinformation and disinformation has penetrated into the Fijian public sphere. Based on the survey, the FEO will implement measures to assist Fijians with filtering the information that they access.

The analysis of the survey results is indeed fascinating. In some areas, we carried out further intrusive analysis to prove certain hypotheses or disprove other offered opinion. The results and the analyses will allow the reader to understand the Fijian Electoral environment better. Of course, you may have more questions, and that is the birth of another survey.

I would like to congratulate Neelam Prasad, Manager Public Relations, for another successful survey and for this comprehensive report with many intriguing data sets.

Thank you.

Mohammed Saneem
Supervisor of Elections

Acknowledgements by Project Lead

The Pre-Election Voter Survey for the 2022 General Election was designed to provide me and my team with valuable data and guidance in terms of the gaps in the messaging on elections, together with an overall understanding of the information landscape in Fiji, particularly in terms of the type of medium to reach voters.

The survey results were collected with the hard work and efforts of over 90 survey assistants as well as the Divisional Managers and their staff. The survey provided us some very interesting data which will be effective in the long-term as well as the short-term planning of messaging to the Fijian voters.

I would like to acknowledge the Supervisor of Elections, Mr Mohammed Saneem, for his guidance and support throughout the course of this project especially in the analysis and write-up of the survey report.

Furthermore, I would also like to acknowledge the FEO Directors Anaseini Seinimoli and Sanjeshwar Ram as well as the Divisional Managers; Litia Sema, Raajan Jattan, Lasaro Naivalu and Viliame Vuiyanuca for their support.

My sincerest appreciation also to the following FEO team members for their assistance:

- Graphics Designer-Deniel Niraj
- Manager Development Services -Amendra Chand
- Programmers -Divnesh Prasad, Joseph Sharma and Nathaniel Raju
- Public Relations Officer- Jennis Naidu

Neelam Prasad

Manager Public Relations.

Introduction

The Pre-Election Voter Survey ['PVS'] is designed to determine various influences and rationale as well as factors that impinge on the decision-making process of the voter. As is normal for surveys of this nature, the survey starts with determining the background of the voter in terms of the education, the employment as well as the locality of the voter so that the data is well spread out and at the same time, the data is representative of a broader spectrum of the population.

The PVS was officially launched on 21 January 2022 with over 90 staff engaged to carry out the nationwide exercise in addition to data collection at the FEO's Voter Services Centres. At the end of the exercise, a total of 9,576 responses were received. On 24 February 2022, the raw data was presented to the Senior Managers of the FEO. All four (4) divisions, including the island of Rotuma were captured in the survey.

Methodology

The PVS was conducted in two (2) parts:

1. Collection of survey responses from the field for three (3) weeks during which the FEO staff went around the country collecting responses from a sample population. The responses were also collected at the FEO's 14 Voter Services Centres.
2. Analysis of results and compilation of report pertaining to the data.

PVS Timeline

The PVS was conducted between 21 January 2022 to 11 February 2022.

PVS Platform

An Online Form was used for data collection and the analysis was done against voter registration data for validation purposes. The questionnaires were developed by the Project lead and approved by the Supervisor of Elections.

Quality Control

The data that has been collected from the 9,576 responses has been compiled following a quality assurance process. The quality assurance process was designed to remove any data that has been compiled through improper survey mechanisms based on complaints received from the members of the public and also where there were repeated voter numbers.

The individuality of the subjects interviewed was maintained through the use of VoterCard numbers. Each voter is given a unique Electronic Voter Registration number which is printed on the VoterCard and as such, any voter who may have been interviewed more than once would have had their responses removed from the survey. The 9,576 responses still provide a good baseline for the analysis to be conducted.

Questions

The survey divided the questions into five (5) different categories. The first category captured the voter registration information of the survey respondents followed by their access to information, and the management of the information they received with a focus on the platforms that the respondents relied on for election information.

This section also concentrated specifically on fake news, disinformation and misinformation and survey respondents were asked to provide information on this particular aspect. The latter part of the survey investigated the interests of the voters in terms of their interest in politics, their expectations regarding the announcement of the election date, as well as, general voting indicators such as reading of manifestos and their intention to vote in the next election.

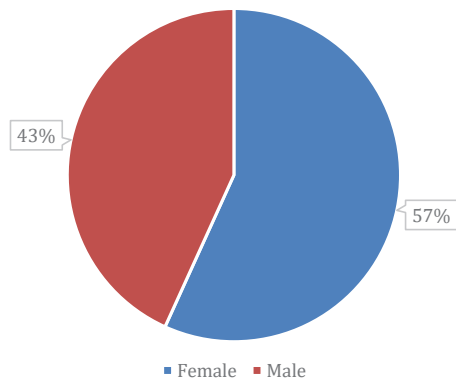
The final section of the survey tested the confidence of the voters in terms of their basic human rights in elections, namely, the right to choose the candidate of their choice and the right to secrecy of the ballot.

Note: The questions were not compulsory so survey respondents had the option to not answer one (1) or more questions and any analysis that was conducted was done on the responses that were received.

National Summary

Of the 9,576 survey respondents, 5,438 were females and 4,138 were males.

Distribution of respondents by gender



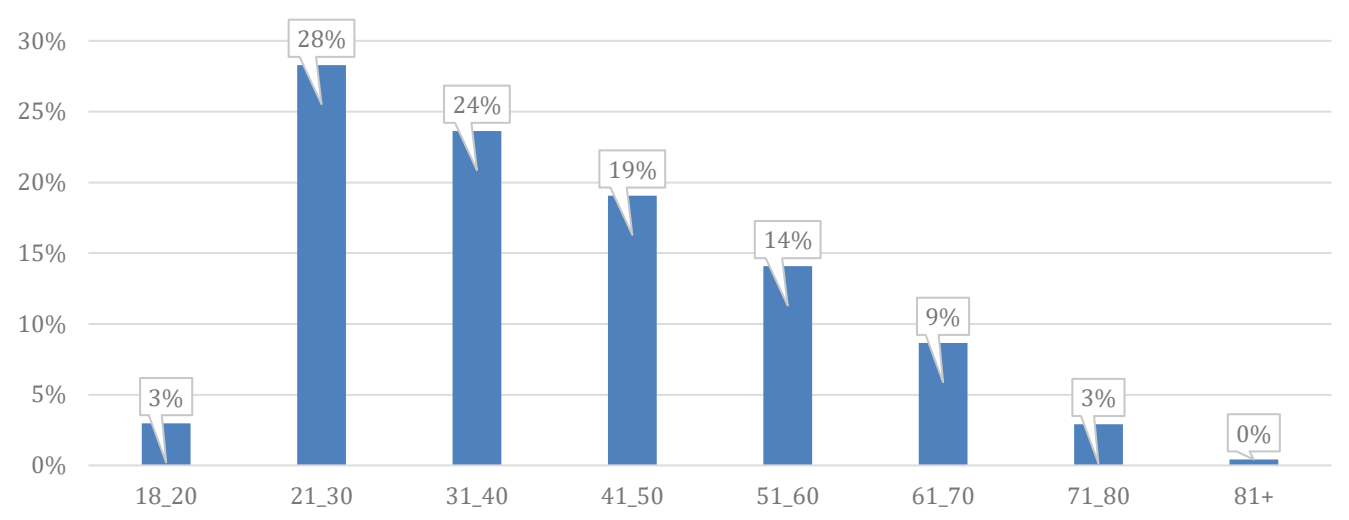
Female	5,438
Male	4,138
Total	9,576

As at 31 December 2021, men currently make up 49.99% of the National Register of Voters [‘NRV’] with 332,198 registered voters while women make up 50% of the NRV with 332, 283 voters.

The gender distribution in the survey is relatively similar to the NRV and the sample can be considered a good enough representation of the voting population in terms of gender.

Distribution of respondents by age

The age breakdown of the survey respondents is determined from the voter registration data and it is presented below:



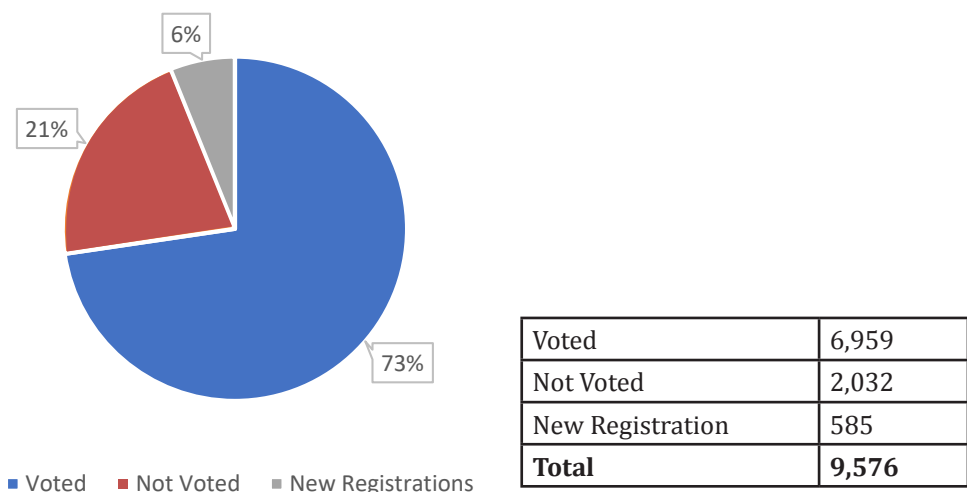
Gender	18_20	21_30	31_40	41_50	51_60	61_70	71_80	81+	Total
Female	175	1575	1347	996	741	423	157	24	5438
Male	110	1134	916	829	606	405	122	16	4138
Total	285	2709	2263	1825	1347	828	279	40	9576

The 21-30 age group had the highest number of participants in the survey. This group makes up 22% of the NRV. The 31-40 cohort had the second highest number of participants. This cohort makes up 24% of the NRV.

The age distribution in the sample, is very much similar to the distribution in the NRV as per voter statistics from 31 December 2021.

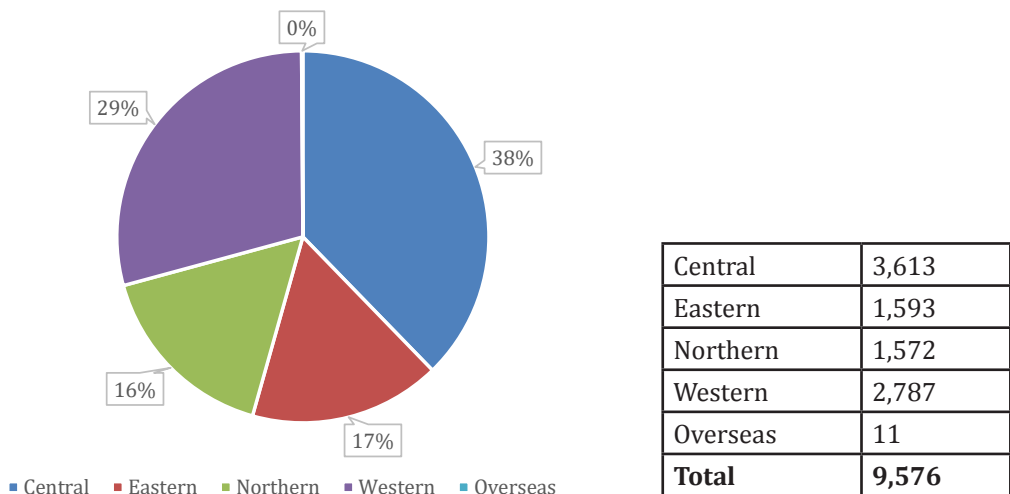
Distribution of respondents by 2018 voter turnout

It is important to ascertain what percentage of the sample voted in the 2018 General Election and what percentage did not vote. Of the 9,576 survey respondents, 6% were new registrations since 2018.



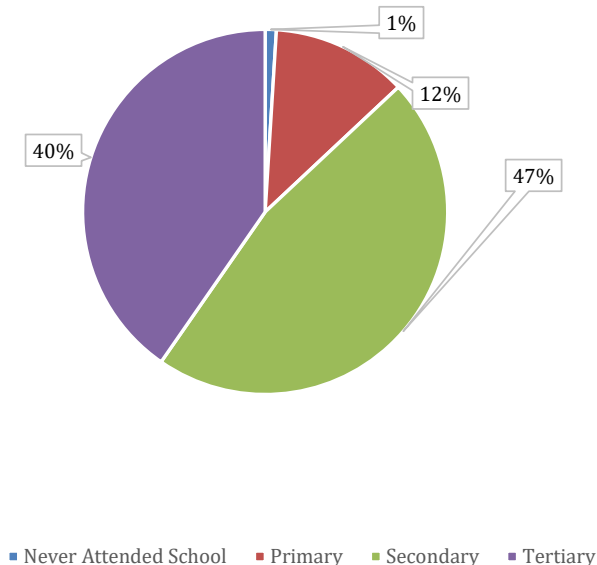
Distribution of respondents by division

The chart below shows the distribution of the voting sample based on geography.



Educational Background

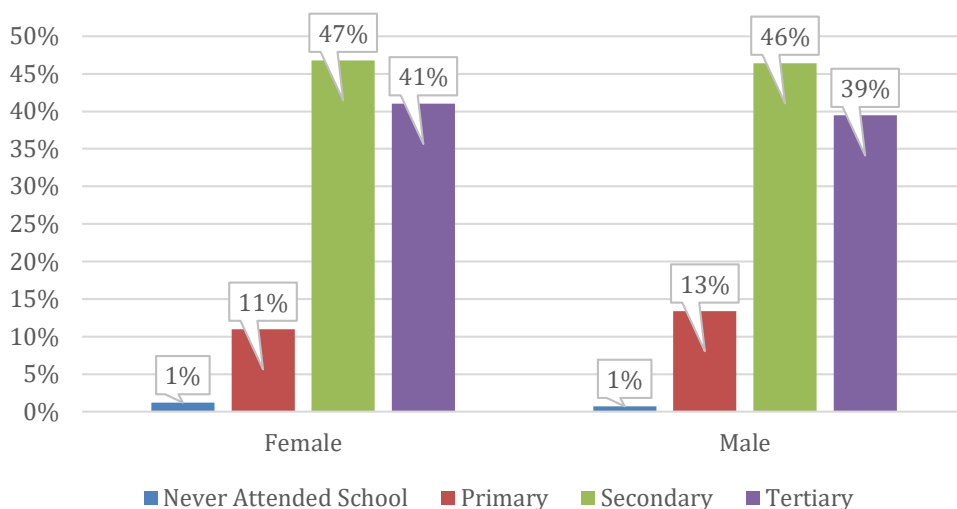
Based on the survey responses, 47% of the voters had secondary school qualification and 40% of them had acquired tertiary level education. 12% had primary level education and 1% of the survey respondents indicated that they had never attended school.



Never Attended School	94
Primary	1,146
Secondary	4,442
Tertiary	3,843
Total	9,525

Educational background by gender

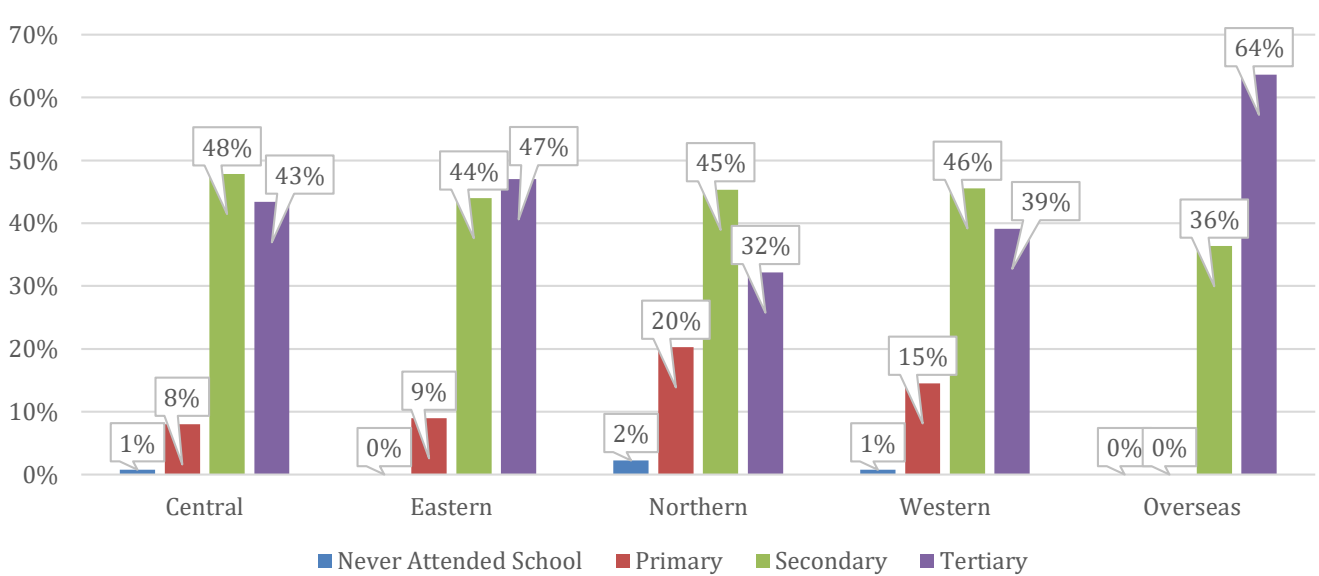
As noted earlier, 57% of the respondents were female. The graph below provides a breakdown of the education levels of the respondents by gender.



The education breakdown is similar for both genders. Interestingly, a higher percentage of female respondents had attained secondary and tertiary level education compared to their counterparts.

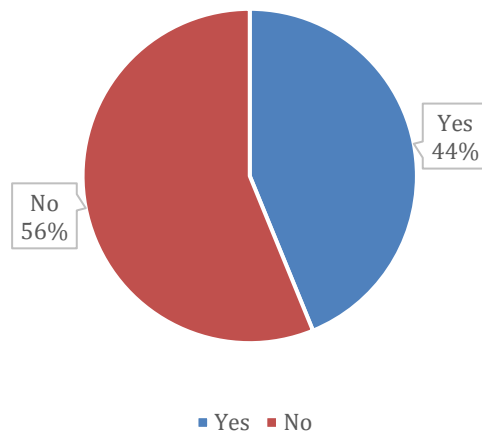
Educational background by division

It is also important to ascertain the education levels of the respondents by locality. Below is a graph outlining the education levels by each division.



Employment Background

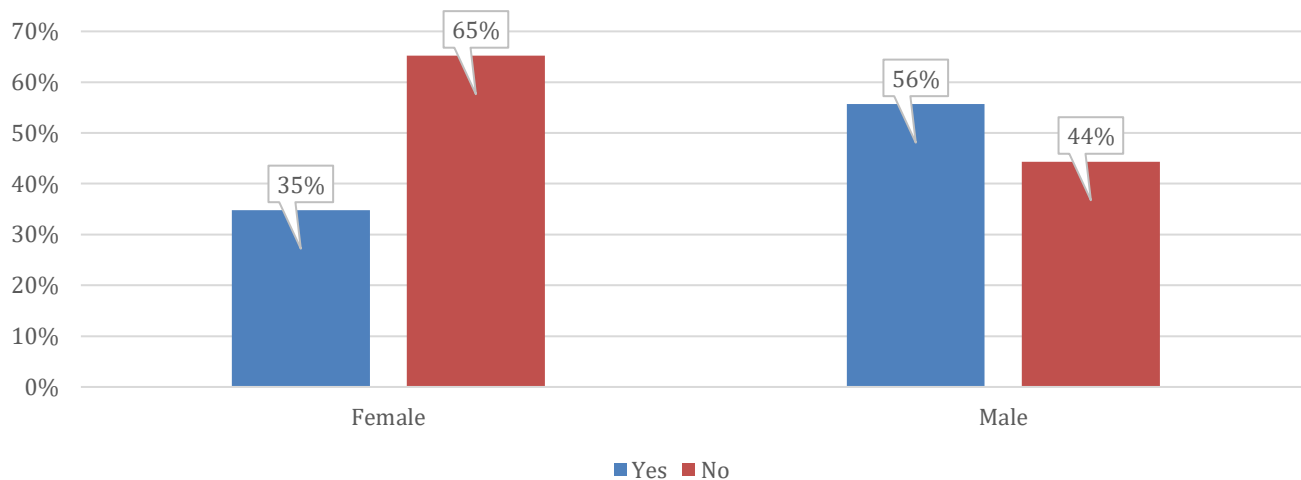
The survey also captured the employment data of voters and as per the survey, 56% of the respondents indicated they were not employed while 44% indicated that they were.



No	4,153
Yes	5,336
Total	9,499

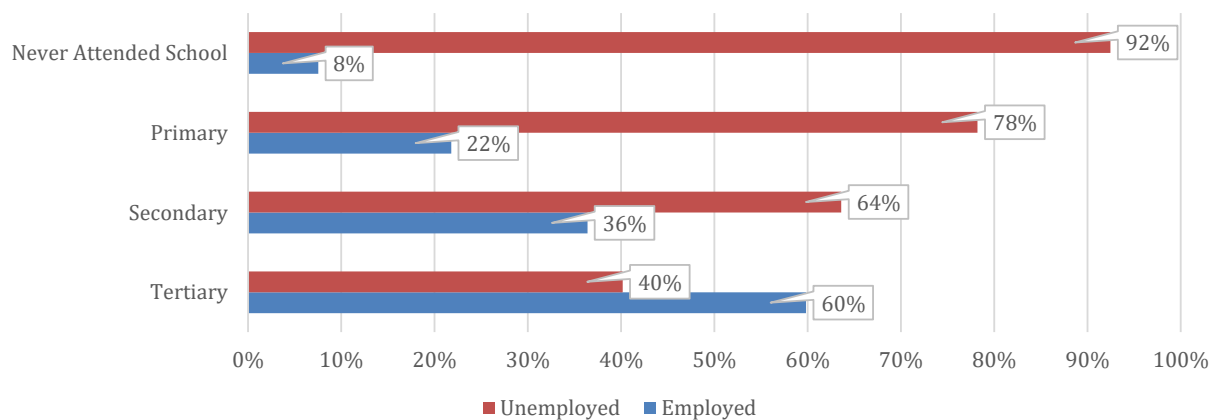
Employment background by gender

The graph below shows the employment status by gender. It is noted that 65% of females were not in employment while 56% of the males were employed when the survey was conducted.



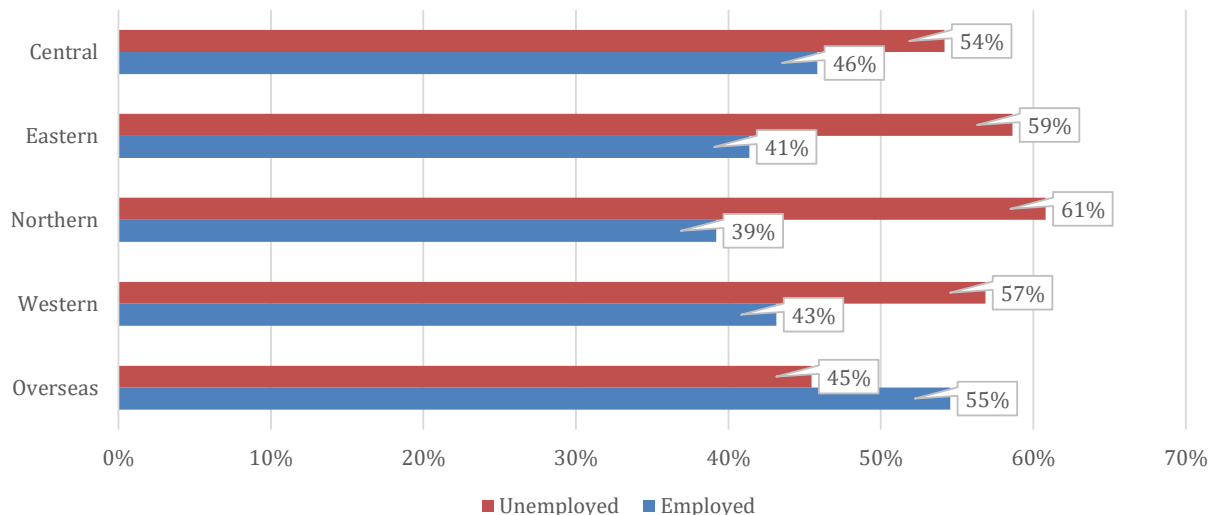
Employment background by education

It is also possible to determine the education levels of the respondents and to see if they are in employment. The highest number of unemployed people were the ones that did not attend school.



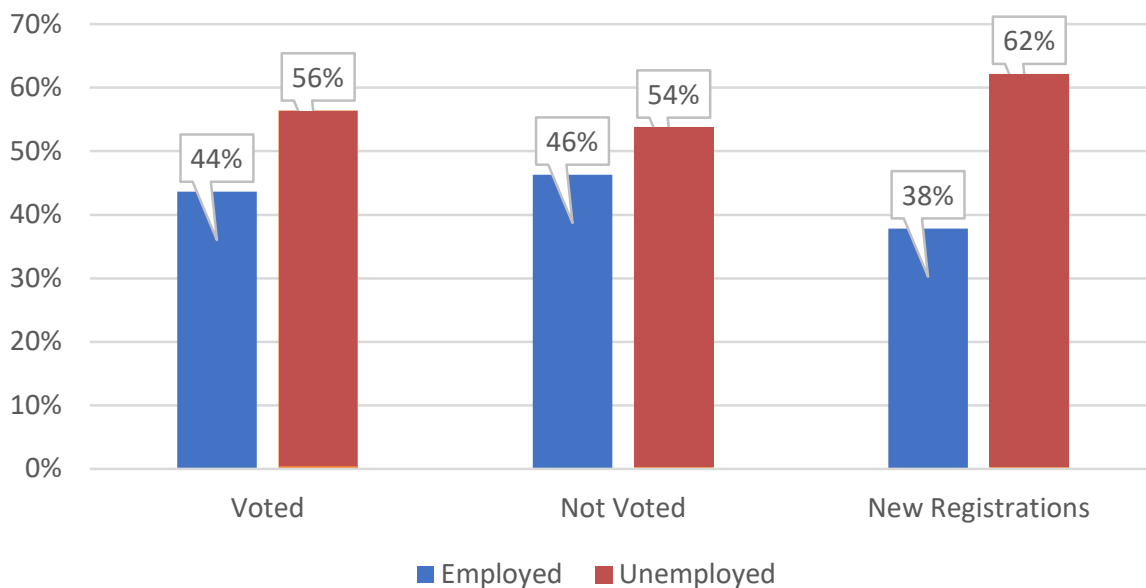
Employment background by division

The rate of unemployment across Fiji appears to be consistent. On average 40% of the respondents in all divisions are employed.



Employment background by 2018 voter turnout

The table below shows the current employment status of the survey respondents against the 2018 voter turnout data.



The Survey Questions

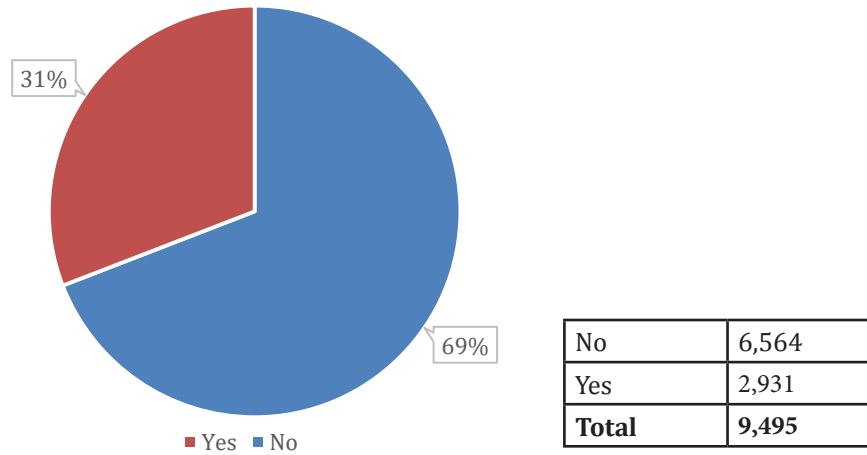
List of Questions	Explanatory Notes
<p>Questions on Voting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you upgraded to the new Blue VoterCard? 2. Have you changed your residential address since the 2018 General Election? 3. Did you know in order to vote in a General Election in Fiji, you have to circle, tick or cross the number of the candidate you wish to vote for on a Ballot Paper? 	<p>These questions will provide the FEO with critical information on the current situation in terms of voter preparation and readiness for the 2022 General Election.</p>
<p>Information Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where do you get most of your election information from? 2. In the last 6 months, how often have you come across posts on Facebook by the Fijian Elections Office? 3. Have you noticed fake news on social media websites? 4. If so, on which of the following social media sites have you come across fake news/ misinformation? 	<p>These questions looked at the information consumption patterns of the voters and the level of awareness on fake news and misinformation. It also sought feedback on the effectiveness of social media marketing for the FEO.</p>
<p>Behavioral Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How often do you verify that the information you are reading on social media is true? 2. Have you ever shared something on social media based only on the headline, without reading the full article? 3. Do you verify the information you receive on social media about elections? 4. How much interest do you take in politics? 	<p>These questions aimed to identify patterns of behavior among the respondents and how they interact on social media.</p>

<p>Aspiration Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If it were up to you, when should the date of the next General Election be announced? This is the date announcing when election will be held. It's not the date of the election. 2. Are you planning to read the manifestos of all the Political Parties? 3. Will you vote in the next General Election? 	<p>These questions sought the opinion of voters on their preference for the election date. It also attempted to identify voting trends for the next General Election.</p>
<p>Perception Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have the freedom to vote for whomever I want in an election. 2. The elections process in Fiji provides equal opportunities for all voters to take part in elections. 3. My Vote is secret. 	<p>In this section, statements were given and respondents were asked to share their perceptions. The primary aim for it was to gauge voter confidence in the Fijian electoral process.</p>

Note: The survey responses are presented as summaries in this Report.

Question 1: Have you upgraded to the new Blue VoterCard?

In 2020, the FEO had expired the Green colored VoterCard which was in issue since 2012 to get voters to upgrade to the new Blue VoterCard which had additional information such as the voter’s Polling Venue details.

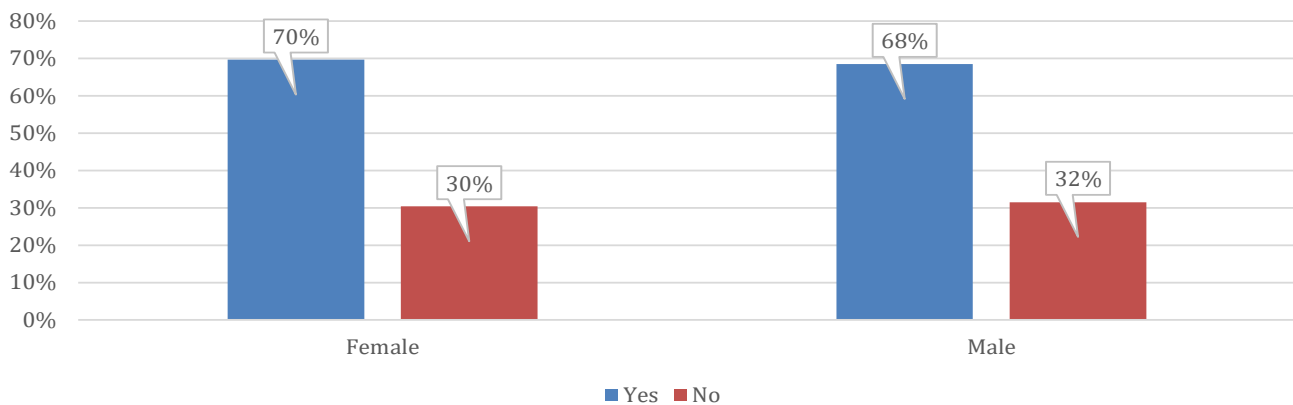


It is noted that 69% of the respondents indicated that they had upgraded to the new Blue VoterCard and 31% indicated that they were yet to upgrade.

The outcome of this survey allows the FEO to establish strategies and opportunities to accommodate the remaining 31% so that the maximum number of voters upgrade to the new Blue VoterCard.

1.1 Summary of responses by gender

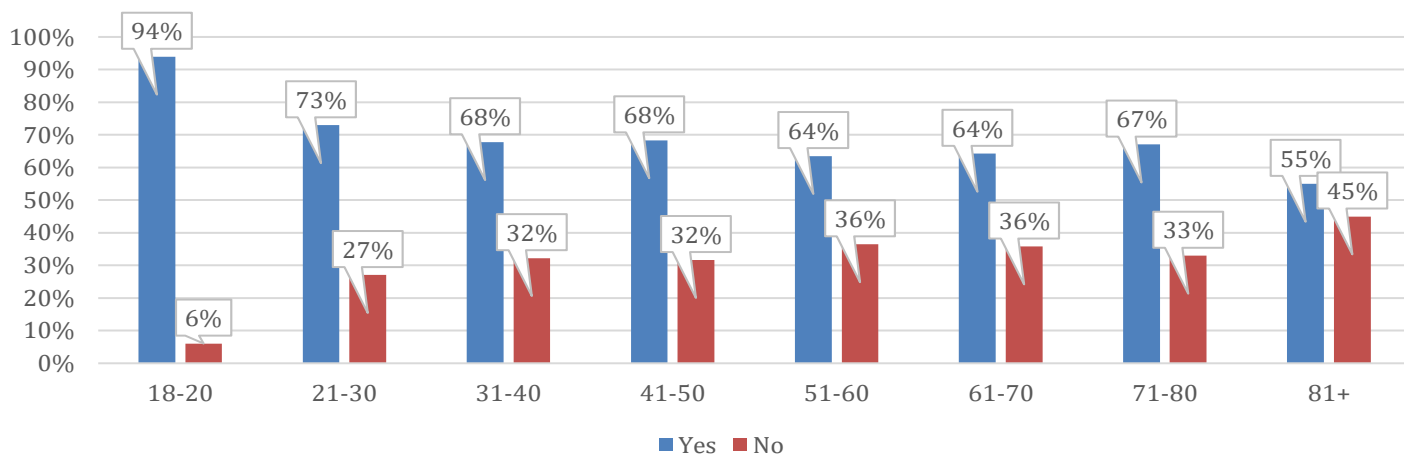
The graph below shows the breakdown by gender of the sample in terms of those that had upgraded to the new Blue VoterCard.



The survey demonstrates that more females have upgraded to the new Blue VoterCard.

1.2 Summary of responses by age

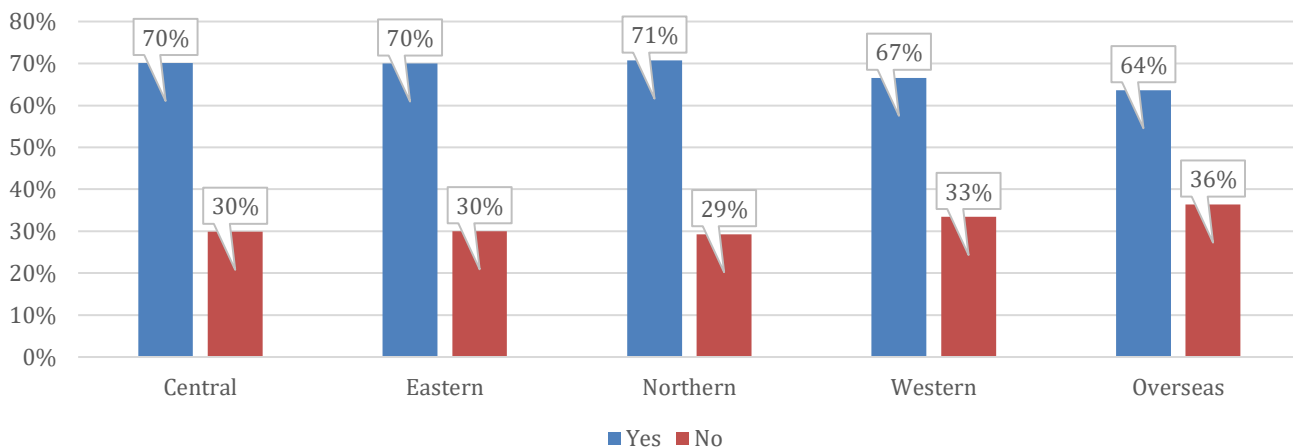
It is also possible to use the NRV to determine the age of individual respondents. The graph below shows the percentage of respondents in respective age categories who have upgraded their VoterCard.



The 18-20 cohort has the highest percentage of respondents on the Blue VoterCard. This is likely because this group has new voters who would be registering for the first time and therefore, would have received the latest Blue VoterCard. The responses positively indicate that more than half of the respondents across the different age groups are already on the new Blue VoterCard.

1.3 Summary of responses by division

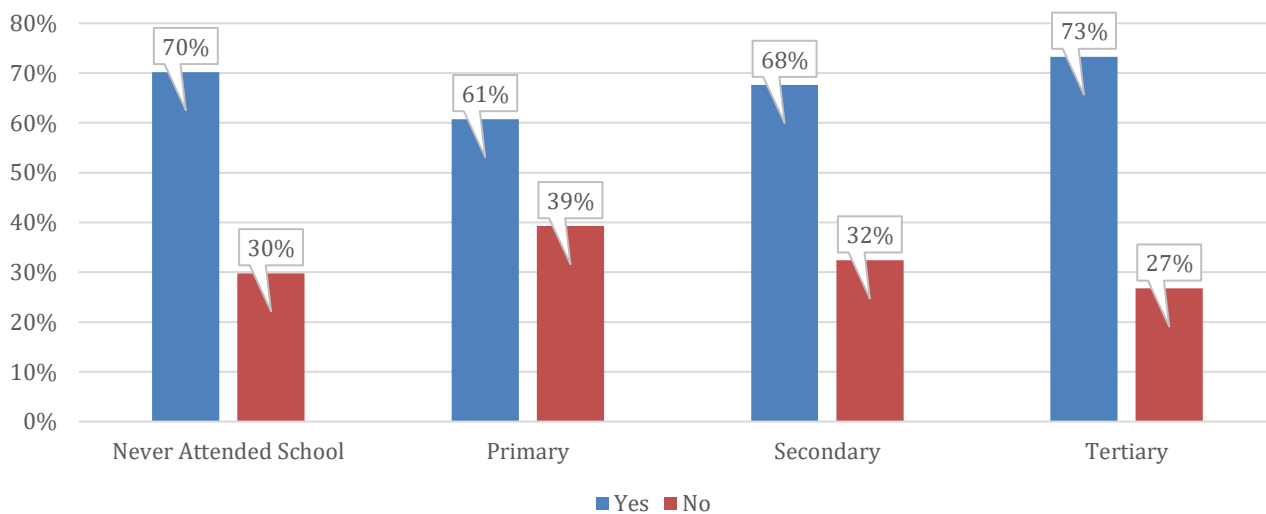
The trends for the four (4) divisions in the graph below are relatively similar with the Western Division recording the highest percentage of respondents who were yet to upgrade.



The Overseas registration drive which will be conducted in the coming months would provide an opportunity for overseas voters to upgrade their VoterCard.

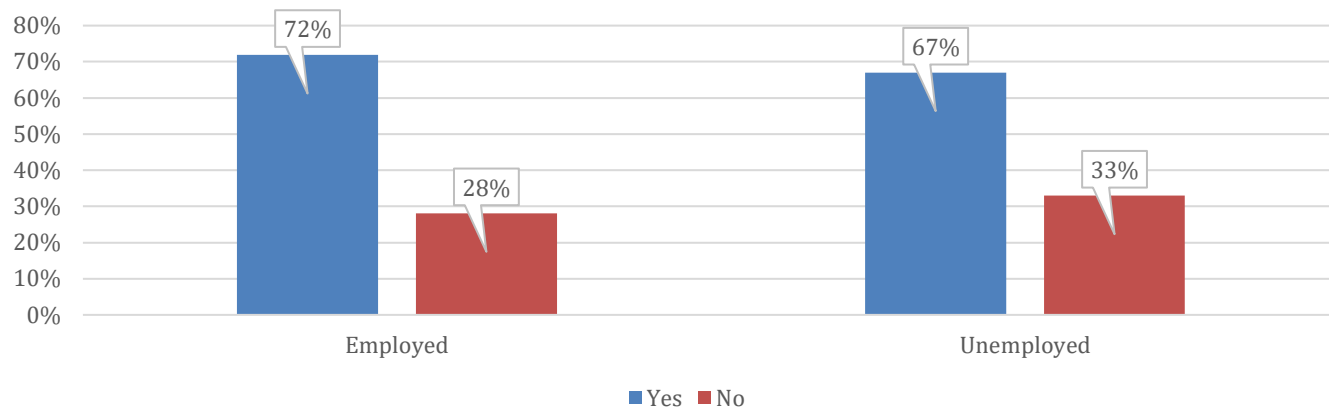
1.4 Summary of responses by education

The graph below shows the distribution of the respondents by education and demonstrates the rate of upgrade to the new VoterCard.



1.5 Summary of responses by employment

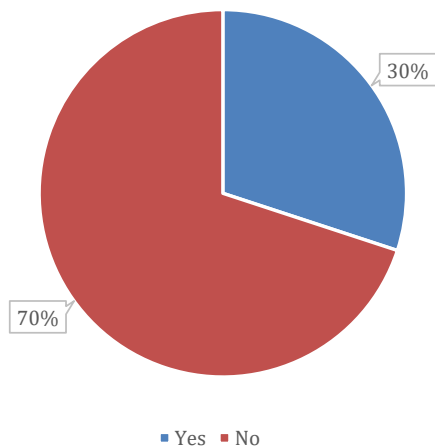
The FEO has been conducting Business House Registrations since October of 2021 which would have allowed employees of various organizations to access voter services at their place of work and upgrade their VoterCard.



The responses indicate a high rate of VoterCard upgrade. The 'No' responses are 28% and 33% for the respective categories. It appears that employment does not have a bearing on the individual voters upgrading to the new VoterCard.

Question 2: Have you changed your residential address since the 2018 General Election?

The post-election survey from the 2018 General Election demonstrated that the primary reason voters did not vote on Election Day was because they had moved and did not amend their residential address on the NRV. This reduced their capacity to go and vote at their assigned Polling Station.

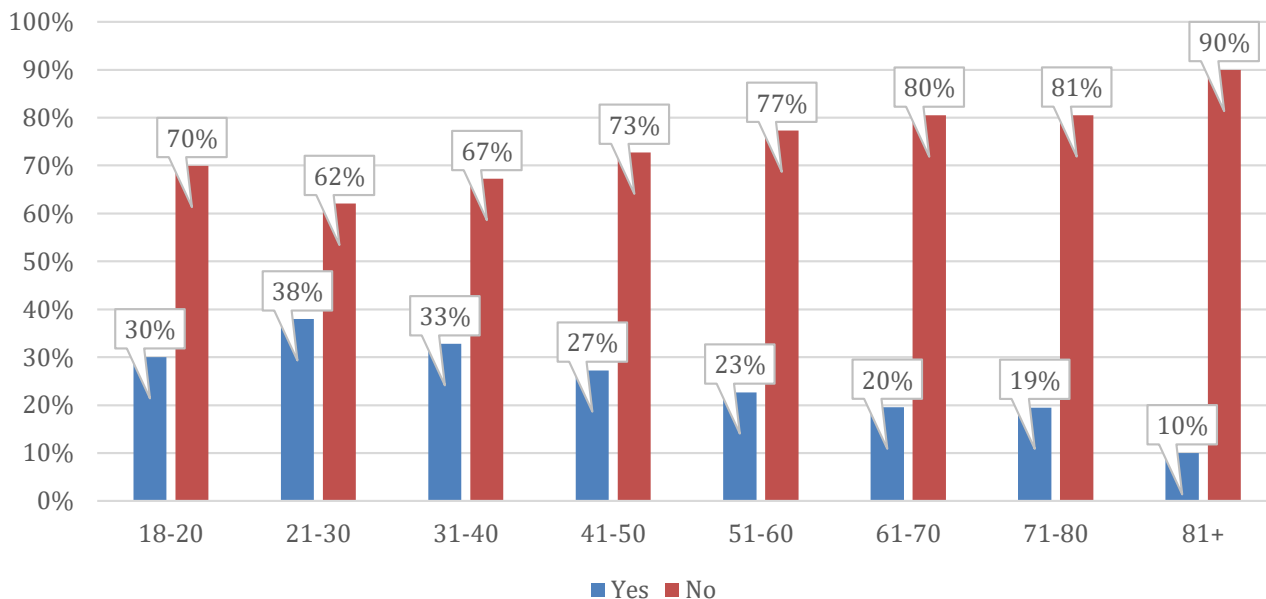


No	6,646
Yes	2,854
Total	9,500

In this survey, it was found that 30% of the voters have changed their residential address. These voters need to upgrade their VoterCard and update their address.

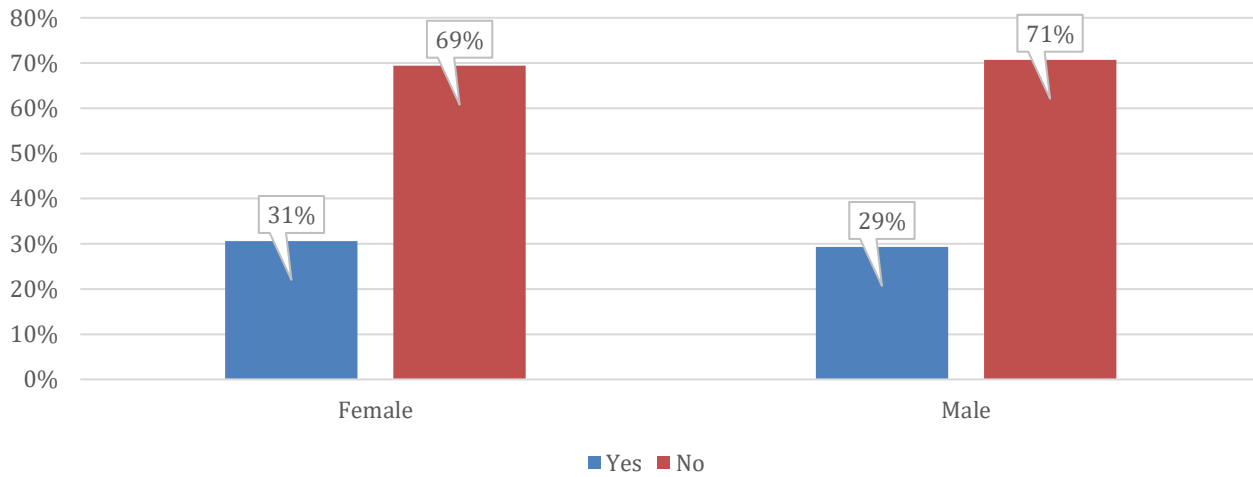
2.1 Summary of responses by age

The 21-30 age group has the highest percentage of respondents indicating that they had changed their residential address. This age group is understood to be the most mobile as they would be the ones returning from university or seeking lucrative job opportunities elsewhere. In comparison, the 41+ age group shows a declining trend in terms of movement as this category of voters are more likely to be settled in life and less prone to moving or changing houses.



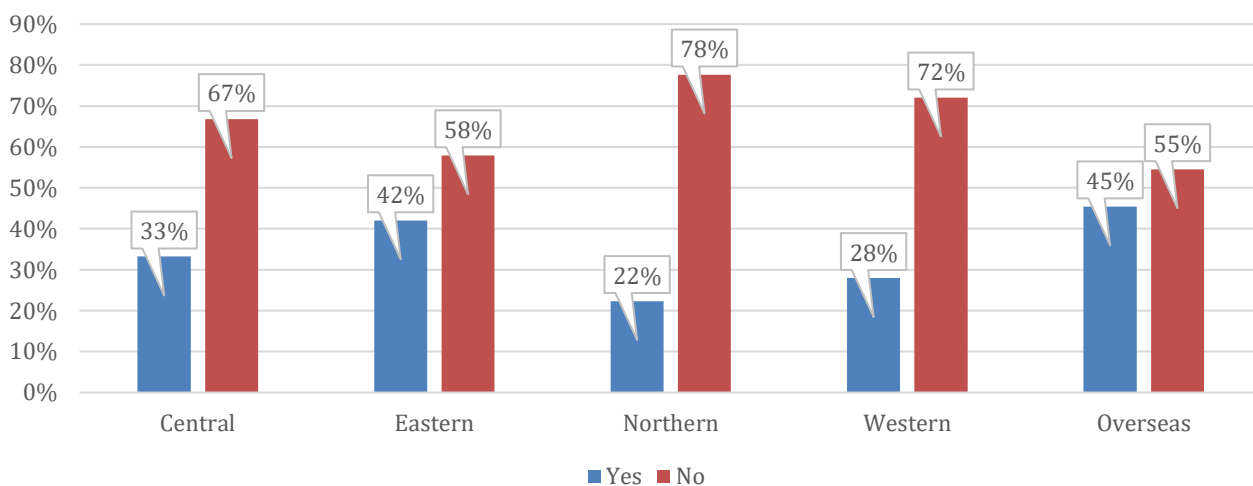
2.2 Summary of responses by gender

The data was tested to determine the gender breakdown of the respondents when it comes to change of residential address.



2.3 Summary of responses by division

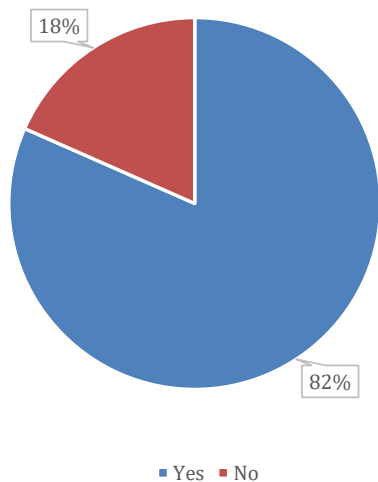
Of the four (4) Divisions, Eastern has the highest percentage of respondents indicating they have changed their residential address. Some of the reasons that could provide explanations for this movement would be for students to attend university or for the working class to have moved to urban centres in search of jobs and better economic opportunities. It could also be that tourism industry workers returned to their home villages due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



2.4 Summary of responses for respondents on the new Blue VoterCard

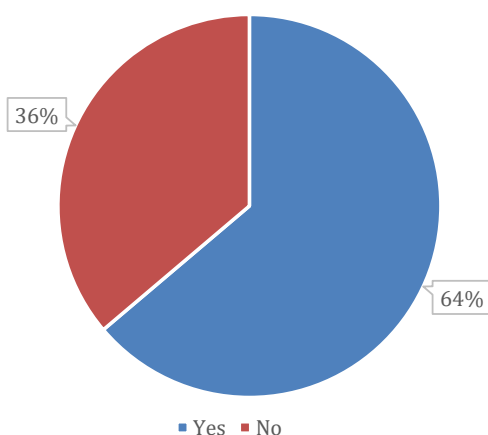
Using the specific responses by each of the voters, it is possible to ascertain what percentage of the voters had changed their residential address but had not yet upgraded to the Blue VoterCard (18%). This number will determine the target range for the FEO for the 2022 General Election Nationwide Voter Registration Drive.

The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who had changed their residential address but had not yet upgraded to the Blue VoterCard.



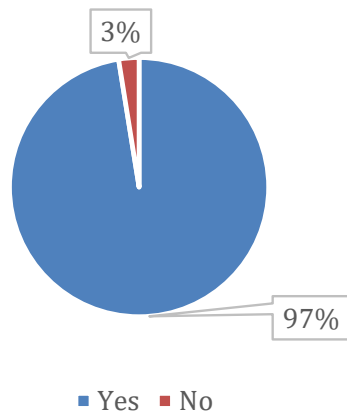
It was also important to ascertain what percentage of the voters had not changed their residential address and also had not upgraded to the Blue VoterCard (36%). These voters will still be able to vote at their last Polling Station if the election is announced and there is a low risk of them missing out on voting.

The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who had not changed their residential address and had not upgraded to the Blue VoterCard.



This data indicates to the FEO the percentage of the voters that were less likely to have their VoterCards amended since they had not changed their residential address. It is most likely that a portion of these voters may not eventually upgrade to the new Blue VoterCard. The FEO will need to implore other marketing incentives for these voters to upgrade to the new Blue VoterCard.

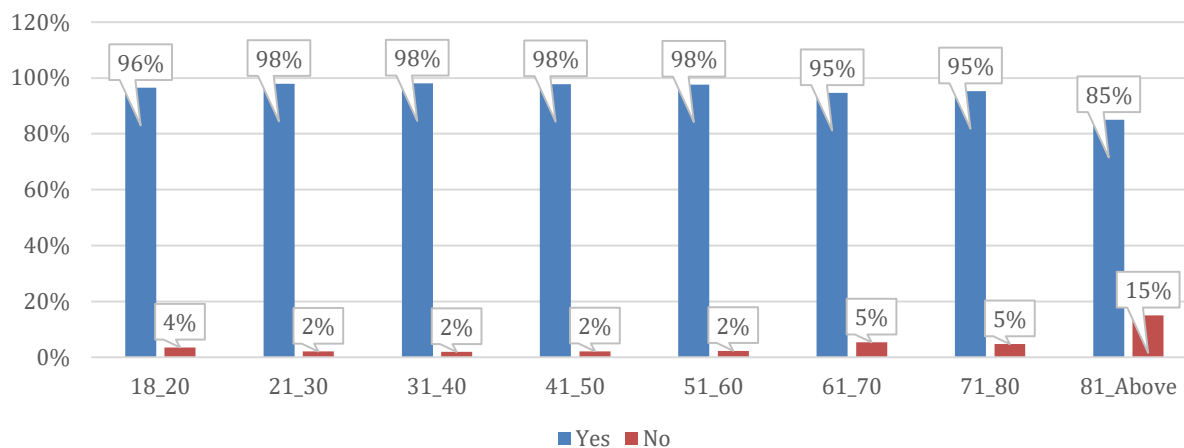
Question 3: Did you know in order to vote in a general election in Fiji, you have to circle, tick or cross the number of the candidate you wish to vote for on a Ballot Paper?



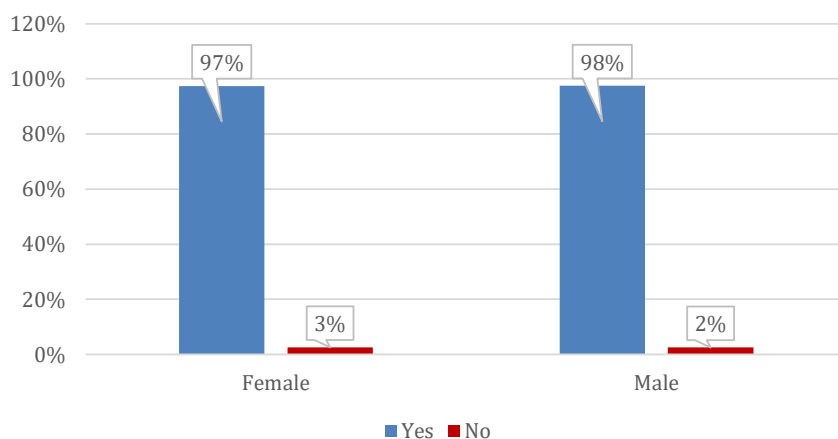
No	241
Yes	9,266
Total	9,507

The survey responses reveal that 97% of the respondents know how to vote in a general election in Fiji which is a good indication, considering that the country has had two (2) general elections in the current system and the process of voting has remained the same. The number of respondents that answered in the negative is very minimal. As such the investigations that follow are relevant.

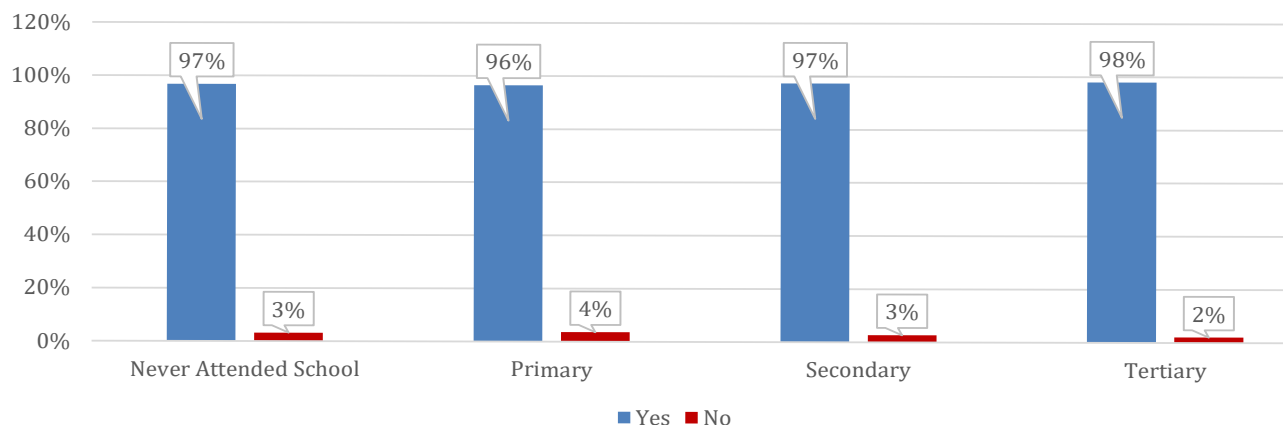
3.1 Summary of responses by age



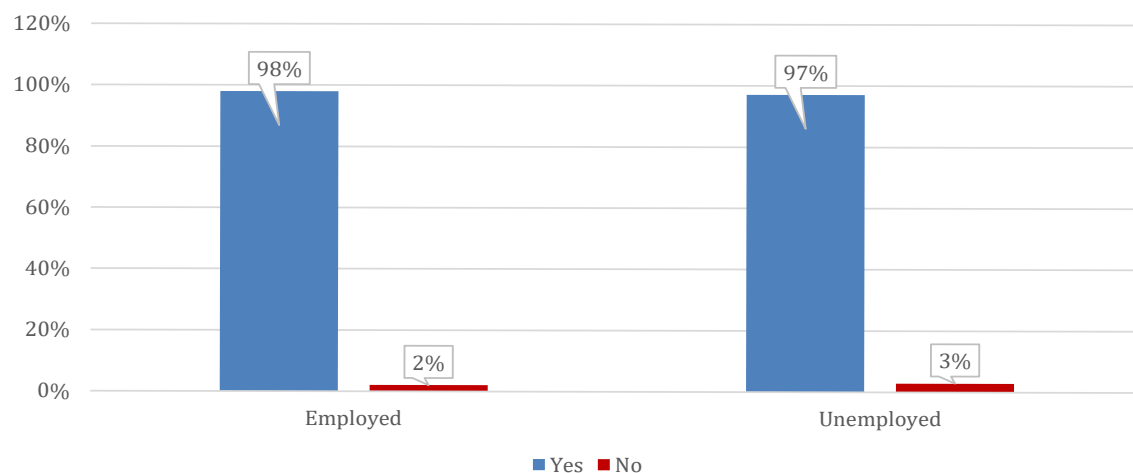
3.2 Summary of responses by gender



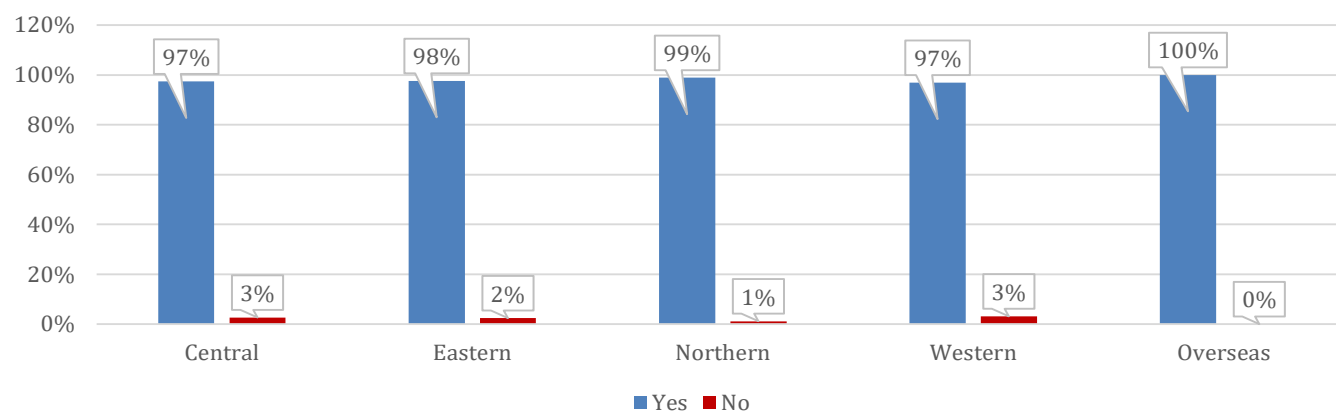
3.3 Summary of responses by education



3.4 Summary of responses by employment status



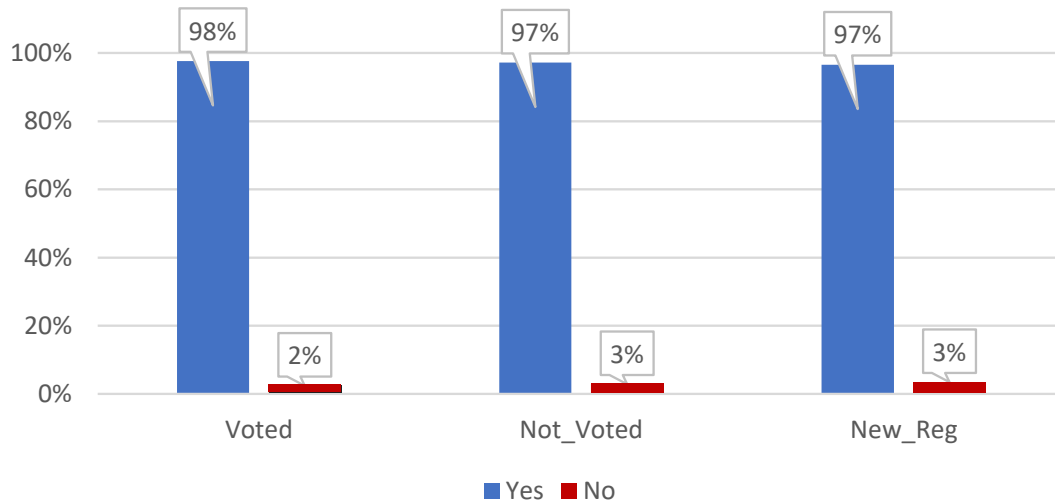
3.5 Summary of responses by division



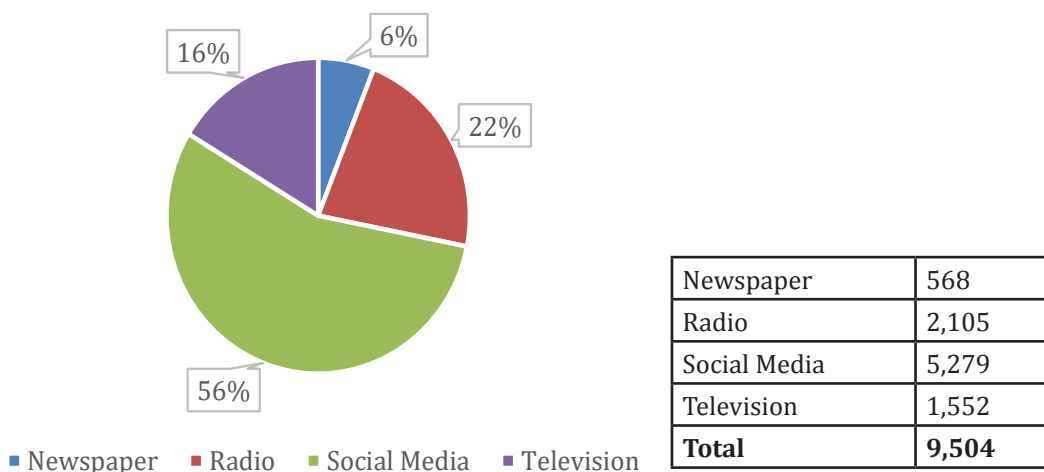
3.6 Summary of responses by 2018 voter turnout

Another assessment that is relevant from this question was to see the responses of the people who had actually voted in the 2018 General Election. Of the survey respondents, 73% had voted in 2018, 21% had not voted that year while another 6% were registered after the 2018 General Election.

The responses show that 97% of the respondents who were registered after 2018 already possess the knowledge on how to vote. One could attribute this to the Year 10 *'Introduction to Elections'* module that is part of the compulsory secondary school curriculum.



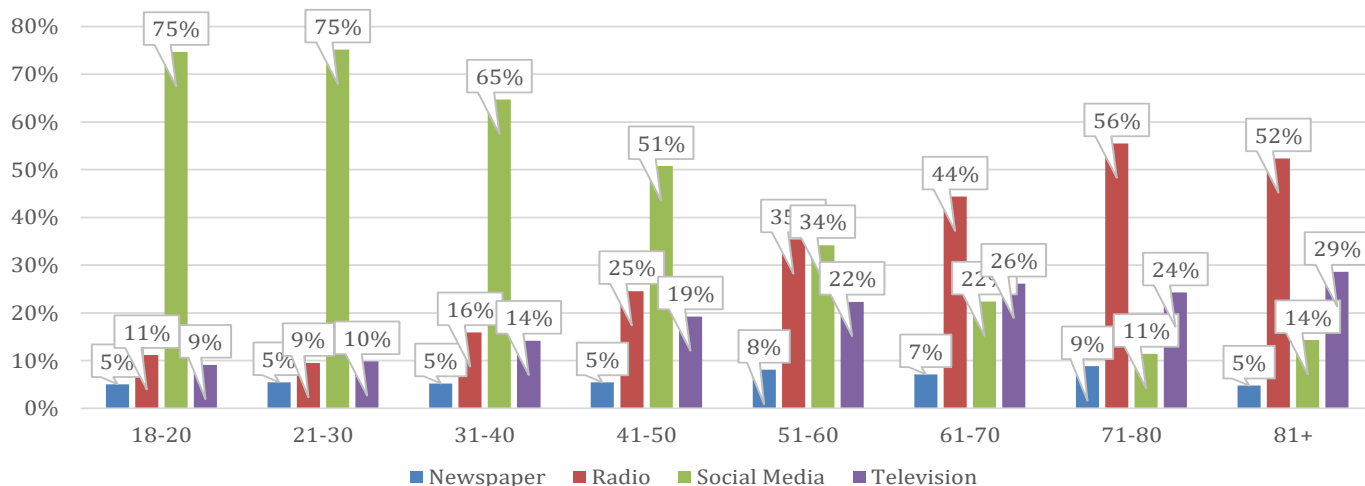
Question 4: Where do you get most of your election information from?



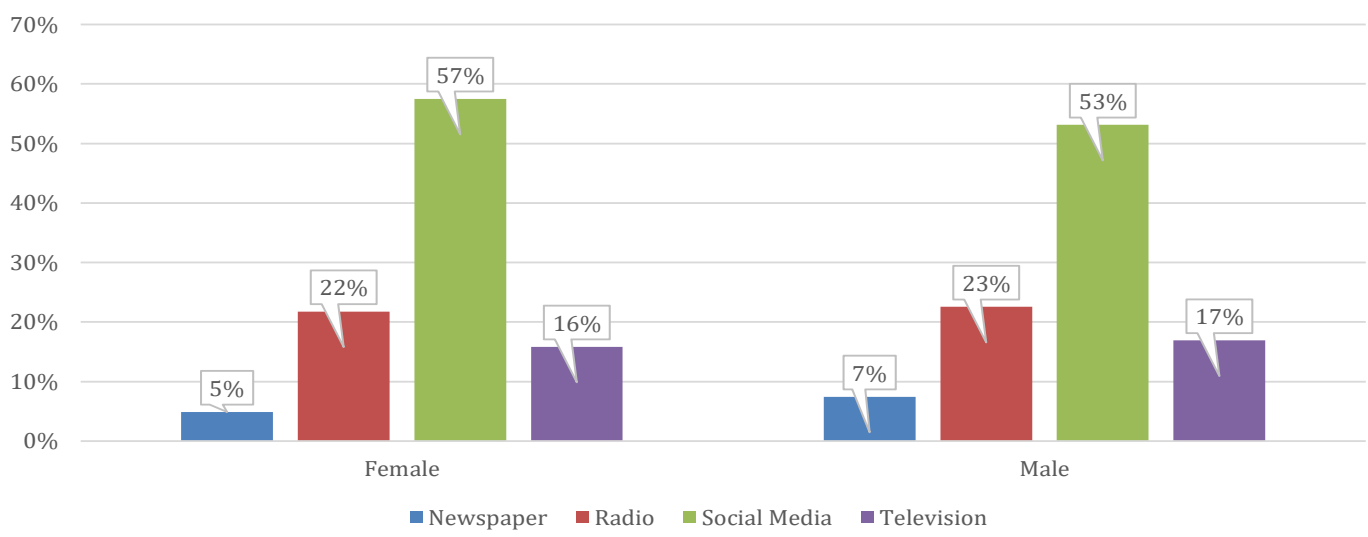
56% of the respondents reported that they got most of the election information from social media, 22% reported getting their information from radio, 16% from television and 6% from newspapers. Based on the fact that the survey established that the majority of the voters receive their election information from social media, the FEO decided to further break down the results of the survey by age category for each of the platforms.

4.1 Summary of responses by age

The age breakdown of respondents and the medium from which they get most of their election information.



4.2 Summary of responses by gender

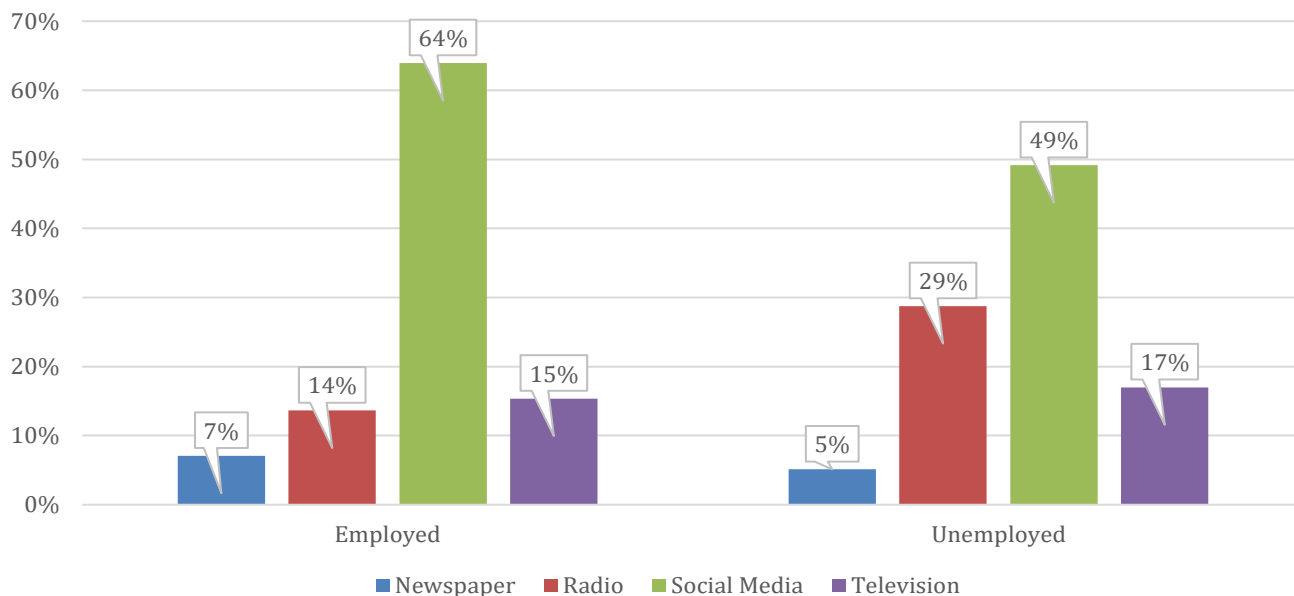


More than half of the respondents in both the male and female categories access election information on social media. The FEO has been boosting its presence on social media and lately has managed to work with Facebook to get its profile verified by Facebook.

More males in comparison to females use radio, newspaper and television, whereas a higher percentage of females use social media as per the survey.

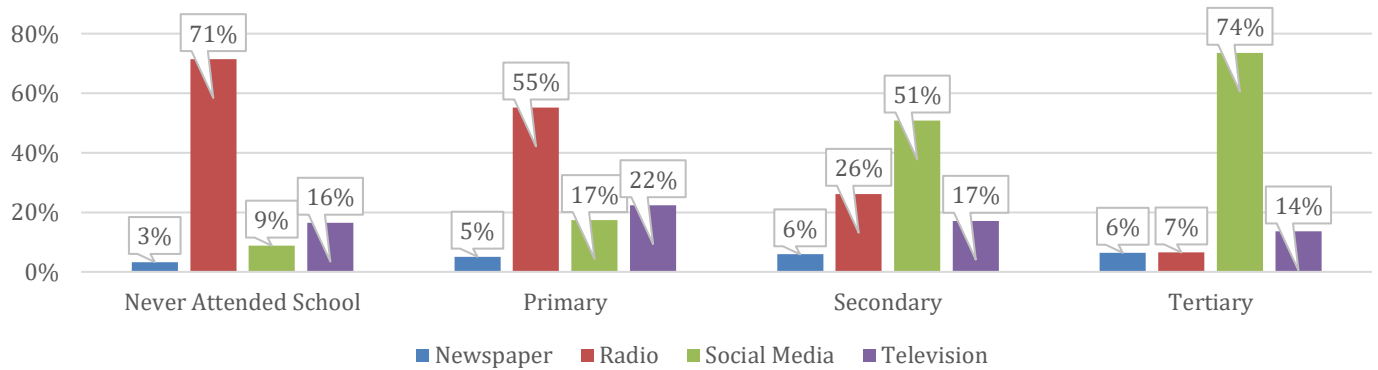
4.3 Summary of responses by employment status

A greater number of unemployed people appear to obtain most of their information from the Radio while 64% of employed respondents get their information from social media.



4.4 Summary of responses by education

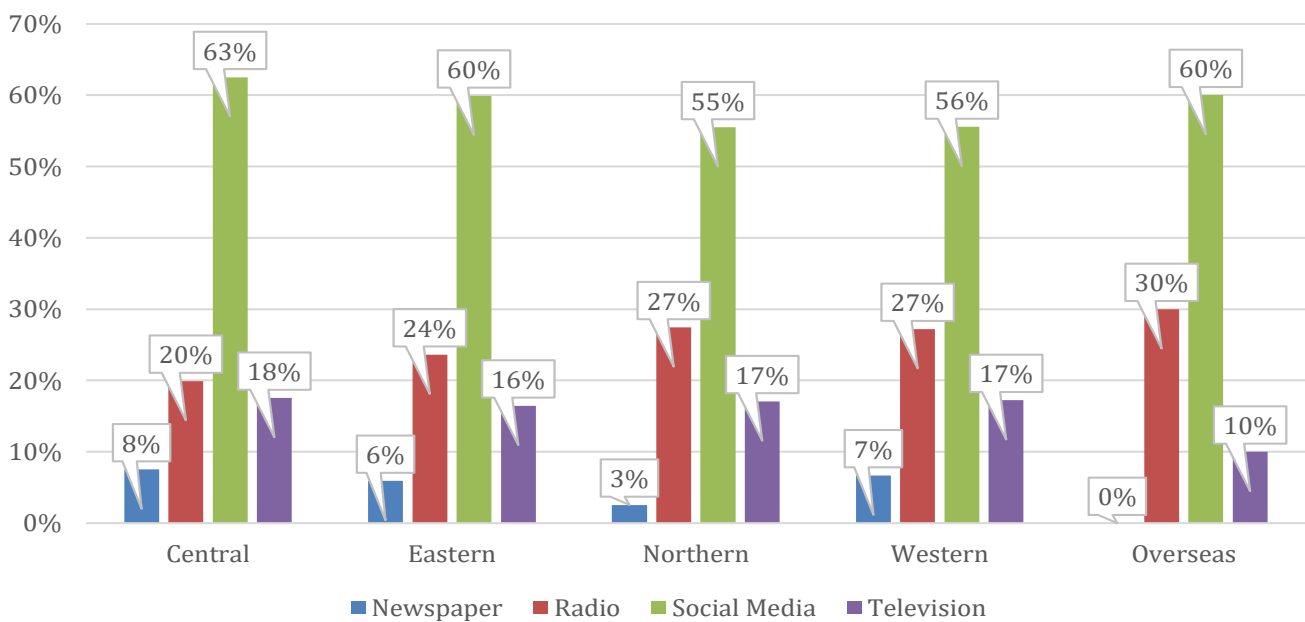
It appears from the survey that respondents who attended primary school only or did not attend school at all rely primarily on radio for information. Interestingly, 26% of those who went to secondary school also rely on radio. 74% of tertiary qualified respondents rely on social media.



4.5 Summary of responses by division

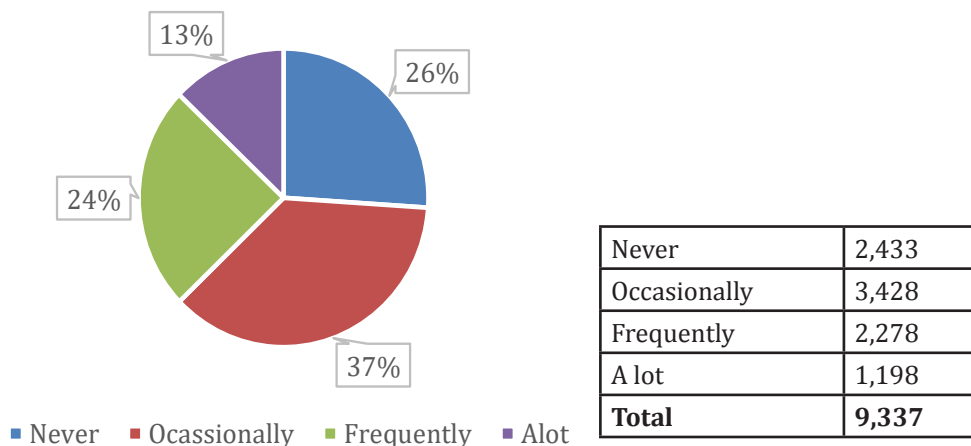
The FEO records the residential address for all voters and based on the data from the voter registration records, analysis is also done to demonstrate the type of platform used by voters in different parts of Fiji. This information can come in handy for political parties as they prepare their campaigns.

In later parts of this survey, the data on where people get most of their election information from will be utilized to also determine their trust and confidence in the elections and the rights guaranteed under the 2013 Constitution of the Republic of Fiji.



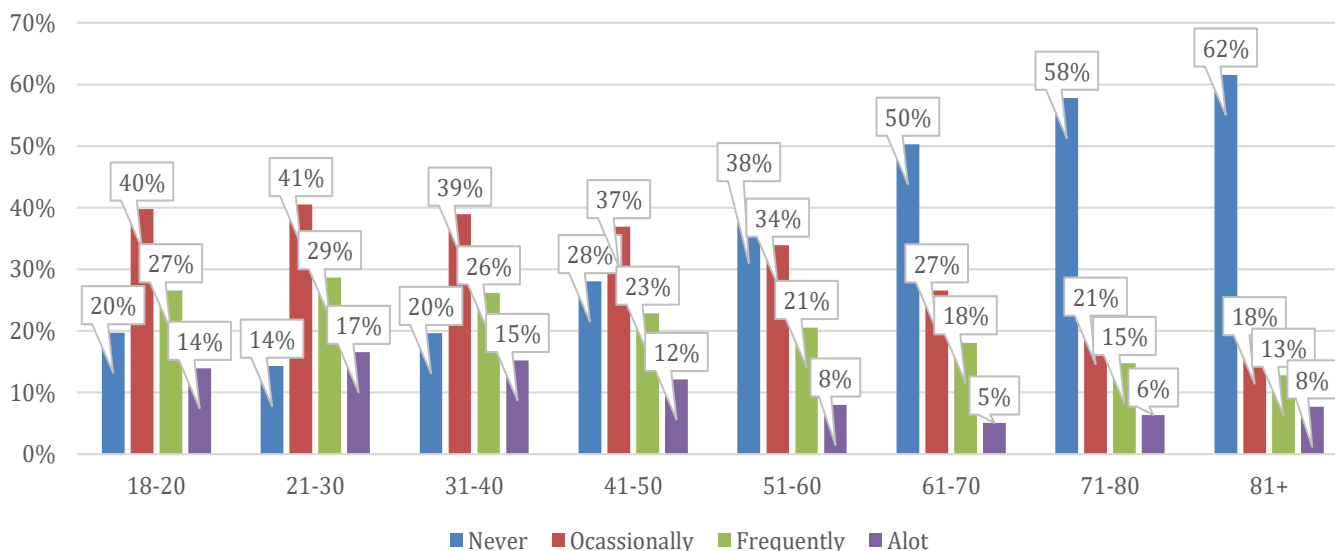
Question 5: In the last 6 months, how often have you come across posts on Facebook by the Fijian Elections Office?

The FEO Facebook page has been quite active in the past six (6) months. Critical information such as information on registration, recruitment of election officials as well as online quizzes attract significant visitors to the page.



74% of the survey respondents have come across posts from the FEO either ‘Frequently’, ‘Occasionally’ or ‘A Lot’. The survey showed that 14% of the voters had responded that they came across a lot of posts from the FEO while 26% have never come across posts from the FEO.

5.1 Summary of responses by age

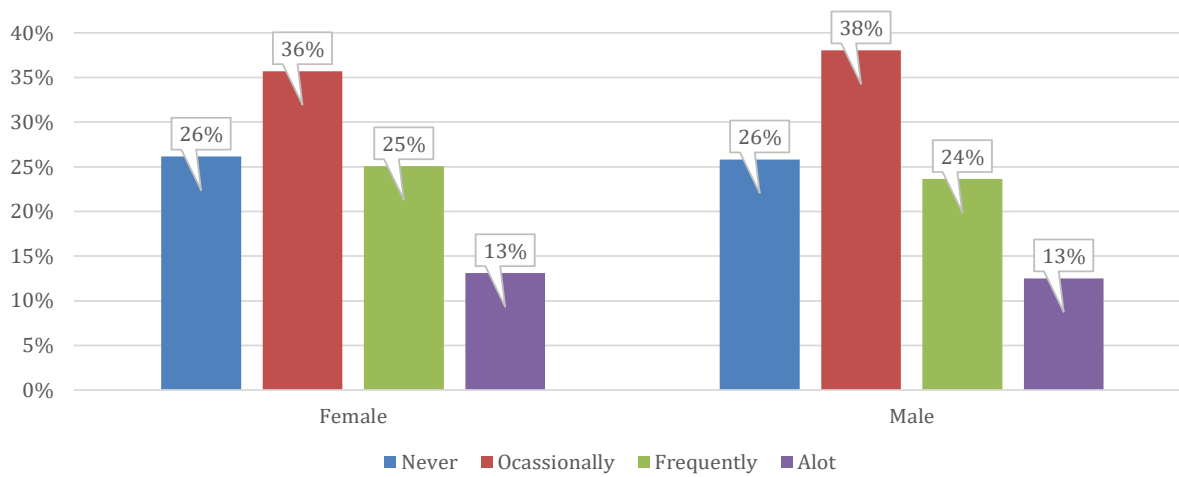


The 21-30 group has the highest percentage of respondents who come across posts from the FEO ‘A lot’, followed by the 31-40 and 18-30 age groups. For the 18-40 age group, more than 60% of the respondents claim to either occasionally or frequently comes across posts from the FEO which indicates a high level of engagement. The 41-50 group has 58% respondents who either ‘Frequently’ or ‘Occasionally’ come across FEO posts which is still a good level of engagement.

Respondents falling in the 51+age group have the highest percentage of respondents indicating they have never come across posts from the FEO. As this is the older group of voters, a possible reason for their response could be that they are not active users of social media. The trend in ‘never’ coming across information from the FEO Facebook page appears to rise from 31+age category. This is the group who will need to be targeted on other mediums such as radio and television.

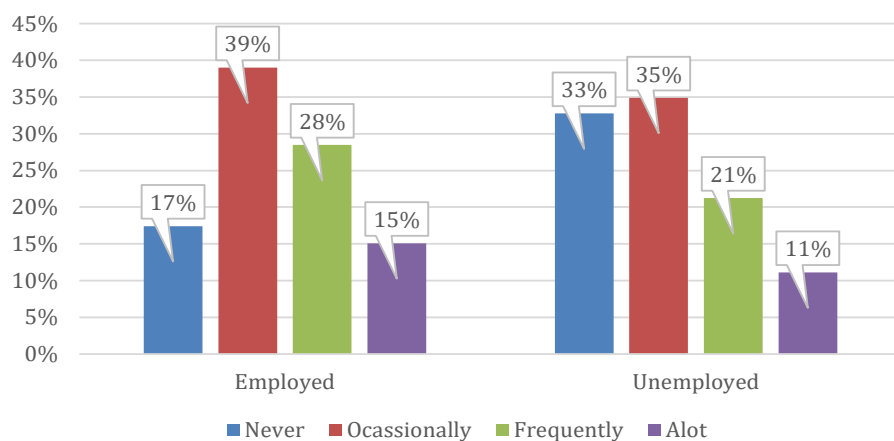
5.2 Summary of responses by gender

The graph below shows a breakdown of responses from males and females on the question of how often they came across posts from the FEO on Facebook in the last six (6) months. It is noted that the frequency is relatively similar for both genders.



5.3 Summary of responses by employment status

This analysis was important to see the responses from respondents who were employed, to this question, against the responses from respondents who were unemployed.



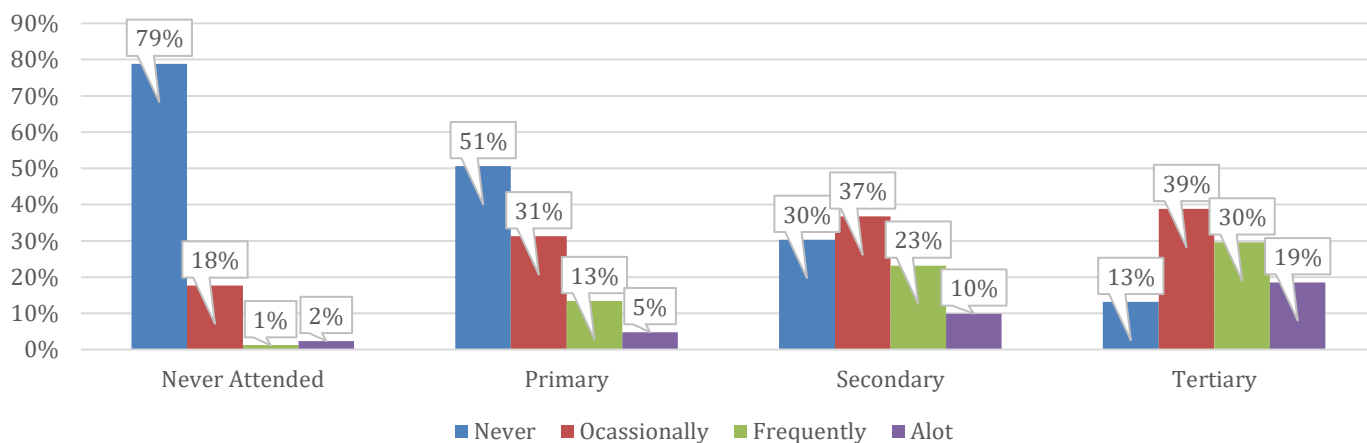
For the respondents who are employed, more than 83% have come across posts from the FEO either ‘Occasionally’ (39%), ‘Frequently’ (28%) or ‘A lot’ (15%).

For those who are unemployed, more than 67% have come across posts from the FEO while 33% have indicated they ‘never’ come across FEO posts.

The FEO awareness team can also rely on data from the employment analysis to decide on the timing for posting Facebook content simply because the working hours in Fiji are predominantly fixed and at the same time, the time for lunch is also relatively similar in all organizations, which would indicate to the FEO in terms of the timing of active content on its Facebook platform. Based on the analysis, the FEO Public Relations Team can create more effective outreach through its Facebook platform to voters in Fiji.

5.4 Summary of responses by education

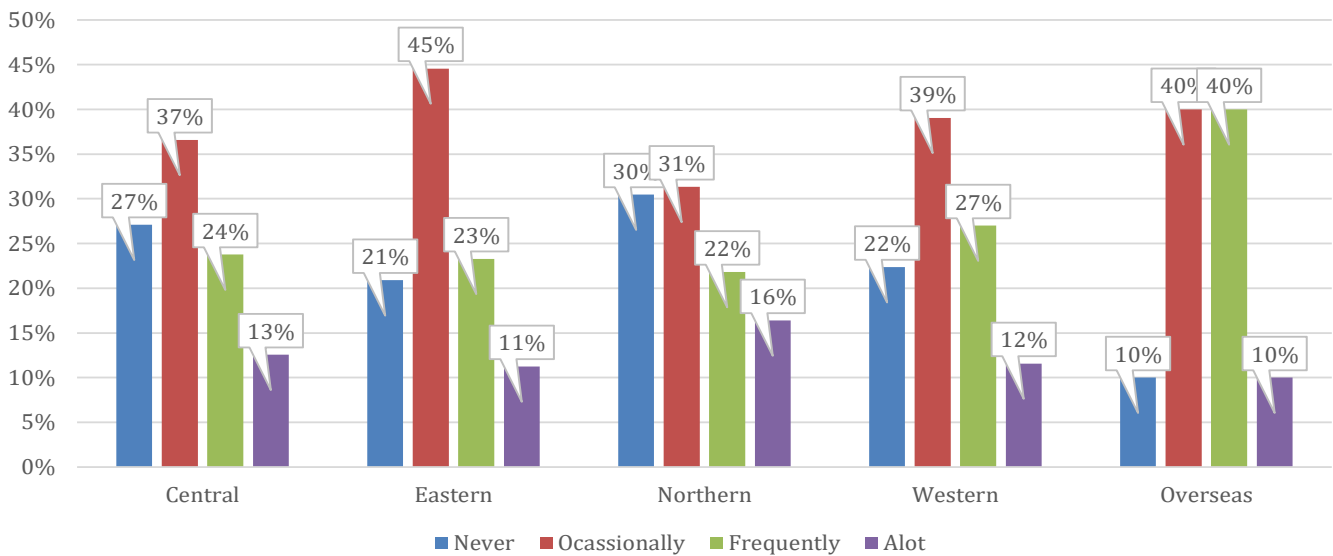
An analysis was done on the educational background of the respondents against the responses given to this question. This is important to understand the dynamics of Facebook users, their educational background and the frequency with which they come across posts from the FEO. This will also create an important indicator for the FEO in terms of the content that the FEO creates on its Facebook page.



In terms of trend, as the level of education rises, the likelihood of respondents to come across FEO posts ‘A lot’, ‘Occasionally’ and ‘Frequently’ also increases. Moreover, as the level of education increases, the likelihood of people to respond with ‘Never’ decreases.

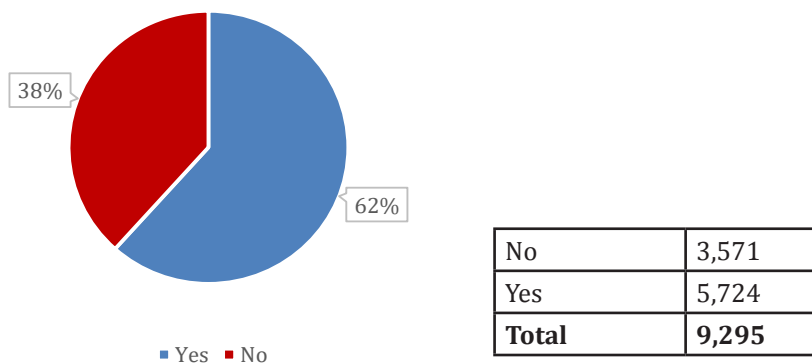
While it is subjective, some possible explanations could include the fact that the level of education could be indicative of access to technology, reliance on new media for information and changing habits in relation to information consumption.

5.5 Summary of responses by division



30% of the survey respondents in the Northern Division have stated they never come across FEO posts with 27% answering the same in the Central Division. Overall, approximately 70% of the respondents across the Divisions come across FEO posts either 'Frequently', 'Occasionally' or 'A lot' indicating high levels of engagement.

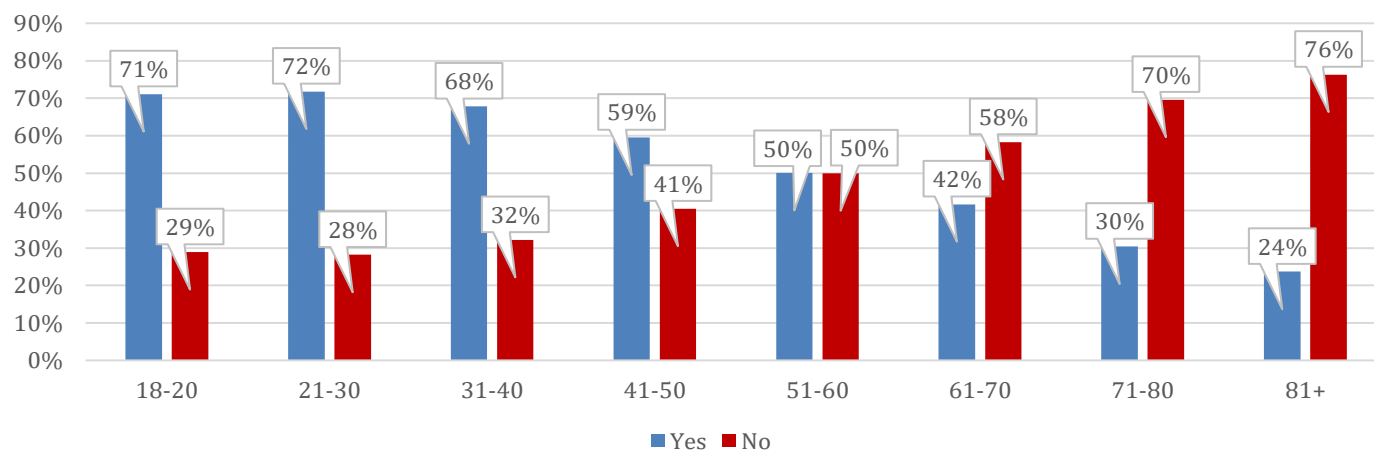
Question 6: Have you noticed fake news on social media websites?



Of the 9,295 responses 62% have noticed fake news on social media websites while 38% have not.

6.1 Summary of responses by age

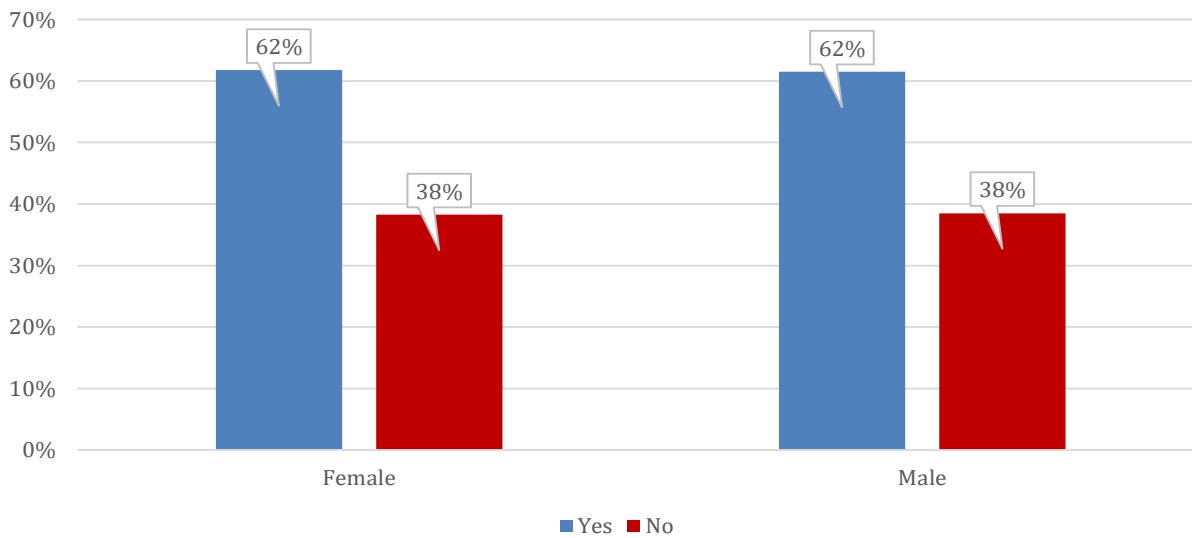
The trends correspond with age.



For the 18-50 cohort, more respondents report noticing fake news on social media. Then the graph reaches equilibrium at the 51-60 cohort. From 60+ more respondents indicate they have not noticed fake news. It is important to keep in mind that the survey has shown people over 51 tend to rely less on social media for their information.

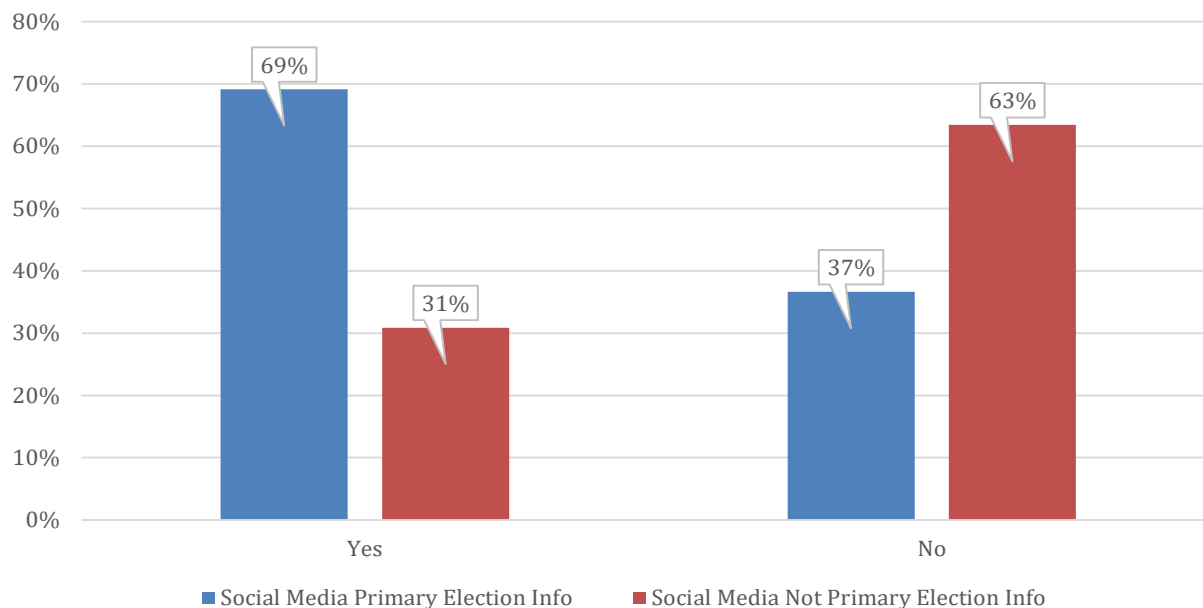
Possible explanations for this could be the level of awareness on fake news and the younger generation who is much more tech savvy is likely to have more awareness about fake news and enough to identify it. The older generation who may still be getting used to social media may not have that level of awareness on fake news.

6.2 Summary of responses by gender



6.3 Summary of responses for social media use

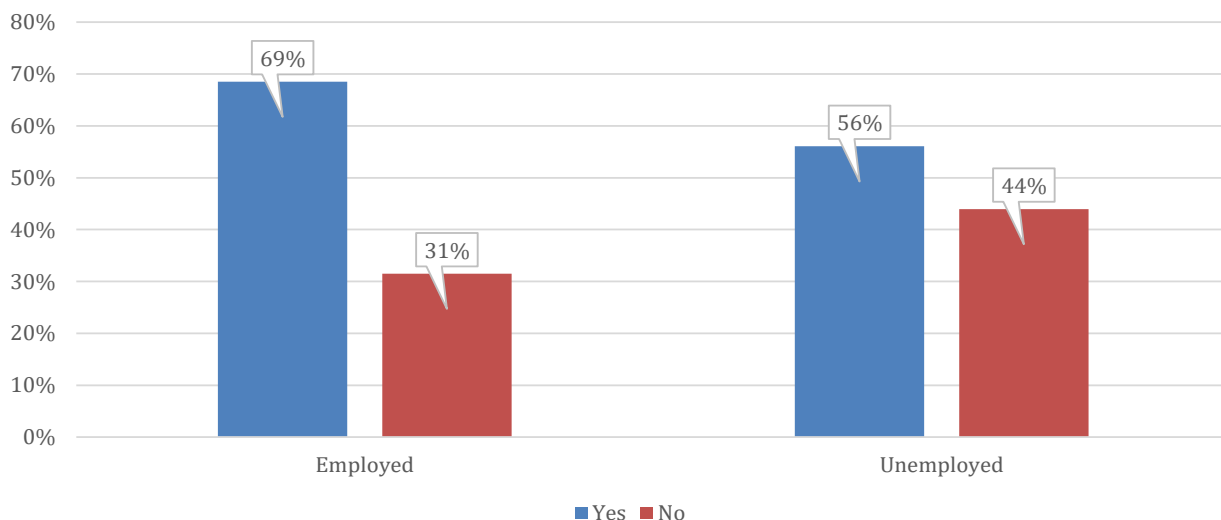
This analysis needed to be verified against the users of the platforms to see the extent of penetration. Of the number who have either answered 'Yes' or 'No' to the question, it was imperative to see how many actually used social media.



69% of the people who have come across fake news on social media actually use social media as their main platform for accessing information. Of the 3,571 respondents who indicated they haven't come across fake news, only 37% actually use social media as their primary platform in their responses to this survey.

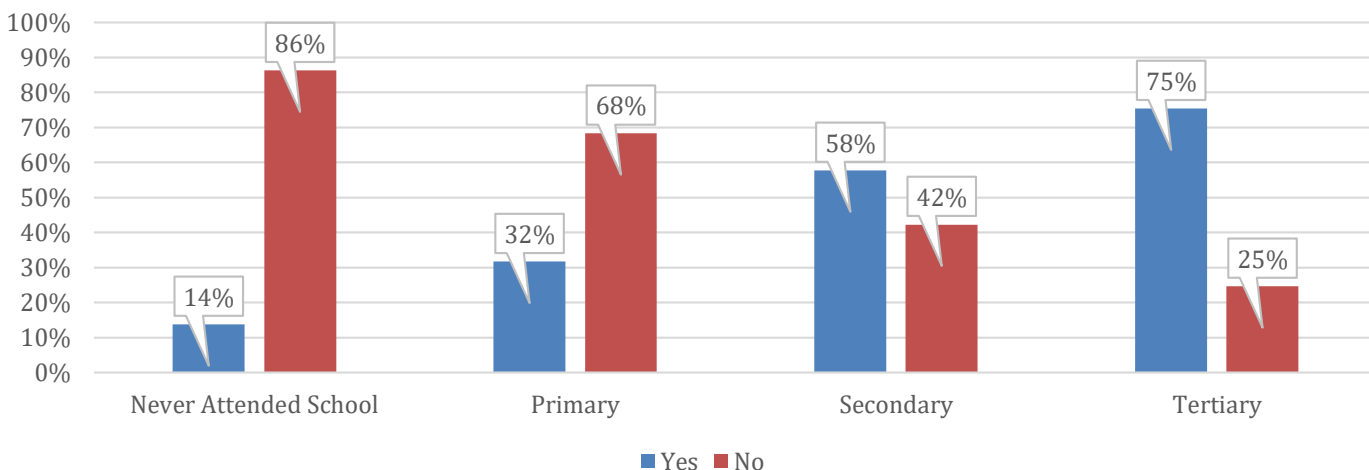
6.4 Summary of responses by employment status

A higher percentage of respondents who were unemployed indicated they did not notice fake news on social media compared to the ones who were employed.



6.5 Summary of responses by education levels

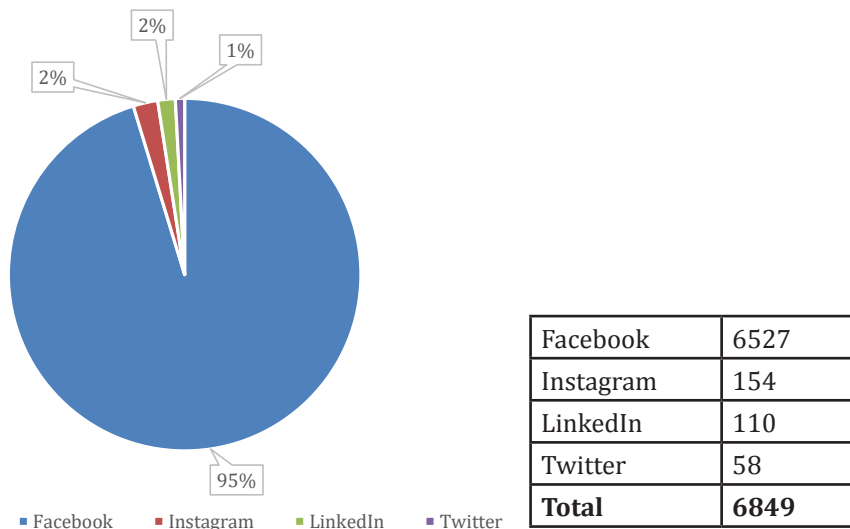
This analysis indicates the importance of education in allowing a person to conduct verification of an article on social media before he or she decides that the article is fake or false. This analysis explores the hypothesis that the lesser the education, the higher the probability that a person may not be able to filter information as fake news.



The graphs indicate that as the level of education rises, the likelihood of respondents to identify fake news on social media also increases. It’s an upward trend. As per the hypothesis, those who had never attended school or only attained primary levels of education reported they did not come across fake news.

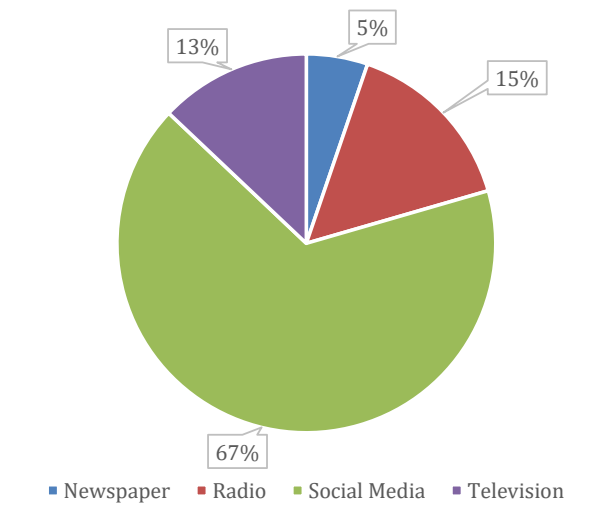
While there is no standard measurement to gauge the extent of fake news present on social media websites, the trends on the graph do give an indication that levels of education have some extent of influence on the respondents’ perceptions on whether they had come across fake news or not.

Question 7: If so, on which of the following social media sites have you come across fake news/misinformation?



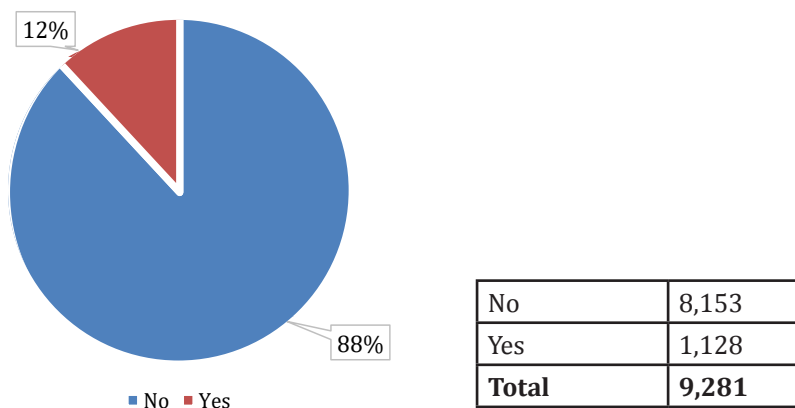
Of the 6,849 responses 95% suggested Facebook, 2% suggested Instagram, 2% LinkedIn and 1% Twitter. Majority of persons have suggested that they have come across fake news misinformation on Facebook. Facebook is the most widely used social network in Fiji.

7.1 Summary of responses by social media use



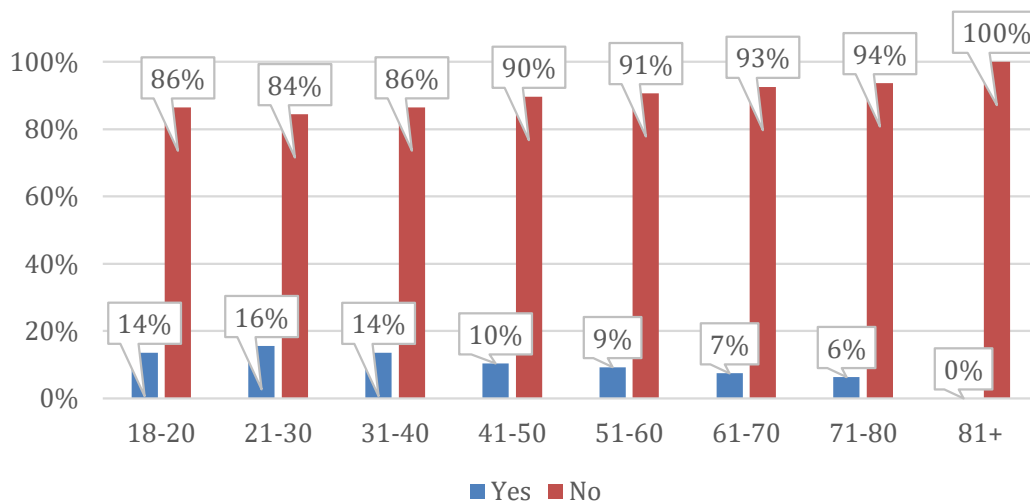
Of the 95% respondents who said Facebook had the most fake news, 67% of them rely on social media for their election information.

Question 8: Have you ever shared something on social media based only on the headline, without reading the full article?



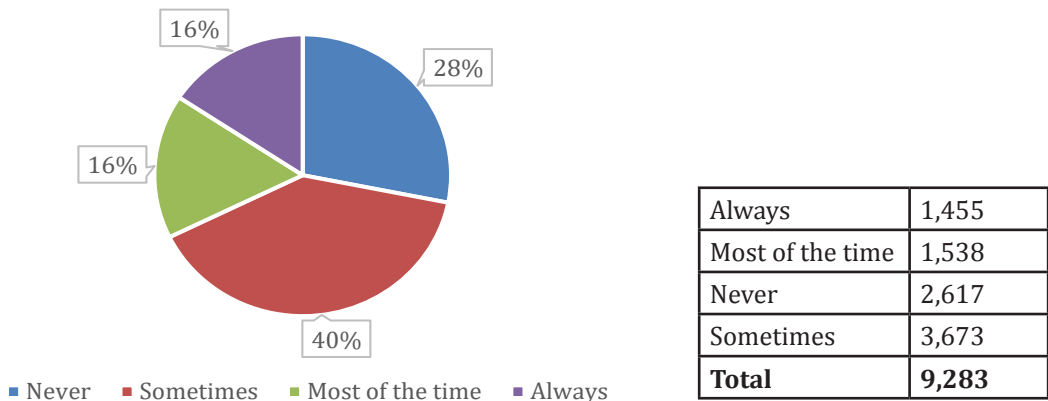
A vast majority of the respondents have indicated that they do not share information based on the headline. It demonstrates a greater level of responsible online behavior.

8.1 Summary of responses by age



More than 80% of the respondents across all the age groups indicated they did not share something on social media based only on the headline.

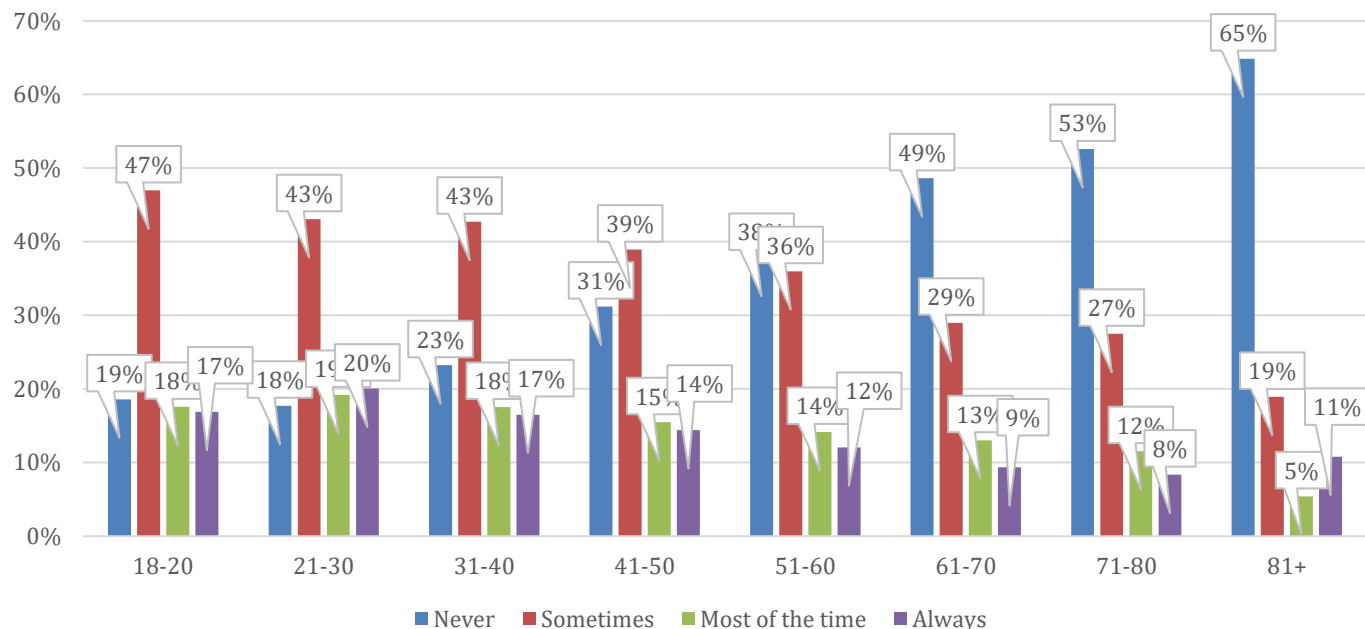
Question 9: Do you verify the information you receive on social media about elections?



72% of the respondents indicate that they verify information on social media either ‘Sometimes’, ‘Most of the time’ or ‘Always’ while 28% indicate they never verify information on social media regarding elections.

9.1 Summary of responses by age

The trend corresponds to age. The habit of verifying information appears to be more prevalent in the younger generation.

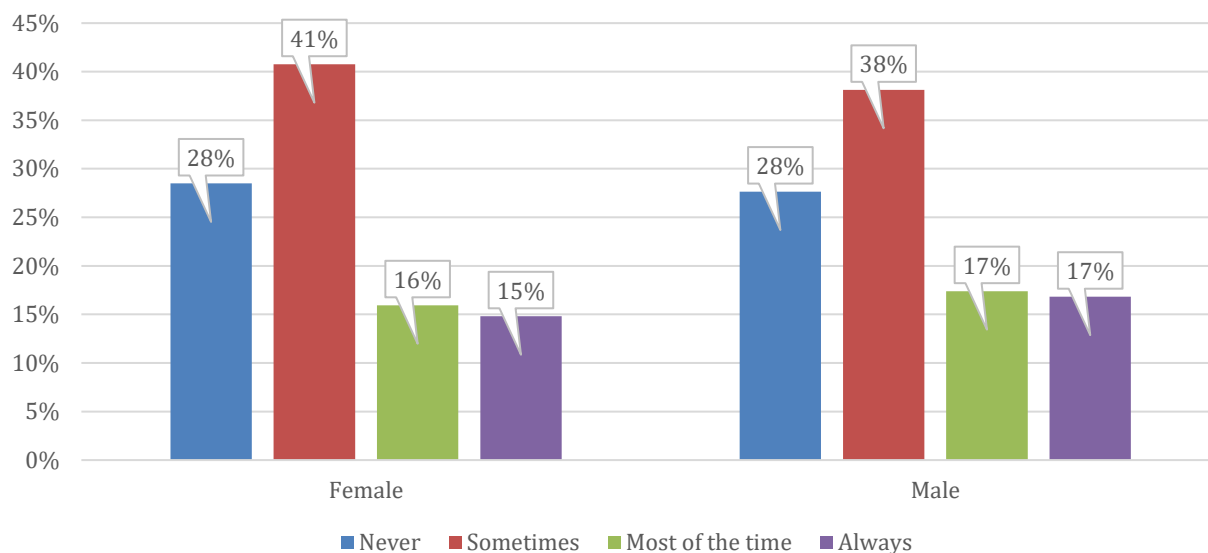


For the 51+ age group, the most popular response was ‘Never’. This could partly be due to lack of awareness on the importance of verifying information on social media. But this is subjective and cannot be ascertained on assumption alone. Also, this survey indicates that respondents over 60 years did not rely on social media for election information.

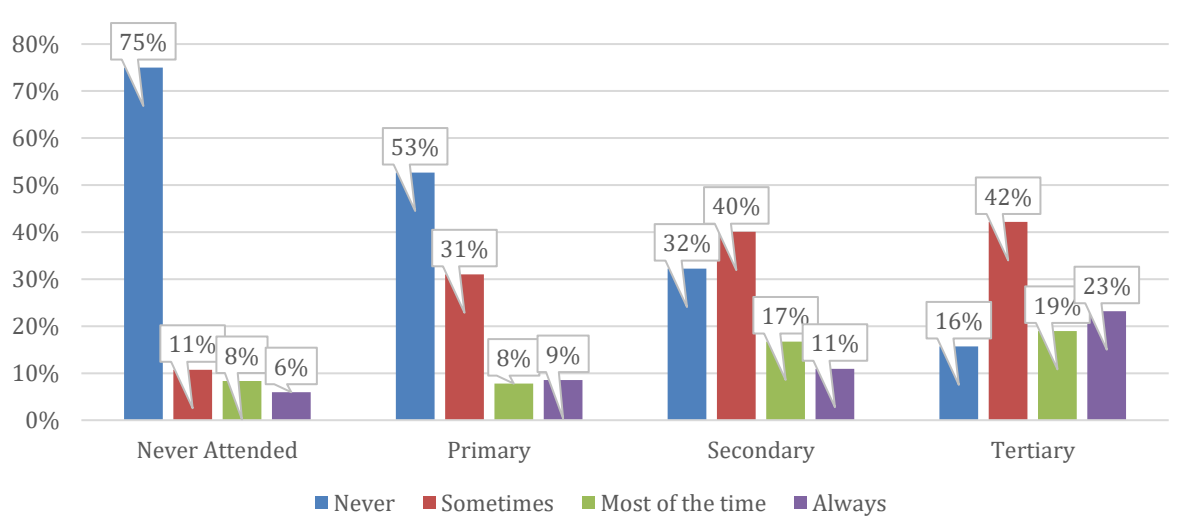
Surprisingly enough, it can be noted that the response for the option ‘Always’ was 20% and below across all the age groups.

9.2 Summary of responses by gender

The survey shows that there are similar patterns of behavior from both genders when it comes to verifying information on social media about elections.



9.3 Summary of responses by education



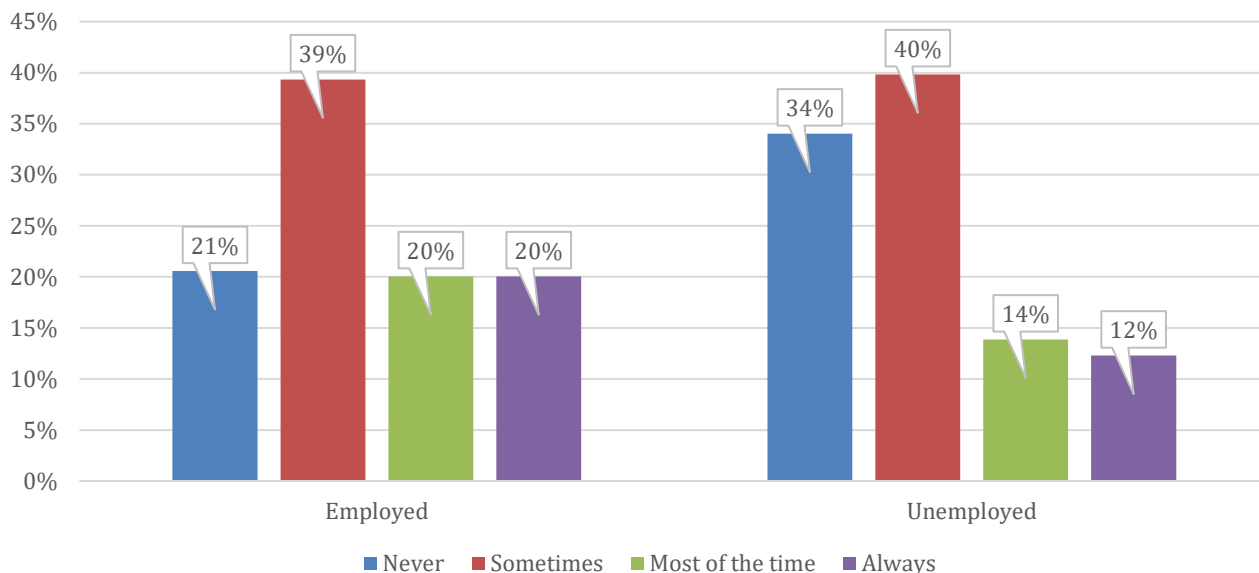
The trend for ‘Never’, declines as level of education increases. Trend for ‘Always’ -rises with level of education.

The findings from this analysis suggest that with education, people are likely to become more aware about the need for information verification which then transforms into habits and behaviors.

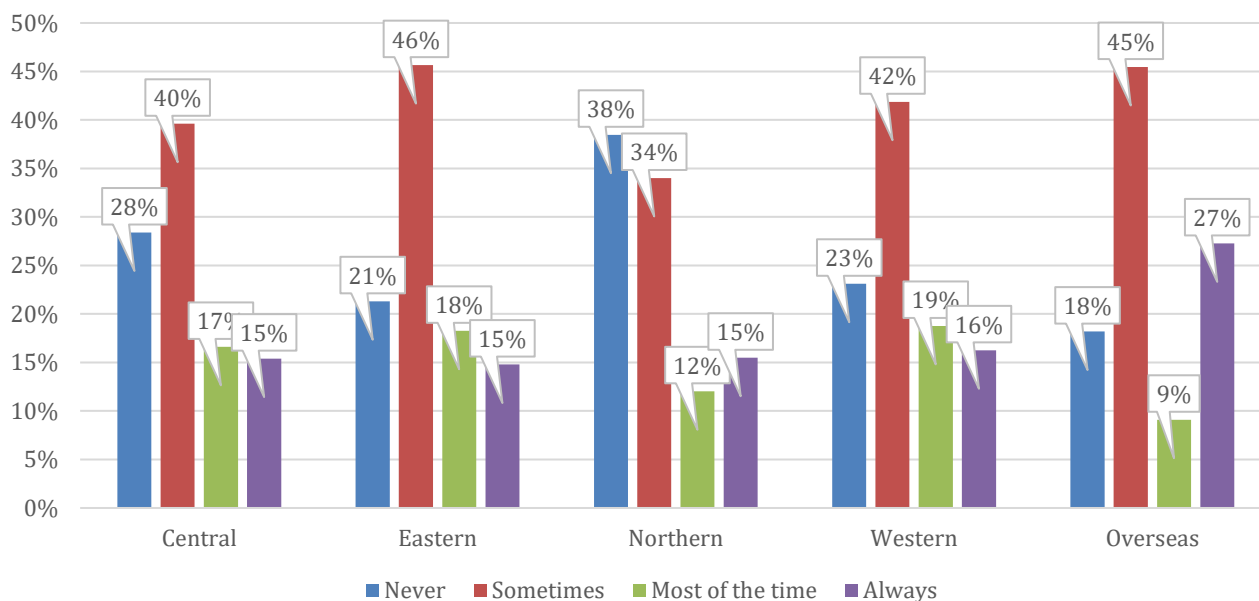
On the contrary, it is still worth noting that only about a fifth of the respondents with tertiary level

qualification and only about 11% of those with secondary level qualification are in the habit of always verifying election information.

9.4 Summary of responses by employment status

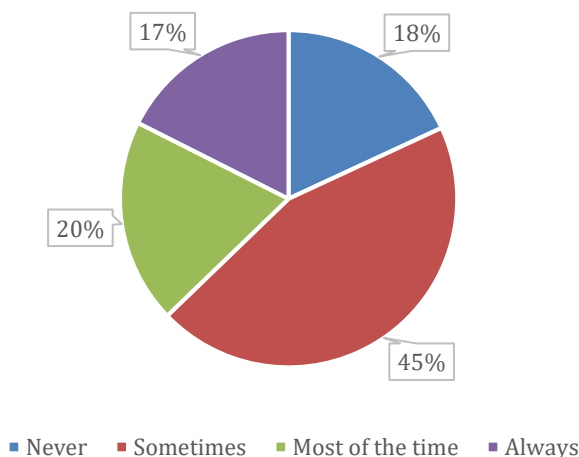


9.5 Summary of responses by division



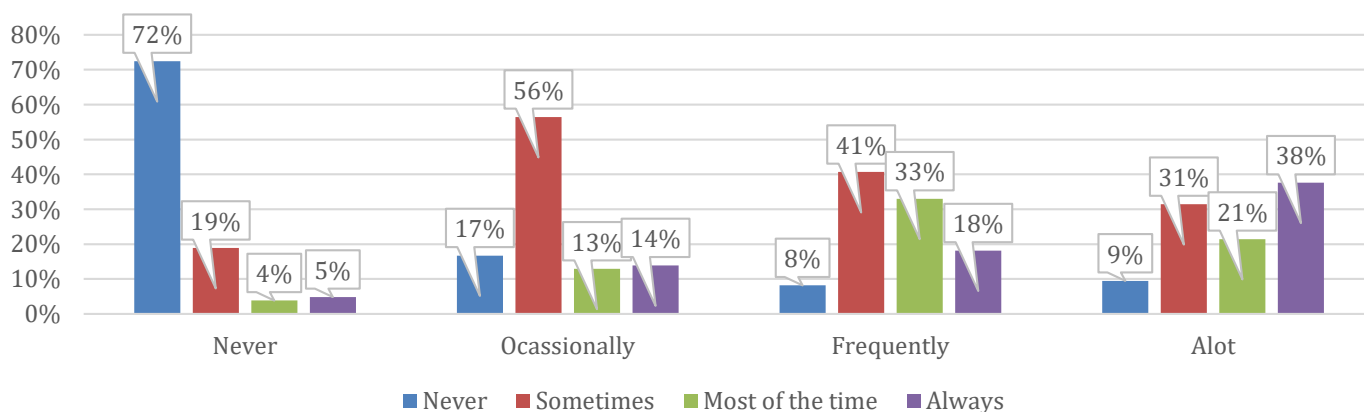
9.6 Summary of responses by social media use

We look at whether people who have said they use social media for election information are in the habit of verifying election information. 18% of respondents who rely on social media for election information never verify the information.



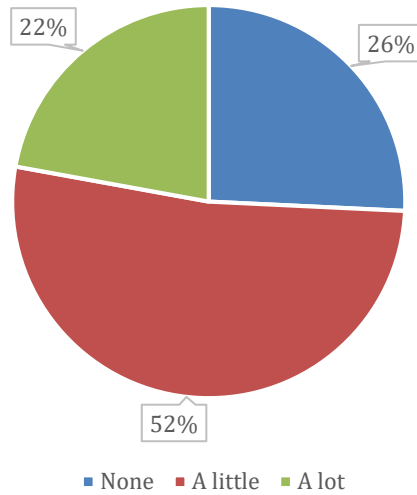
9.7 Summary of responses for those who actively access FEO Facebook page

One possible argument that can be made is that people who verify information on elections use the FEO Page as a source of information. Since the FEO page is very active for information, there is greater chances of subscribers receiving direct information. There is still the existence of other cogent reasons why people visit the FEO page for instance, to check on vacancies.



72% of respondents who never verify information about elections on social media, never came across any posts from the FEO.

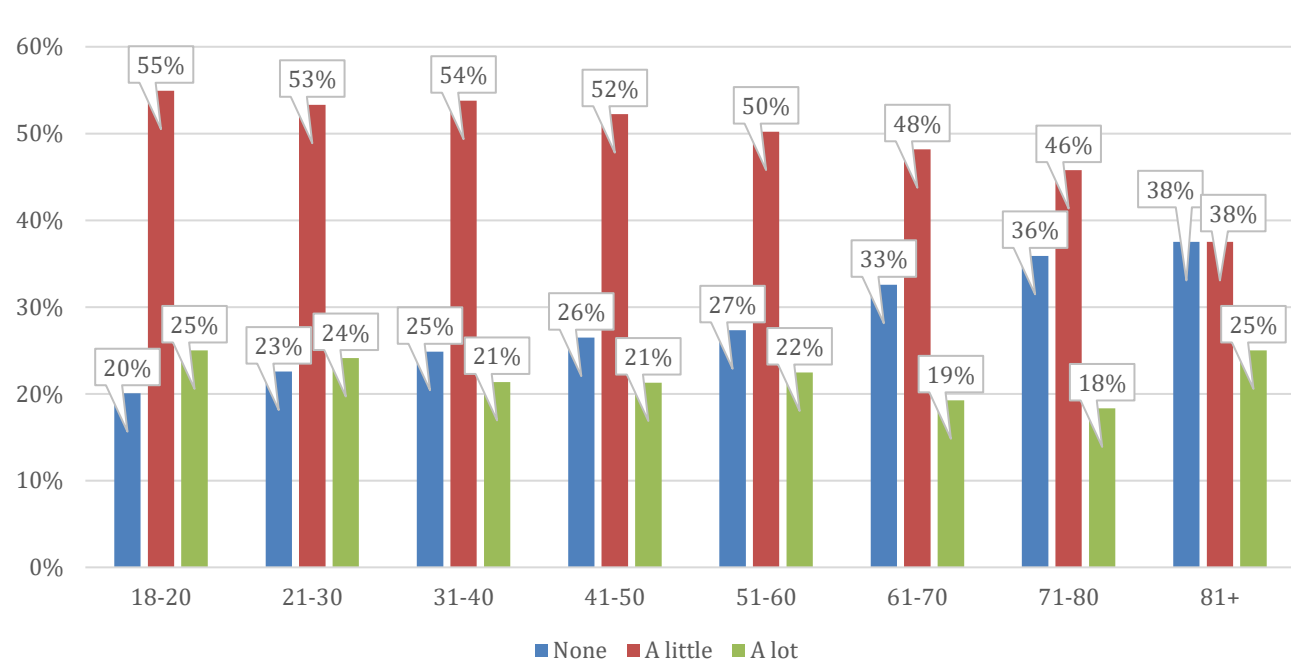
Question 10: How much interest do you take in politics?



None	2,449
A little	4,954
A lot	2,105
Total	9,508

Of the survey respondents, 74% take some level of interest in politics with 22% taking ‘A Lot’ of interest and 52% taking ‘A Little’ interest. 26% of the respondents indicated they took no interest at all. In the Post Election voter survey after the 2018 General Election, 19.7% of the survey respondents noted ‘A lot’ of interest, 58.3% noted ‘A little’ interest while 21.9% noted ‘No’ interest in politics.

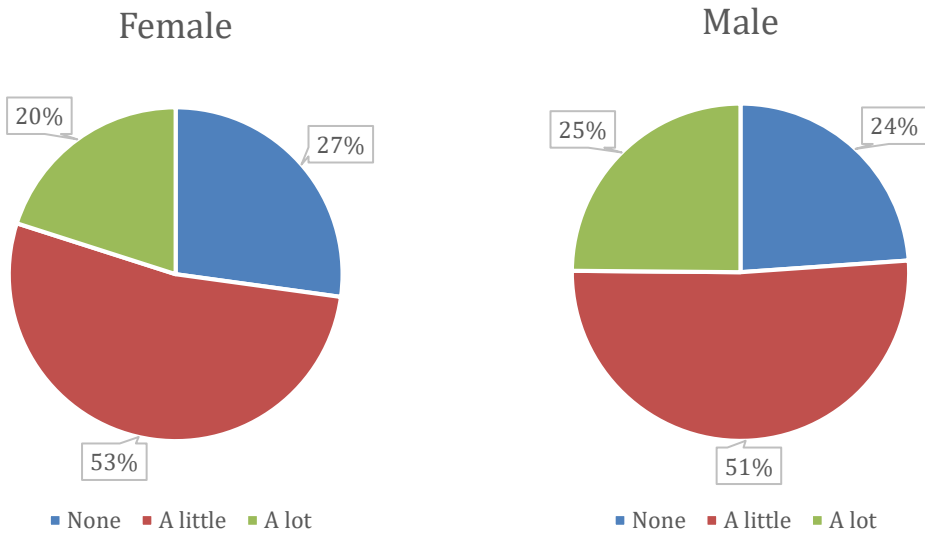
10.1 Summary of responses by age



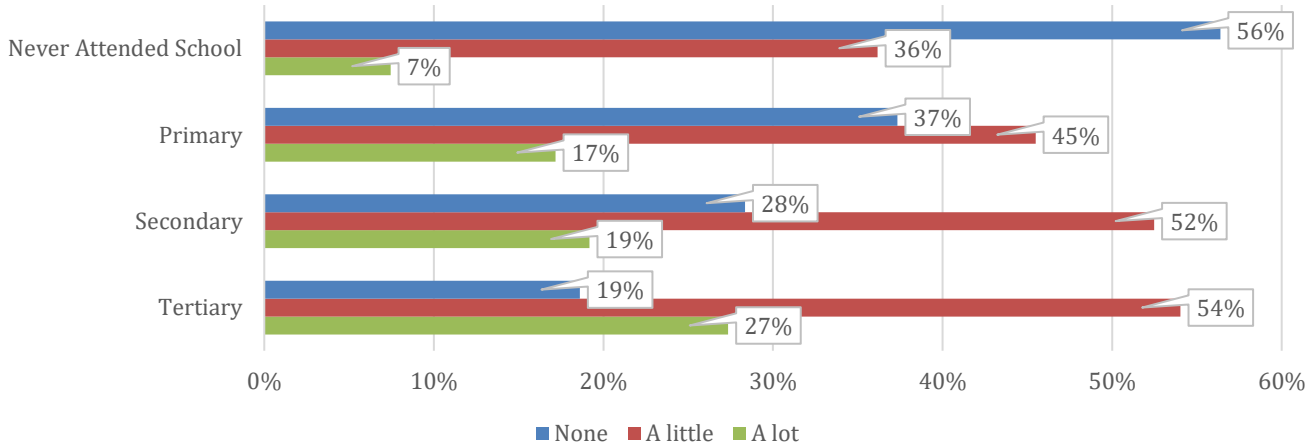
Across all the age groups, more than 60% of the survey respondents take some level of interest in politics either ‘A lot’ or ‘A little’. More than half of the survey respondents who fall between the ages of 18-60 years take ‘A little’ interest in politics. Respondents in the 18-20 and 81+ cohort reported having the most interest at 25%.

The percentage of respondents who take no interest in politics increases with age. The graph takes an upward trend.

10.2 Summary of responses by gender

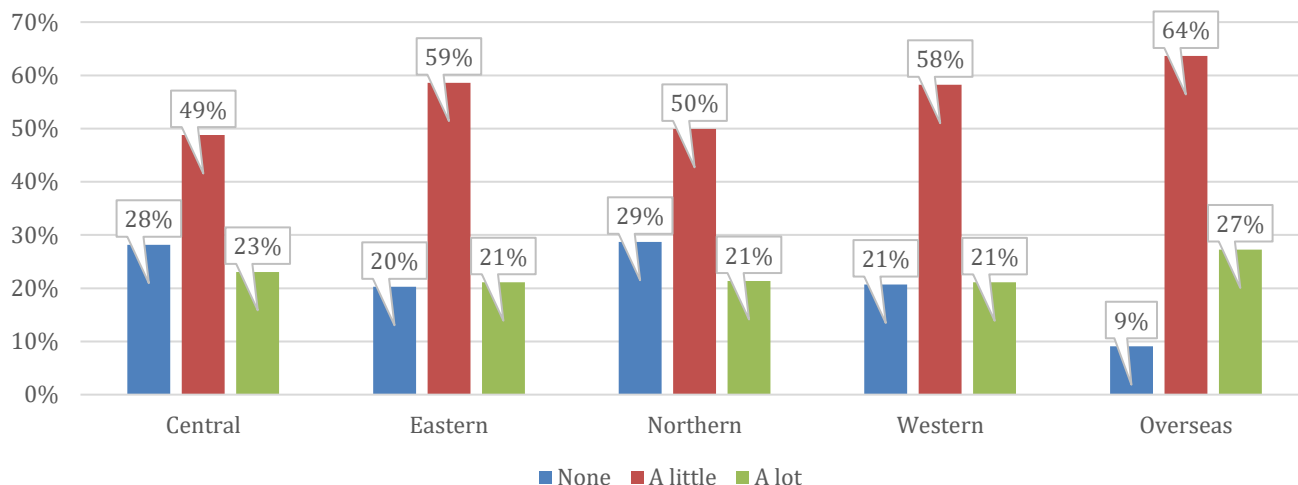


10.3 Summary of responses by education



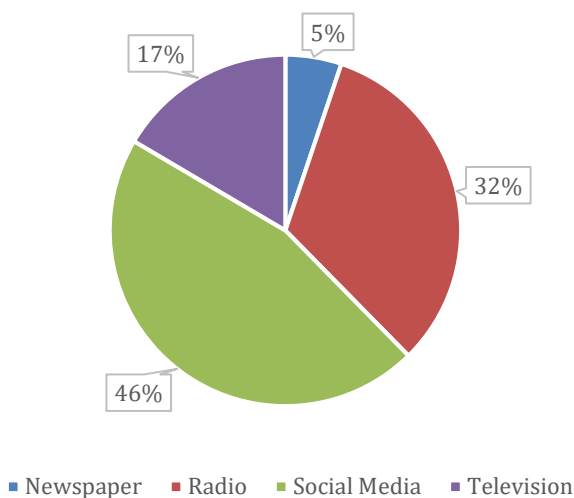
Trend for 'A Lot' increases with level of education. Trend for 'A Little' also increases as education level increases. Trend for 'None' decreases as level of education increases.

10.4 Summary of responses by Division



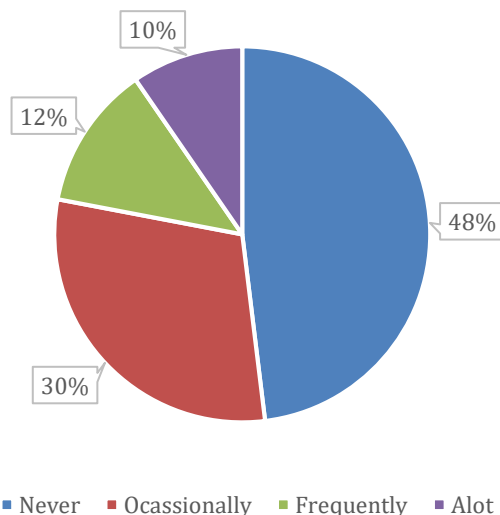
Over 70% of the respondents across the divisions take some level of interest. However, in the Northern Division 29% and in the Central Division, 28% of the respondents indicate they don't take any interest at all in politics.

10.5 Summary of responses for those who answered 'None' against the platform used to access Election Information



Of the 2,449 people who indicated they had no interest in politics, 46% of them access their election information on social media. This analysis was done to see where respondents who took no interest in politics got their election information from.

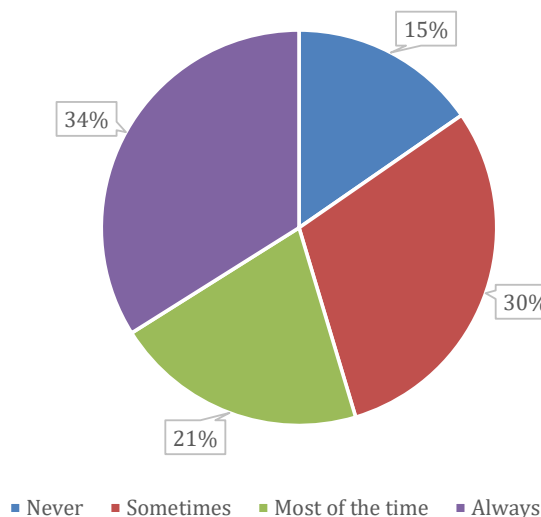
10.6 Summary of responses for respondents who answered 'None' and how often they come across FEO's Facebook posts?



Of the 2,449 people who answered 'None', close to half (48%) indicate they have never come across posts from FEO on social media.

10.7 Summary of responses for respondents who answered 'A Lot' and how often they verify election information on social media?

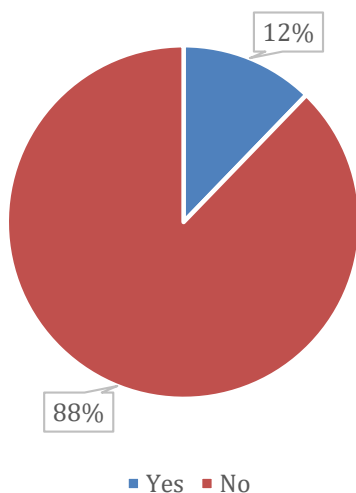
This analysis will allow us to ascertain whether the level of interest in politics has any correlation to the fact that they actually verify the information that they receive on social media on the political landscape in Fiji or not.



Of the 2,105 respondents who take 'A lot' of interest in politics, 34% always verify election information on social media while another 21% do it most of the time. 15% never verify the information on social media.

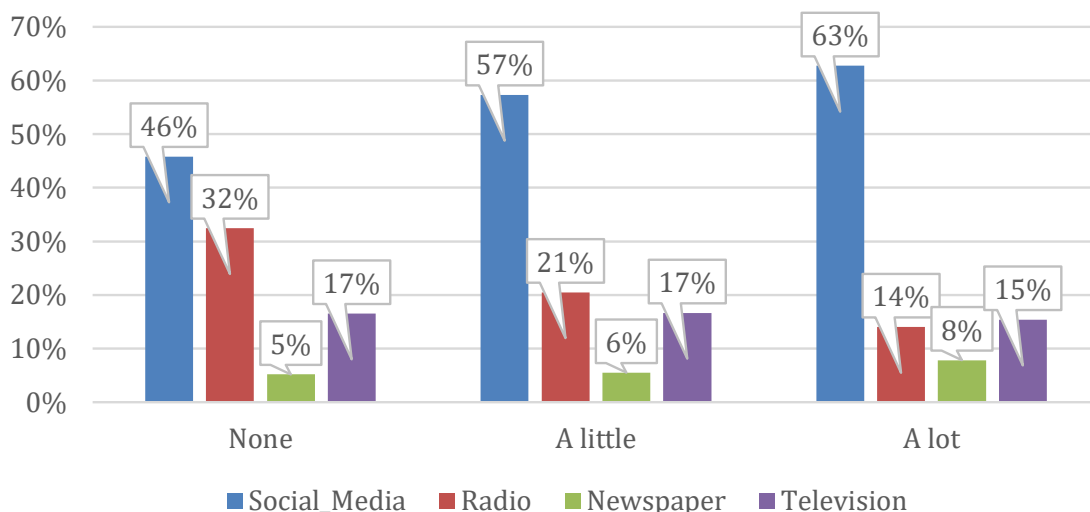
10.8 Summary of responses for those who answered 'A Little' and whether they share information on social media without reading the full article?

Another investigation that can be done is on the 52% that have a little interest in politics to see if they've ever shared something on social media without reading the full article, because they have little bit of interest, so they might look at something and just share it. 12% have said 'Yes' to this question.



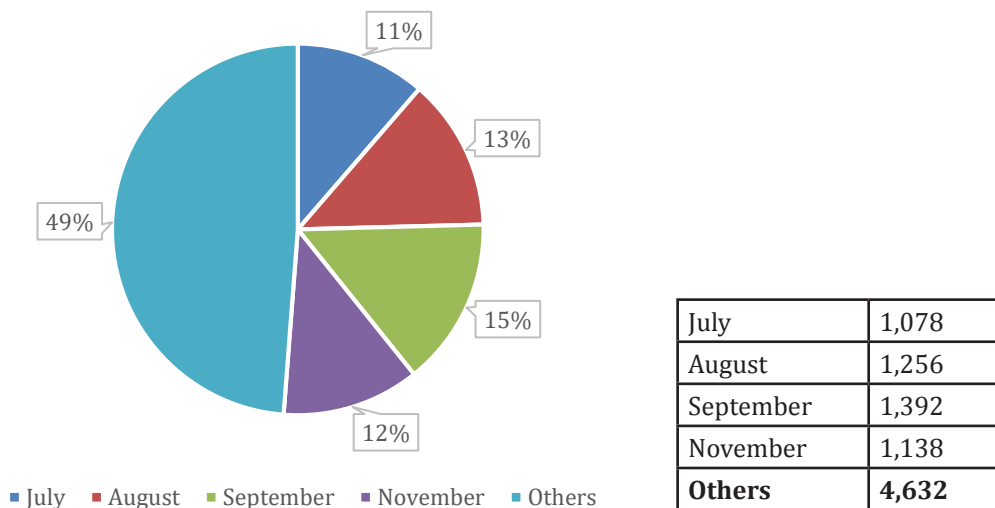
10.9 Summary of responses against the platforms

This analysis looks at the mediums relied on by people to access election information and their levels of interest in politics.



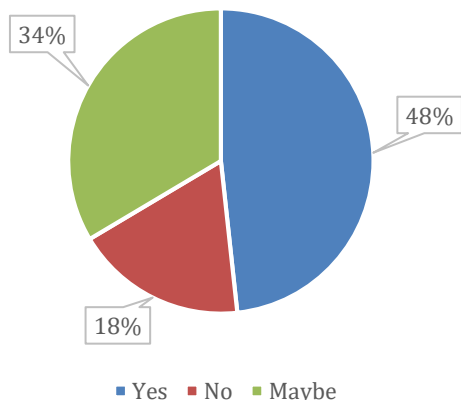
One will note that 63% of those who answered 'A lot' rely on social media for most of their election information. 46% of those who answered 'None' also got their information from social media.

Question 11: If it were up to you, when should the date of the next General Election be announced? This is the date announcing when the election will be held. It's not the date of the election.



The most popular month selected was September (15%) by a slight margin.

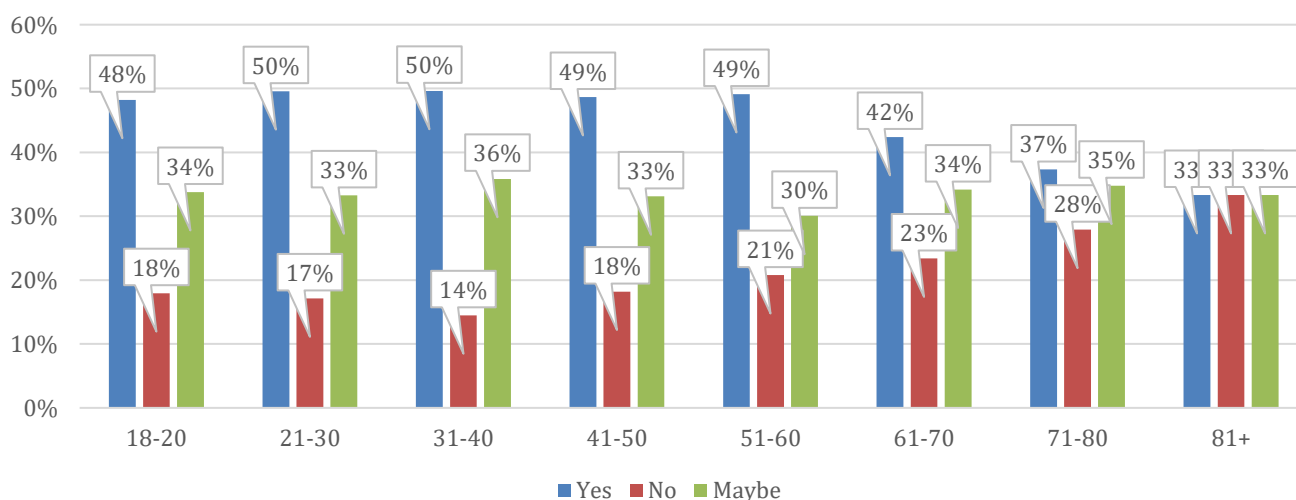
Question 12: Are you planning to read the manifestos of all the Political Parties?



Yes	4,586
No	1,727
Maybe	3,186
Total	9,499

48% of the respondents indicate they will be reading the party manifesto, 34% have indicated they may read it with the remaining 18% stating they will not.

12.1 Summary of responses by age

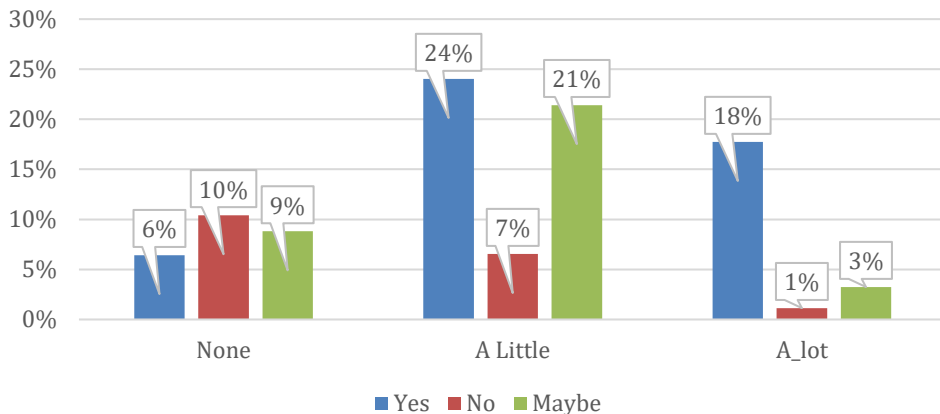


Over 40% of the respondents between the ages of 18-70 years indicate they will be reading party manifestos. More than 30% of the respondents across all the age groups are not sure and have indicated that they may read it. A trend can be seen developing for the 40+ group whereby the probability of respondents reading the manifesto declines and the likelihood of them not reading the manifesto rises as age increases. This could be attributed to party loyalties maintained by these individuals or even loyalties to particular personalities. They will vote for that party/candidate regardless of the proposed policies of that party/candidate.

12.2 Summary of responses by interest in politics

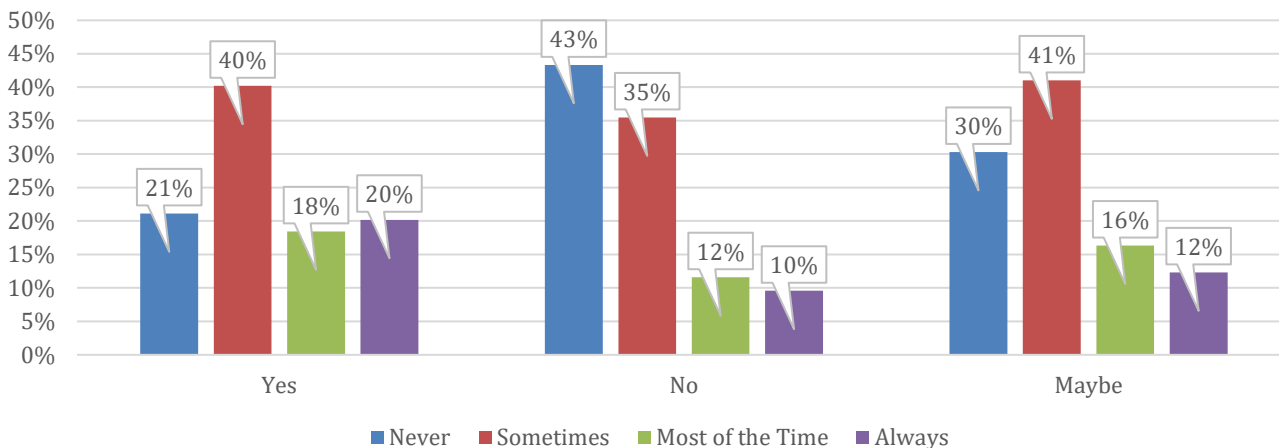
This analysis was important to derive patterns of behavior on whether people who said they take a lot of interest in politics actually relate it to reading party manifestos.

Otherwise, it could mean that they are not aware that they should read political party manifestos or they do not even know that manifestos are something that political parties create.



12.3 Summary of responses by how often they verify information on elections

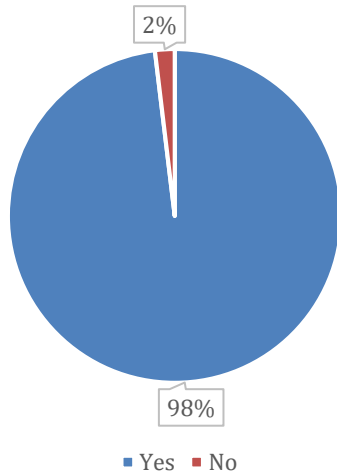
This analysis would be useful to determine whether people are likely to check if the information they are accessing is correct. For example, if there is false information circulating on social media regarding a party’s manifesto, will voters be likely to verify it before believing it to be true.



Of the 4,586 survey respondents who said they will read the political party manifesto, 21% will never verify the information they read on social media while another 40% may verify but ‘Sometimes’.

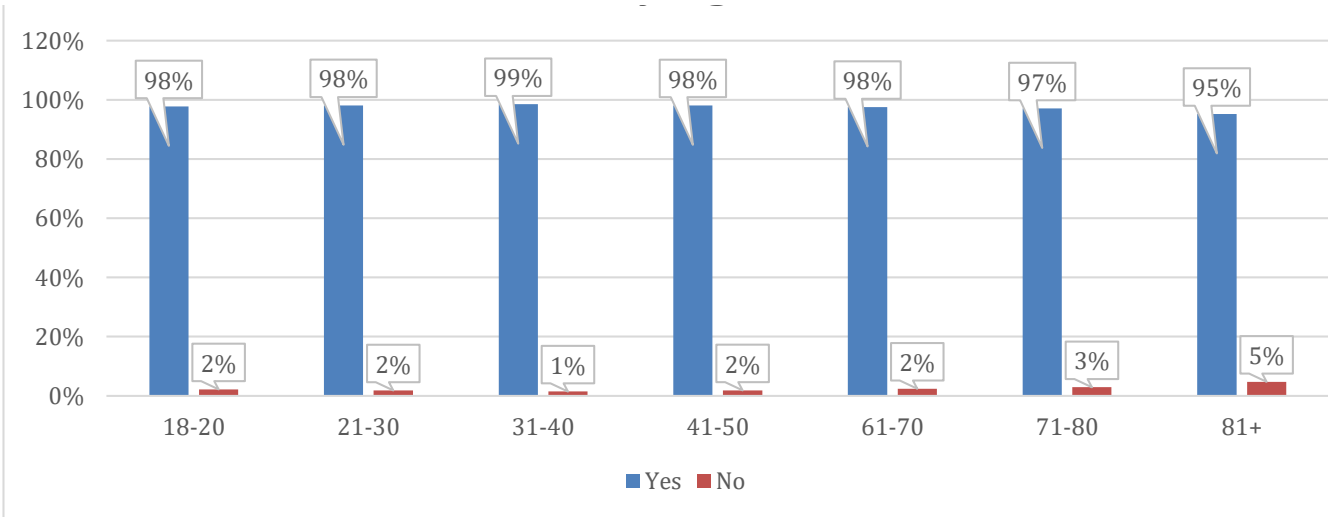
Nearer to the general election, political parties will be campaigning and social media is likely to be one of the major platforms they use.

Question 13: Will you vote in the next General Election?

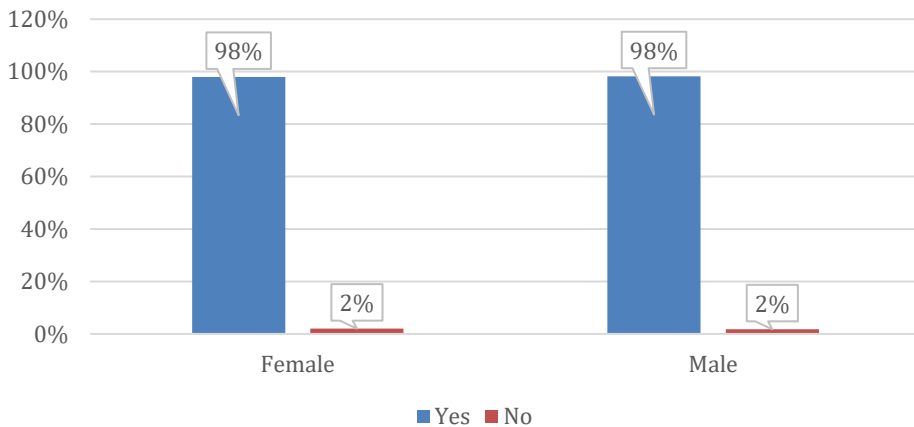


Yes	9,314
No	181
Total	9,495

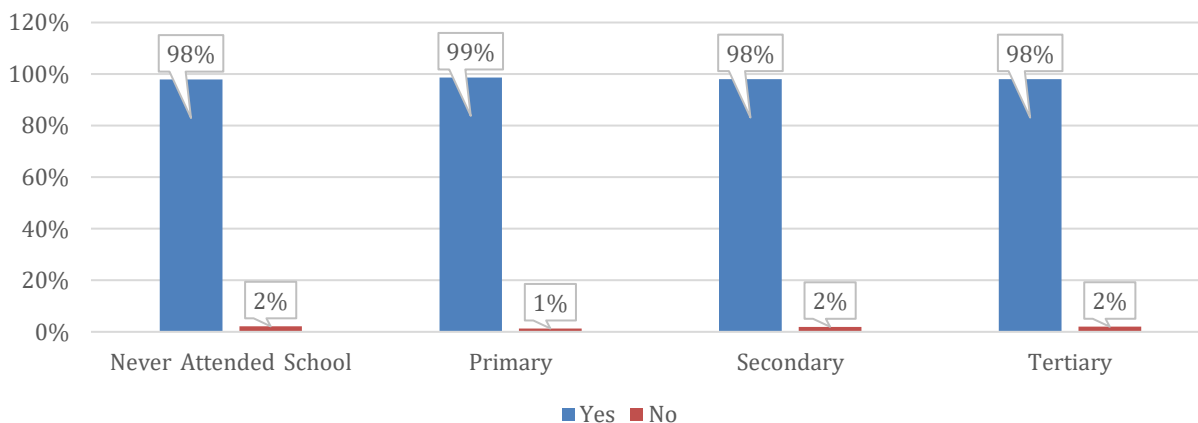
13.1 Summary of responses by age



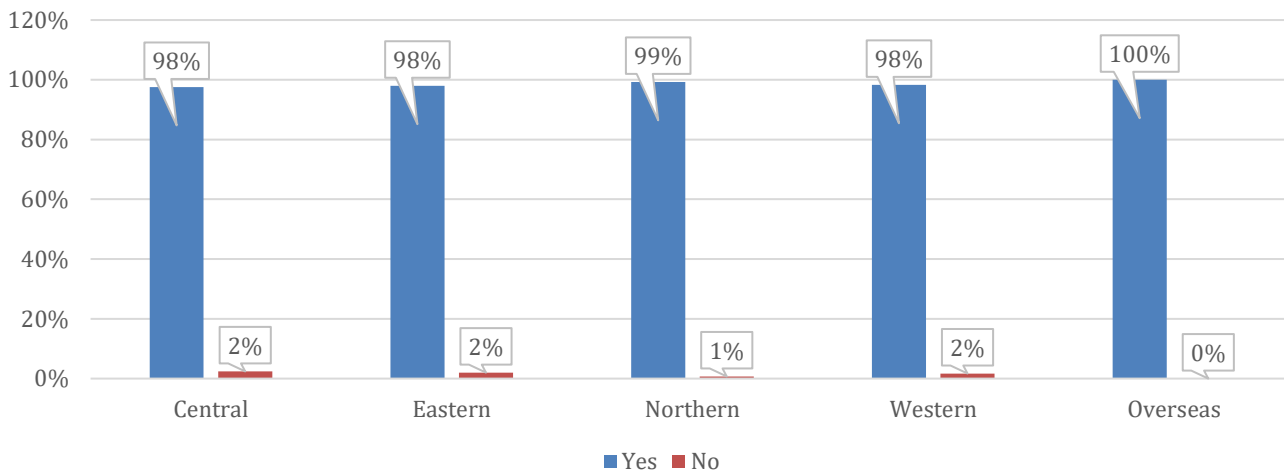
13.2 Summary of responses by gender



13.3 Summary of responses by education

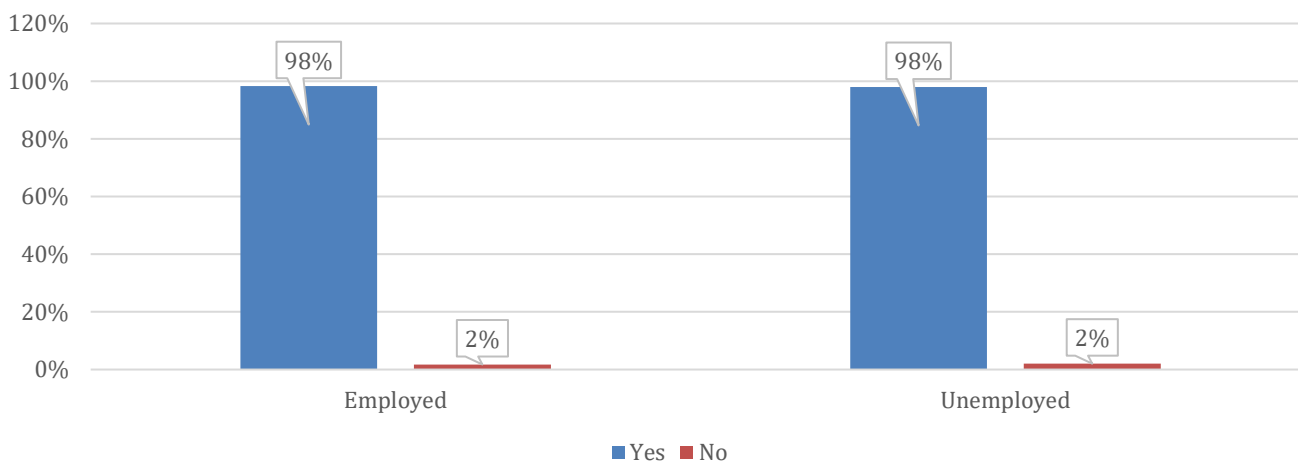


13.4 Summary of responses by division



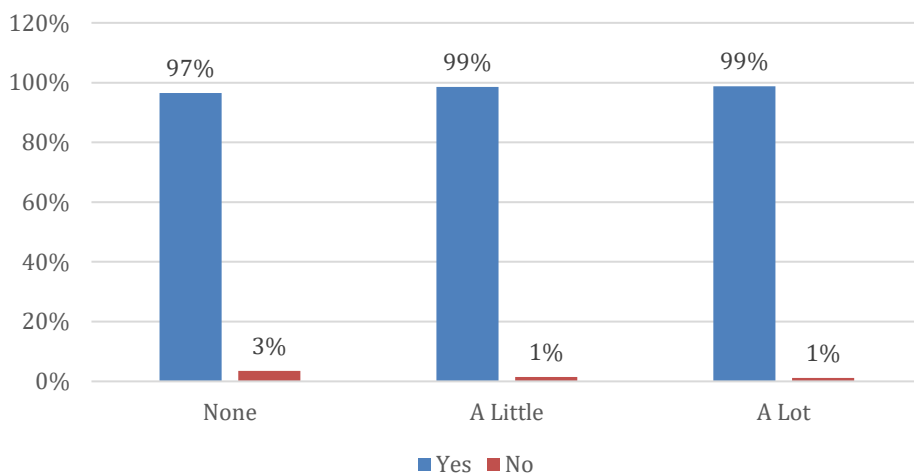
Over 98% of the respondents across all the Divisions indicated they will vote.

13.5 Summary of responses by employment status

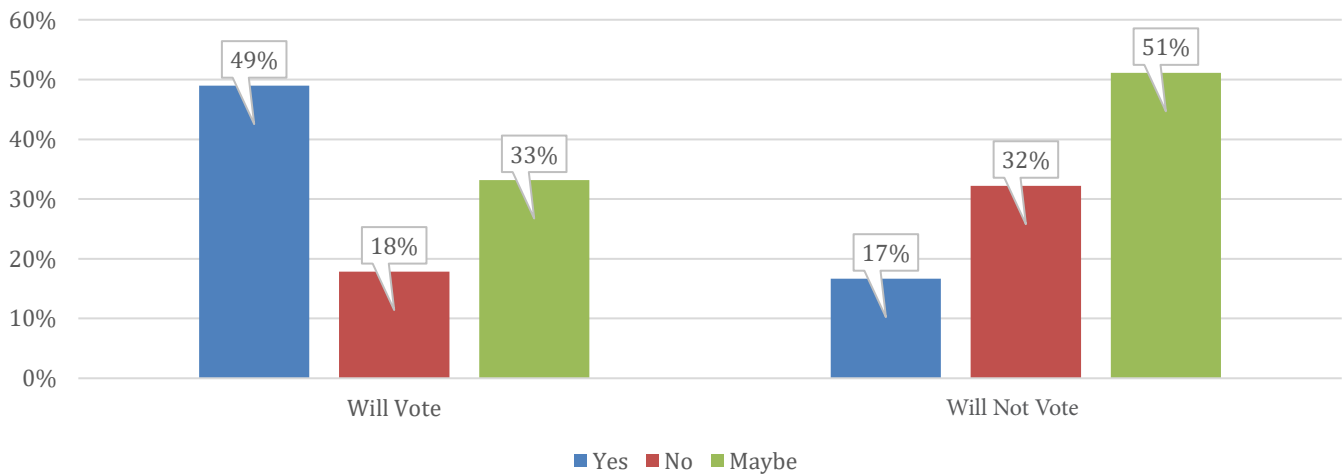


13.6 Summary of responses by interest in politics

For each category it was imperative to see how many had interest in politics so if they have no interest in politics, and they're not going to vote in the next general election, that is - the category of people that need to be taken into consideration for civic awareness.

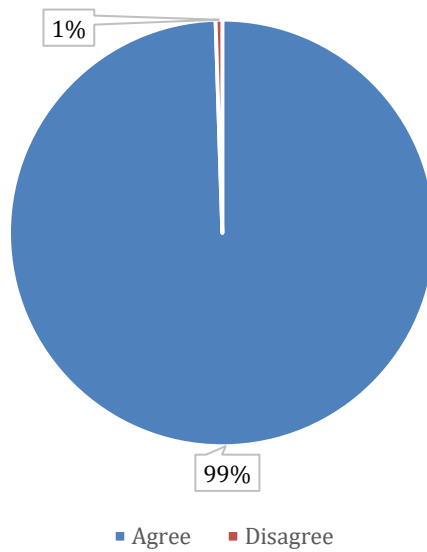


13.7 Summary of responses by whether they will read Political Party Manifestoes



18% of those who indicated they will vote in the next general election are not planning on reading the manifestos of political parties. Meanwhile, 17% who said they will not vote have indicated that they will read party manifestos.

Question 14: I have the freedom to vote for whomever I want in an election.

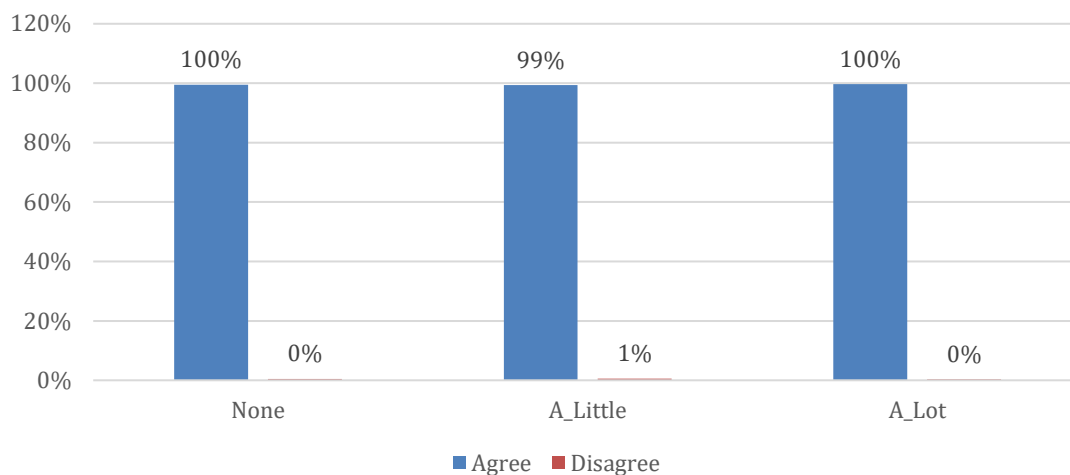


Agree	9,470
Disagree	48
Total	9,518

99% of the survey respondents agree that they have the freedom to vote for whomever they want in a Fijian general election while 1% of the respondents disagree.

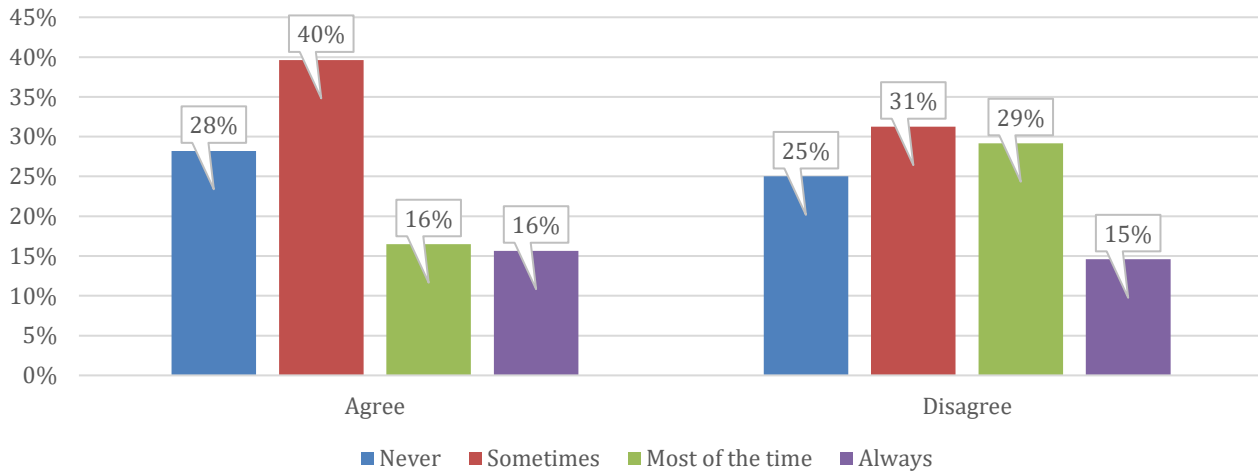
14.1 Summary of responses by interest in politics

The correlation of these two (2) questions is to explore if there are voters who have an interest in politics, but they don't agree that they have the freedom to vote for whoever they want to. That means they don't have confidence in the electoral system.

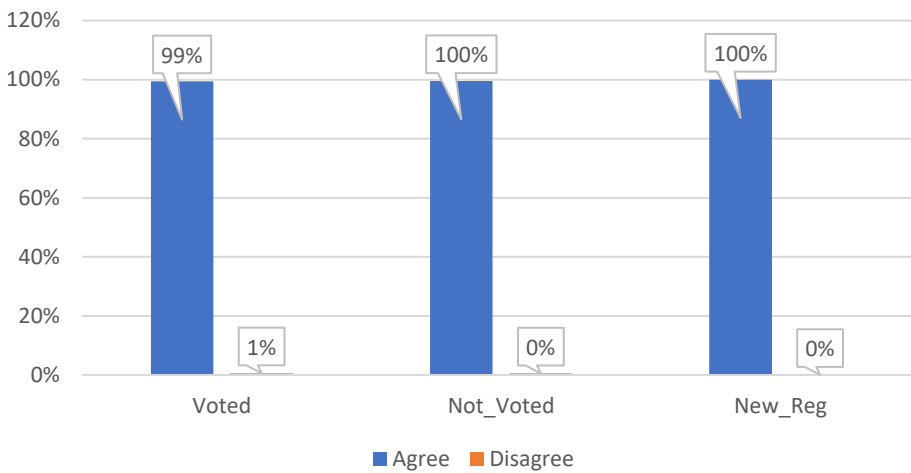


14.2 Summary of responses by whether people verify information on social media

The graph below shows the responses of people who have either agreed or disagreed to the statement with a specific focus on how often they verify information on social media.

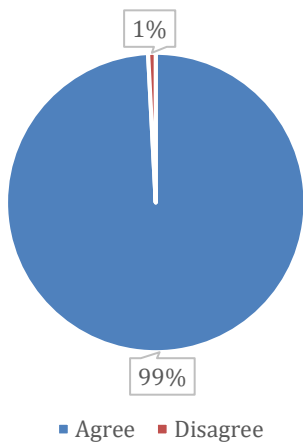


14.3 Summary of responses by whether they voted in 2018



Of the respondents who had voted in the 2018 General Election, 99% agreed with the statement.

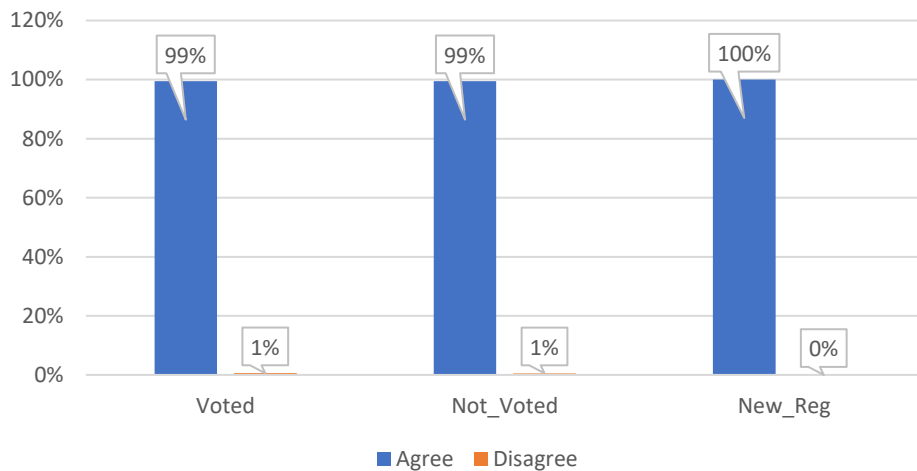
Question 15: The elections process in Fiji provides equal opportunities for all voters to take part in elections.



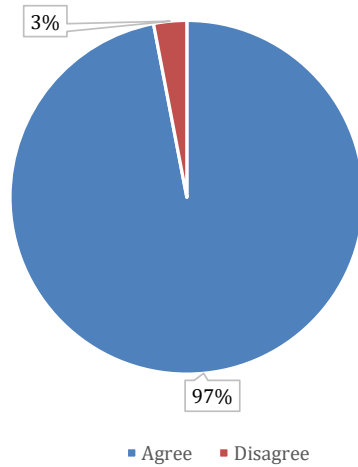
Agree	9,468
Disagree	50
Total	9,518

99% of the survey respondents agree that the elections process in Fiji provides equal opportunities for all voters to take part in elections with 1% of respondents disagreeing with the statement. The responses provide a positive indication in terms of voters’ confidence in the current electoral system.

15.1 Summary of responses by voter turnout



Question 16: My Vote is Secret.

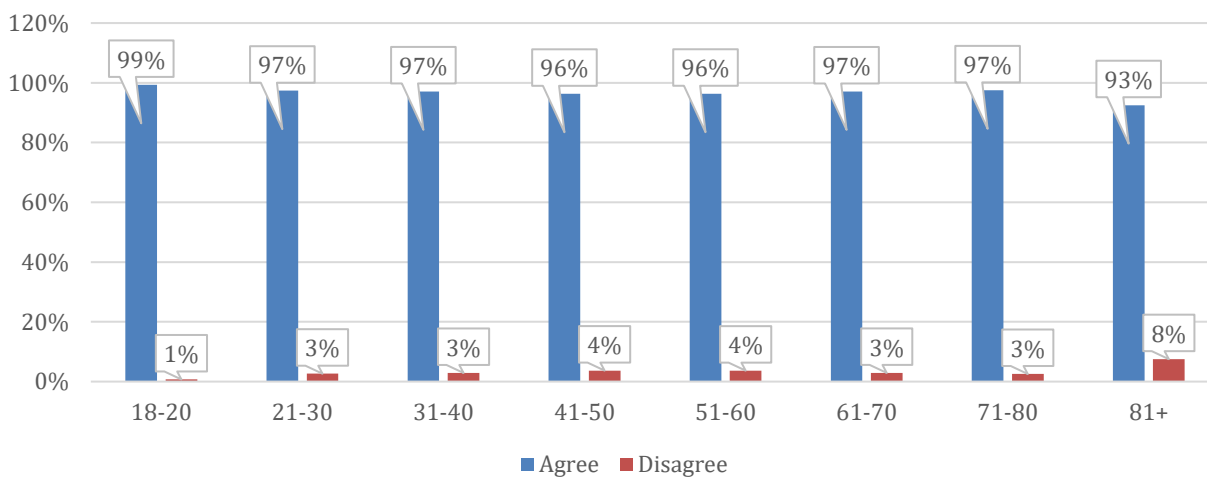


Agree	9,237
Disagree	288
Total	9,525

97% of the respondents believe that their vote is secret under the Fijian electoral system while 3% of the respondents disagree.

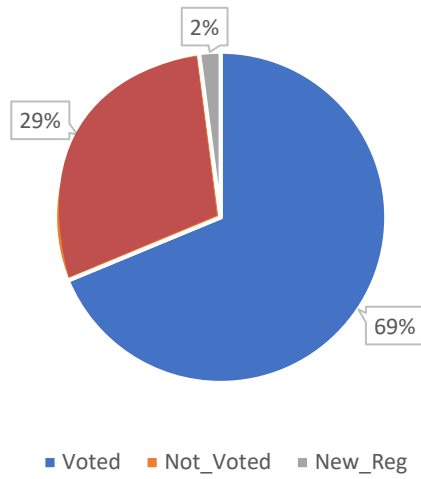
The right to vote by secret ballot is guaranteed in the 2013, Constitution of the Republic of Fiji. The subject for investigation in the survey will be against the 2018 voter turnout data to determine if the 3% who disagree on the statement have gone through a voting process in Fiji to establish whether their point of disagreement is from experience or is simply their perception.

16.1 Summary of responses by age



Respondents who are aged 18-20 have greater trust in the election system possibly due to the 'Introduction to Elections' curriculum in school.

16.2 Summary of responses by 2018 voter turnout



Of the 288 respondents who disagree to the statement, 69% had voted in 2018 and 29% had not.

Conclusion

When this survey was initially conceptualized by the FEO, it was envisioned that the answers to the survey will provide critical information in relation to the level of preparedness of voters. The survey looked at the means of access to information, the level of verification, the level of filtering applied to information that is received by the voter as well as to ascertain the interests of the voter when it comes to politics and other key features of elections.

The survey also sought to determine the level of confidence voters have in the electoral process when it comes to key rights guaranteed to them under the 2013, Constitution of the Republic of Fiji. In analysing the responses that have been received, it was possible for the survey team to make further deductions on various investigations that are presented in this report.

It is hoped that some of these further inquiries made using the survey data that was electronically collected will assist the FEO and all other stakeholders in planning to roll out their own preparations for the 2022 General Election.

Pre-election surveys are usually regarded as best practice internationally. In Fiji, this initiative was taken up by the FEO as the election management body prior to the delivery of key election activities of the FEO. The data on voter perception and behaviour is readily available in easily deducible formats.

The initial findings of the survey were presented to the Senior Management of the FEO prior to the launch of the KYE campaign for the 2022 General Election. This comprehensive survey portrays in a user-friendly format, the findings and results for general use by stakeholders.



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ISBN 978-982-9176-39-4



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