

Political Awareness of Youth in Panabo City, Philippines: An Explanatory Sequential Analysis

Maureal, Maria Paula B. *

Juriana, Lorenbelle Q. **

Ayop, Criszelle Mae J. ***

Lagura, Glenne B. ****

Abstract

In the Philippines, democracy has a vital significance regarding the freedom of the people and that the privileged bear a lot of responsibilities the reason why Political Awareness was born. Political awareness has shown great importance to political participation to be indispensable and functional. However, different studies have concluded that political awareness is essential, yet the youth are indifferent to political participation. This study aims to determine and explain the political awareness levels among different youth strata in Panabo City—precisely, out-of-school youth, in-school youth, and working youth. The researchers used quota sampling to gather data in the first phase of this study in which the participants of each stratum must consist of Fifty (50), a total one hundred fifty (150) participants from Panabo City to level their political awareness. In the second phase of the data-gathering procedure, purposive random sampling was used to gather data to explore the youth's political awareness in which the researchers gathered 9 informants who have experienced similar events. This study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 16, which advocates for peace, justice, and strong institutions to foster sustainable development, enhance societal inclusivity, ensure justice, and build accountable institutions. The findings suggest that further research using a multiple case study approach could provide a more detailed understanding of the political awareness within each youth stratum.

Keywords: Youth Political Awareness, Explanatory Sequential Analysis, Philippines, Sustainable Development Goals 16, Republic Act 8044

*,**,***,**** Institute of Leadership, Entrepreneurship, and Good Governance (ILEGG), Davao del Norte State College, Philippines

* E-mail: maureal.mariapaula@dnsc.edu.ph

** E-mail: juriana.lorenbelle@dnsc.edu.ph

*** E-mail: yop.criszellemae@dnsc.edu.ph

**** E-mail: glenne.lagura@dnsc.edu.ph

Received: March 14, B.E.2568 Revised: April 28, B.E.2568 Accepted: June 27, B.E.2568

การศึกษาความตระหนักทางการเมืองของเยาวชนในเมืองพานาโบ ประเทศฟิลิปปินส์: การวิเคราะห์แบบลำดับเพื่ออธิบายปรากฏการณ์

มาอูเรียล, มาเรีย เปลา ปี *
จูเรียนา, ลอเรนเบลล์ คิว **
อาโยป, คริสเซลล์ เม เจ ***
ลากูรา, เกลนนี ปี ****

บทคัดย่อ

ในประเทศฟิลิปปินส์ ประชาธิปไตยมีความสำคัญอย่างยิ่งต่อเสรีภาพของประชาชน และกลุ่มที่มีอภิสิทธิ์ก็ต้องแบกรับความรับผิดชอบอย่างมาก นี่คือเหตุผลที่ทำให้เกิดความตระหนักทางการเมือง (Political Awareness) ซึ่งมีบทบาทสำคัญอย่างยิ่งในการส่งเสริมให้การมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมืองกลายเป็นสิ่งที่ขาดไม่ได้และสามารถดำเนินการได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ อย่างไรก็ตาม งานวิจัยหลายชิ้นได้สรุปว่า แม้ว่าความตระหนักทางการเมืองจะเป็นสิ่งสำคัญ แต่เยาวชนกลับแสดงความเฉยเมยต่อการมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมือง การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อตรวจสอบและ อธิบายระดับความตระหนักทางการเมืองของเยาวชนกลุ่มต่าง ๆ ในเมืองพานาโบ โดยเฉพาะเยาวชนที่ไม่ได้อยู่ในระบบการศึกษา (out-of-school youth) เยาวชนในระบบการศึกษา (in-school youth) และเยาวชนวัยทำงาน (working youth) นักวิจัยใช้การสุ่มแบบโควตา (quota sampling) เพื่อเก็บข้อมูลในระยะที่หนึ่ง โดยผู้เข้าร่วมจากแต่ละกลุ่ม ต้องมีจำนวน 50 คน รวมทั้งหมด 150 คนจากเมืองพานาโบ เพื่อประเมินระดับความตระหนักทางการเมืองของพวกเขา ในระยะที่สองของการเก็บข้อมูล นักวิจัยใช้การสุ่มแบบเจาะจง (purposive random sampling) เพื่อเก็บข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับความตระหนักทางการเมืองของเยาวชน โดยได้คัดเลือกผู้ให้ข้อมูล 9 คนที่เคยประสบเหตุการณ์ที่คล้ายกัน การศึกษานี้สอดคล้องกับเป้าหมายการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืน (Sustainable Development Goal) ข้อที่ 16 ซึ่งส่งเสริมเรื่องสันติภาพ ความยุติธรรม และสถาบันที่เข้มแข็ง เพื่อการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืน ส่งเสริมการมีส่วนร่วมของสังคม ความเป็นธรรม และการสร้างสถาบันที่มีความรับผิดชอบ ผลการศึกษาชี้ให้เห็นว่า การวิจัยเพิ่มเติมโดยใช้วิธีศึกษกรณีหลายกรณี (multiple case study) อาจช่วยให้เข้าใจลึกซึ้งยิ่งขึ้นเกี่ยวกับความตระหนักทางการเมืองในแต่ละกลุ่มของเยาวชน

คำสำคัญ: ความตระหนักทางการเมืองของเยาวชน, การวิเคราะห์แบบอธิบายเชิงลำดับ, ฟิลิปปินส์,

เป้าหมายการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืนข้อที่ 16, พระราชบัญญัติหมายเลข 8044

*,**,***,**** สถาบันเพื่อการพัฒนาภาวะผู้นำ การเป็นผู้ประกอบการ และธรรมาภิบาลที่ดี, มหาวิทยาลัยแห่งรัฐมินดาเนา, ประเทศฟิลิปปินส์

* อีเมล: maureal.mariapaula@dncs.edu.ph

** อีเมล: juriana.lorenbelle@dncs.edu.ph

*** อีเมล: yop.criszellemae@dncs.edu.ph

**** อีเมล: glenne.lagura@dncs.edu.ph

วันที่รับบทความ: 14 มีนาคม 2568 วันที่แก้ไขบทความล่าสุด: 28 เมษายน 2568 วันที่อนุมัติการตีพิมพ์: 27 มิถุนายน 2568

Introduction

Political awareness significance in the societal context is to preserve democracy in the country to further revitalize the government on what intervention on a specific problem they should use (Rahman & Razali, 2019). As the representation of the nation's future human capital, youth must be politically conscious to understand the political agenda and issues facing the country. However, youth nowadays have minimal interest and participation in civic society due to their lack of political awareness. Their study further stated the significance of political awareness in the societal context is to preserve democracy in the country to further revitalize the government on what intervention on a specific problem they should use. Without political awareness, there will always be spoiled liberties coming from the people, as stated by Bauml et al. (2022).

Under SDG 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions to enhance the peace and inclusivity of each society, provide justice, and develop institutions with adequate accountability. The study by Rahman and Razali entitled Political Awareness Among Students (2019), concludes that when youth are politically aware, their maturity enables them to evaluate potential political leaders critically.

By doing so, this study is hinged on the Theory of Mass Opinion by John Zaller (1991). The RAS (Received-Accept-Sample) model that was established by Zaller where if an entity has a high political awareness, then their decision will be bound to multiple considerations that most likely will bring a good result in terms with civic engagement such as participating in an electoral campaign. This measures how well the youth know the political complication and how they will respond to it. Along with that, the normative theory reinforces the notion by focusing on what ought to be in the political context (Siebert et al., 1956). The people will do something that fits their perspective, and by determining their political awareness level, we can understand the reason in the researcher's four dimensions.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

- I. Youth's Profile
 1. Out-of-School Youth
 2. In-School Youth
 3. Working Youth

II. Political Awareness

1. Political Events and Institutions
2. Political Efficacy
3. Political Attitude
4. Political Behavior

III. Explanation of the political awareness of the youth

The first category is the youth's profile, which includes the youth ages 18 to 30 labeled as Out-of-School Youth, In-School Youth, and Working Youth, which the researchers used as strata in conducting this study. To measure the political awareness of the youth, the researchers created four indicators in the second category to further analyze the data in the quantitative phase. Along with that, the last category of this study allows the researchers to explain the level of the political awareness of the youth in the qualitative phase with the help of these four indicators used in the second category.

Moreover, Panabo City, Davao del Norte has a youth population of 30.92% according to the 2020 census done by the Philippine Statistics Authority. The research aimed to measure the level of the youth's political awareness, which made the locale accurate to the study as the youth have different views regarding political issues. Also, youth voters in Panabo City gained voices through their rising numbers throughout the years, hence the researchers chose Panabo City Davao del Norte as it connects the objectives of the study and fits the population sample.

Various studies concluded that the youths are not interested to be politically aware. Civic participation can be a bridge to a progressive society, as mentioned by National Council for the Social Studies (2013). Nevertheless, the explanation for these matters is nowhere to be found. Hence, the researchers aim to fill this gap by presenting the behavior of the Panabo youth in terms of their political awareness. Researchers need to answer the question, why do youth have low/high political awareness? This aims to unravel the political awareness among the youth in answering these objectives. It is to determine the level of political awareness among youths in terms of Political Events and Institutions, Political Efficacy, Political Attitudes, and Political Behavior and to explain the political awareness of the youth.

Research Method

Study Participants

The researchers used quota sampling in the first phase of this study. Quota sampling selects from the population that has been categorized into its subdivisions; it also uses convenience methods within each stratum (Futri, 2020). The researchers also divided the youths of Panabo into three strata: out-of-school youth (OSY), in-school youth (ISY), and working youth (WY). The participants consists of Fifty (50) participants from Panabo City to level their political awareness. A carefully selected 150 participants were sufficient to conduct this study as stated by Memon et al., 2020.

In the second phase of this study, the researchers used an in-depth interview to elaborate the first data in explaining the youth's level of political awareness. In doing so, purposive random sampling to reinforce the study's intention and addressed the objective thoroughly Campbell et al. (2020). According to Polkinghorne (1989), as cited by Alase (2017), the recommended sample size for interview-based research is five to 10 participants who have experienced similar events.

Furthermore, the sample size was determined through the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the participants for both first and second phase. The participants should be 18-30 years old, registered voters, and residing in Panabo City. However, the study population for the first phase should not be included in the second phase. Then, exclusion criteria include individuals who are under 18 or over 30 years old, who lives outside Panabo City, and non-registered voter.

Materials and Instrument

An adapted survey questionnaire in the study of Al-Khazaleh and Lahiani (2021) was used in this study. The questionnaire was translated into a Cebuano dialect for the respondents to understand, consisting a 24-item survey questionnaire and indicators of this study to determine the level of political awareness of the youth in Panabo City. An adapted scale from Nyutu et al. (2020) was used to identify the youth's perceptions, rating each item on a Likert Scale from 1 to 5. Scores of 1.00–1.80 indicate very low political awareness, 1.81–2.60 indicate low awareness, 2.61–3.40 are neutral, 3.41–4.20 indicate high awareness, and 4.21–5.00 indicate very high awareness.

The researcher used the validity of the questions by conducting pilot testing to test and refine our survey questionnaire before gathering the data. The Cronbach alpha test score was used to test the reliability of the survey questionnaire. A score of 70 and above is sound, 80 and above

is better, and 90 and above is best. Right after the quantitative phase, the qualitative phase commenced, wherein the panelists refined and revised the questionnaire.

In the second phase of the study, the researchers conducted an in-depth interview using the interview guide questions based on the results of the quantitative phase which were revised and refined by the panelists.

Design and Procedure

The researchers used a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, gathering data in two phases: quantitative data collection and analysis for the first phase, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis. A qualitative method was used to explain further the data in the first phase (Creswell, 2018).

In the quantitative phase, descriptive statistics were used, with the mean calculated to represent the central tendency of the data. In addition, Standard Deviation was used to further test the individual responses, as stated by Lee et al. (2015). It was utilized to estimate the Standard Error of the Mean (SEM); and how precise the representation of the mean in the sample data is. Moreover, the researchers used variance analysis (ANOVA) to analyze the sample population's distribution (Kim, 2017). By doing so, the significant difference between the four dimensions was determined.

In the qualitative phase, the gathered data were analyzed through coding and thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the thematic analysis process circulated around transcribing data and recording preliminary concepts after multiple readings and listening to ensure transcription accuracy. Additionally, the four factors credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability encompassed Lincoln and Guba's (1985; as cited in the study of Korstjens & Moser (2017) framework that was used to determine the study's trustworthiness.

Furthermore, ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining respondent's consent before the interview or survey conducted and the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents were protected by using pseudonyms as it will keep their name or personal information private and confidential in accordance with R.A. 10173 Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Analysis

Quantitative Findings on the Level of Political Awareness

Table 1. Mean Score of the Youth's Political Awareness in Panabo City

Indicators	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive Analysis
Political Efficacy (Pagka-epektibo sa Politika)	150	4.298	0.594	Very High
Political Attitude (Politikal nga Kinaiya)	150	4.240	0.594	Very High
Political Behavior (Pamatasan sa Politika)	150	3.837	0.911	High

Table 1 presents the mean score and standard deviation for the variables representing youth's political awareness in Panabo City, reveal that the respondents strongly agree that they have awareness regarding Political Efficacy ($\mu=4.298$; $SD=0.594$) and Political Attitude ($\mu=4.240$; $SD=0.584$). It indicates that the youth have confidence in their understanding of their role and impact on the political processes and have taken initiatives to change the status quo to shape the nation's future (Basinillo et al, 2024 and Victor, 2024).

Meanwhile, the participants indicated political awareness regarding Political Events and Institution ($\mu=3.849$; $SD=0.703$) and Political Behavior ($\mu=3.837$; $SD=0.811$). However, the high standard for political behavior indicates varying viewpoints of the respondents' level of political behavior. According to Kiess (2021, as cited by Grasso & Giugni, 2021), this experience shows a greater trust in political institutions, consequently increasing the likelihood of continued participation.

In addition, while some participants may be actively involved in political activities, others may also exhibit lower levels of engagement. The findings corroborate the assertion made by Terrible et al. (2023) that there are youth who, unless they believe that the issues are truly impacting them, do not appear to be all that interested in getting active in socio-political matters, hence, their minimal participation (Terrible at al., 2023 & Borja et al., 2024). This concludes that the youth participants have a high awareness in political efficacy, political attitude, political events and institutions, and the respondent's response varies on political behavior.

Table 2. Political Awareness Levels Among Youth Strata in Panabo City

Strata	Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Descriptive Analysis
In-School Youth	Political Events and Institution	50	3.820	0.587	High
	Political Efficacy	50	4.417	0.398	Very High
	Political Attitude	50	4.357	0.469	Very High
	Political Behavior	50	3.800	0.655	High
	Overall Mean		4.099		High
Out-of-School Youth	Political Events and Institution	50	3.990	0.679	High
	Political Efficacy	50	4.158	0.758	High
	Political Attitude	50	4.127	0.689	High
	Political Behavior	50	4.180	0.729	High
	Overall Mean		4.114		High
Working Youth	Political Events and Institution	50	3.736	0.554	High
	Political Efficacy	50	4.318	0.562	Very High
	Political Attitude	50	4.236	0.909	Very High
	Political Behavior	50	3.532	0.554	High
	Overall Mean		3.956		High

Moreover, presented in Table 2 is the summary table of the level of political awareness of the youth in Panabo City in every sub-group. All the strata agree to the Political Events and Institutions with a mean of 3.736 to 3.820. For Political Efficacy and Political Attitude, all the groups express strong agreement besides Out-of-School Youth ranging from 4.158 to 4.417 in Political Efficacy and 4.127 to 4.357 for Political Attitude. Political Behavior is consistent across the three groups with ranging the mean from 3.535 to 3.180. In addition, the standard deviations suggest that there is a major varying response to the Political Attitude of the Working Youth. Despite their high political awareness, it is evident that there are youth who need more political awareness. Ahmed et al. (2015) concluded that low political awareness among youths has varying factors including their gender and field of expertise.

It also shows that in-school youth has an overall mean of 4.0985, out-of-school youth has an overall mean of 4.11375, and working youth has an overall mean of 3.9555. The overall mean concluded that the youth in Panabo City has a high political awareness, however out of each strata,

out-of-School Youth is more politically aware according to its overall mean. This reinforces to the study of Badaru and Adu (2021) that the youth have high political awareness in understanding the political system.

Table 3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results for Political Awareness Among Youth Strata in Panabo City

Indicator	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Decision (H_0)
Political Events and Institution	1.680	2	0.840	1.718	0.183	Accept
Political Efficacy	1.718	2	0.859	2.478	0.087	Accept
Political Attitude	1.321	2	0.661	1.960	0.145	Accept
Political Behavior	10.602	2	5.301	8.905	<.001	Reject

On the other hand, based on the gathered data in Table 3, the study conducted in Panabo City revealed that there were no significant differences in Political Events and Institutions [$F(2, 147) = 1.718; p=0.183$], Political Efficacy [$F(2, 147) = 1.718; p=0.087$], and Political Attitude [$F(2, 147) = 1.718; p=0.145$] dimensions among the youth population. However, it is important to note that there are significant differences regarding the Political Behavior [$F(2, 147) = 1.718; p < .001$] resulted in the data.

This implies that the youth in Panabo City have varying degrees of involvement in political matters. This result is akin to the study of Tomy et al. (2022), that youth in India have a high political awareness that led them to criticize their government for causing conflicts inside the country and its government. Nevertheless, their involvement in politics is very low. In doing so, this results that the youth may be high in political awareness, but for some reason, they refuse to be involved in politics.

Qualitative Findings on the Level of Youth's Political Awareness

In-depth interviews were conducted in this phase with three participants from each stratum. There were three (3) participants from in-school youth, working youth, and out-of-school youth, for a total of nine (9) informants in the qualitative phase. Interviews were conducted to further explain the level of the youth's political awareness based on the data gathered from the quantitative phase.

Political Awareness Among Youth in Panabo City

The subsequent questions were posed during the in-depth interview, facilitating the researcher's comprehensive interview on the topic above: How do you understand the political situation in Panabo City? What do you think is important about your participation in political processes like voting or advocacy? What are the recent political situations in your community that have shaped your political outlook and opinions? What do you think drives your involvement in political activities in your community? And what hinders your involvement in any political activities? From the personal perspectives of the participants, four (4) themes were generated on how you understand the political situations in Panabo City.

There is a self-serving advantage to participating in politics.

The youth in Panabo City are concerned about being excluded and marginalized, believing that the administration is dominated by favoritism when giving benefits, especially when the election period is near, comes with various benefits. According to IDI2, benefits like cash will be given during the election campaign. On the other hand, IDI6 responded that nowadays, politics is heavily influenced by finances rather than a firm conviction of public service. This is often present in a third-world country where politicians carefully choose their vulnerable targets, like those people living in poverty (Kramon, 2016).

“I will no longer try to understand the politics here in Panabo because it has changed. They will no longer prioritize or include you in the benefits if you are not close to the government.

“I attend meetings because they often distribute resources during these gatherings, especially when the election is near.”

There is political chaos that has confused the community.

IDI7, a working youth informant, observes that politics in Panabo has become chaotic compared to the past administration due to differing political affiliations. The youth added that the differing political affiliations have led to a chaotic administration that results in a loss of trust among the youth, according to IDI6. Given these situations and issues, this situation shows that the attitude of the political process and its actors, with issues such as corruption, incompetency, and self-serving behavior, leads the public to distrust politics (Van der Meer, 2016).

“The Panabo is very chaotic now due to political colors. Unlike in the past, we were one team. Now, there are boundaries or diversity.”

“After learning about a certain political issue here in Panabo, I find it hard to trust the candidates if they run again next time.”

There is a lack of political cooperation.

IDI4, as a working youth, was not interested in politics due to her lack of active participation in political meetings. Her lack of involvement results in disinterest in political matters. In IDI8's part, community discussion and events in Panabo City's politics have not benefited her at all IDI8 or their community. Calawa et al. (2023) 's study concluded that youth are disinterested in participating in socio-political issues. Leaders tend to neglect their responsibility to encourage youth participation and as long as youths are not affected by the community's existing challenges, they will also not show interest in any political gatherings and events.

“I am not interested in politics because I don't involve myself in meetings and because I don't attend the gatherings.”

“The political discussions and events didn't benefit me or the community either.”

The information from social media influences us citizens.

Social media provides information about electoral processes and incidents, such as calamities and issues locally like scams. IDI2 said he can gather such news on social media and stay informed about the happenings in his community. Moreover, IDI1 summarizes the idea that social media significantly influences how he views and reacts to the situation in the City of Panabo. According to Vizcaino-Laorga, Catalina-Garcia, and De Ayala-López (2019), young individuals take on two participatory viewpoints of social media: sharing opinions and getting news from it.

“I read on social media about many deaths, floods, fires, and numerous scams here in Panabo.”

“Their actions involve posting on social media. Because of these posts, our perspectives change, and have an impact on us.”

To exercise my political rights.

IDI5 expressed his point of view that being involved in the political and civic participation including voting are just exercising their legal rights given to them by the government. Additionally, IDI9 reinforced that participating in politics is only exercising the right of suffrage. In doing so, exercising the political rights of the youth can be called dependency on independence, according to Galstyan (2019). If the youth have more independence and autonomy, then they are more likely to engage in politics and exercise their political rights.

“People have the right to engage in politics because it's also necessary, enshrined in the law, and that's how things work here in the Philippines and its realm of politics.”

“Participating in political gatherings is essential because those running officials are serving us.”

To better understand politics.

IDI1 claims that being involved in politics affects their political decisions because it evolves and widens their political horizon; they learn varying lessons. IDI4 reinforces IDI1's statement that her political decisions are influenced by the politicians' programs that enable the youth to stay on a straight path wherein there is a future for them. If the youth receive proper support from the people around them, they are more likely to engage in democratic processes (Levy & Akiva, 2019).

“When I ran for SK Chairperson in the BSK Election 2023, my political beliefs seemed to evolve, and my knowledge broadened due to my surroundings.”

“During the campaign for the national election in 2022, I had many events and experiences that helped me understand politics.”

To make more informed political decisions.

Since the youths know their right to vote, IDI3 will go beyond choosing suitable politicians to be elected as their community leaders because it is their responsibility. IDI1, an in-school youth, can analyze more deeply who she chooses to believe in and what she believes, significantly affecting her political decisions. The study of Orzal et al. (2023) concluded that people consider politicians'

education, experience, personality, and profession to play a significant role in identifying who to vote for. This tells us that citizens, especially the youth, engage in politics to examine political candidates further.

“It influences me because I will vote for the candidate if I see that they have a project, especially concerning SK.”

“I have become more critical in choosing or believing in the decisions or words of the local government of Panabo, which has influenced my political choices.”

To gain favors and benefits.

As youth exercised their political involvement, they accordingly received favors and benefits through cash that motivated and influenced IDI8 to participate in the election. IDI6 also explains her importance in participating in political matters through the money given by the politicians. Additionally, during electoral campaigns and election proper, IDI6 also concluded that if a politician has money, they will win the election with no doubt. In doing so, youth did not escape the phenomena of vote buying. Canare et al. (2018) explained that vote-buying often exists in low-income communities where the giver can influence the youth's decisions.

“Focusing on the good things that can benefit the youth, like giving cash, has influenced me when it comes to political participation.”

“They will pay you and buy your vote to get elected; vote buying during election, there's no certainty that Panabo will progress.”

Facing conflict in a political party during the election.

IDI1 indicated that the main problem in politics is the political party color. Indeed, Agbodzakey (2024) stated that conflict causes delays in decision-making and implementation, which results in unproductive governance in a collaborative governance system. IDI7, an SK Chairman, also encountered conflicts with his Councilors, stating that conflicts within the administration are inevitable. Voting preferences are influenced by social issues, cultural values, and identity politics (Gidengil et al., 2001).

“The gap between political party colors is the main issue, the root of why there are political problems.”

“It’s inevitable to encounter conflicts with your colleagues, so staying anchored to the barangay councils is essential.”

Encountering different political ideas during a political campaign.

According to a research study in Bulukumba Regency of Pilkada (2020), first-time voters sometimes depend on the influence of their family and society, which shapes their political behavior. IDI1 experienced this situation during the election when their political ideas differed from theirs. Various political opinions, ideologies, behaviors, and preferences affect voters' political decisions regarding the candidate they want to support (Kulachai, 2023). Meanwhile, IDI 9 experienced voting independence, supporting a candidate according to her personal decision irrelevant to her family's choices.

“My relationships during previous elections seemed messy, even though we were friends and had different political opinions, we ended up in conflicts.”

“I will decide what I want to vote for because they (my family) won't understand since we don't support the same things.”

Being involved during elections.

As per IDI1, her political beliefs developed when she decided to run for the SK Chairperson position. Her beliefs changed as she shaped her environment. Moreover, World Youth Report (2007) stated that it is critical for youth to actively participate in social involvement and democratic practices to meet their needs and ensure that their fundamental human rights are upheld. It showed that political campaigns activated these inner biases, which led to political choices during the elections (Potter, 2006). IDI5 stated that during an election, what influences her voting decision is the candidate's platform.

“When I ran for SK Chairperson in our barangay, my political beliefs strengthened; they evolved and influenced my surroundings.”

“During the election, I realized how important my vote was. What influenced me was whether the candidate offered significant help and what their platforms were.

Discussing political issues in my community.

The study by Orzal et al. (2023) states that it is pertinent to include discussions on other aspects of the voter's political experience during the pre-election period, such as how they perceived the campaign period, how much the various campaign propaganda influenced them, how knowledgeable they were about the electoral process, how they felt about the pre-election period at the time, and how they intended to vote. On the other hand, family strongly influences an individual's voting decision, and social media as voting decisions in the family are deeply rooted in a child from a very young age. As a result, they either adopt their parents' political party of choice or are impacted by their political ideas (Klass, 2016).

“Others' opinions can influence me by engaging in conversations. If someone I know introduces another politician who has accomplished a lot, it can be enticing.”

“Of course, during elections, my opinion about a politician changes. I think this one is good, but then someone tells me not to vote for him or someone else.”

To see positive change as I feel responsible for it.

To bring change and progress in the community, the youth, especially IDI1, was motivated to join political engagement to bring efficient governance to her barangay. Akinyetun (2019) suggests that youths organize more informal and formal political movements and activities to link across borders to discuss common issues and concerns. IDI4 reinforces the study of Mokhzan et al. (2023), who analyzed their data that the youth often volunteer because they desire to achieve something in return, whether for themselves or the bigger picture.

“One of my reasons for getting involved in political activities is that I want our barangay to achieve justice, fairness, transparency, and accountability in our community.”

“Once I become involved in political activities, I feel like I have made a huge contribution to my community.”

To be self-educated about community engagement.

Johnson's (2017) creation of Emergent Exploration explained that opportunities that gave the youth civic involvement were their way to understand more about community engagement and widened their horizons in understanding the community. Experiences and learnings that drive IDI2 to continue involving himself in political matters. The study of Dagohoy et al. (2024) concluded that the youth could learn from their experience with the proper guidance. In fact, by engaging themselves in politics, they could educate themselves by observing, listening, and involving themselves in politics.

“So, I strengthened my political engagement because I knew I had so much to learn.”

“I accepted it to show the youth that even if they are not influential, they still have a purpose. Even if it's not in a big way, they can still help their community.”

To be involved politically as influenced by people.

Influencing one another to join an important matter is a very effective way to engage the youth in a political engagement. A few examples are IDI1, his older friends influenced him to enter politics and run for public office in the last BSK Election. To reinforce the statements, the study of Orzal et al. (2023) proved that family and peers are the primary influencers of the youth regarding political decisions, stating that youth's political decision is merely the echo of their parents or peers.

“I get involved in political activities because of my older friends. People will push me to enter politics.”

“So, what motivates me is my father's mindset, which prioritizes politics since I also want Consolacion to be prosperous.”

To uphold my civic duty.

IDI3 understands this right for her to exercise according to the constitution. IDI6 also expressed her sentiments that if she cannot vote, it will make her an illegal citizen. Nashmena et al. (2022) draw to a close look that citizens already know their political rights, the importance of voting, and their responsibility to uphold as responsible citizens. They did not burden themselves to weigh in their political decisions thoroughly because they care more about becoming illegal

citizens. This explains that the youths are not apathetic in political processes but they become isolated (Temanna, 2018).

“I vote because if I'm not registered in Panabo, I would be illegal”

“If you don't vote, you get removed and you have to go back and register again.”

Fear over political consequences.

IDI6 experienced a fear of social media engagement regarding political discussions due to a possible hacking of a candidate's supporters, which prevented her from engaging in political discussions on social media. According to the study of Kulachi (2023), social media networks directly and indirectly impact the voter's political decision during an election. For IDI6, political decisions are primarily driven by perceived benefits or detriments, with a key concern being the potential impact on their family's employment

“I'm afraid to share on Facebook because my account might get hacked by supporters, and something might happen to me, so I do not comment.”

“My decision to vote depends on my mother, depending on what is good and what is not. If it's good, I'll go for it; if not, I won't because it might affect their work.”

The conflict between personal beliefs and familial expectations.

Familial influence, particularly the family's primary income source, could hinder the youth's political involvement. As per IDI5, he has a sense of apathy towards political involvement, believing it doesn't yield any significant changes. His sense of apathy towards political involvement depends on his father working for a politician as their family's leading provider. Thus, family be considered significant in a socio-political relationship of the youth based on its political behavior and decision (Uysal, 1984, as cited by Turan, 2017).

“It doesn't make a difference; it's just the same. I also don't really get involved in politics because my dad works for a politician, and I'm not allowed to.”

“I don't know because my parents told me what to do. If they vote, I vote, too.”

Prioritizing personal matters over public interest.

IDI3 hasn't been motivated by anyone to engage in politics. Youth often state that they are distracted by their interests and activities, which leads them to lack adequate time for political involvement White et al. (2000). IDI3 finds that his other life responsibilities and commitments demand more attention. White et al. (2000) further said, youth's perspectives on the candidate who cannot provide for their needs are one factor why youth have a low level of political interest.

“No one has motivated me. Perhaps because I'm still young, I prioritize my personal matters over political engagement.”

“I'm not really that interested in political engagement. My other obligations and demands in life take up more of my attention.”

Lack of interest in political matters.

Youth thinks that politics is dull and boring, as they view the candidate as dishonest, self-serving, and unrepresentative White et al. (2000). However, most youth depend on their political participation for the benefits they can acquire; as per IDI6, she refrained from participating in activities because she felt excluded from the associated benefits. Also, Participant IDI8 did not believe he had any political obligations to contemplate. An individual who receives less information about the political party or candidate are the ones who are less participative, which makes their interests unheard by the public (Fowler & Margolis, 2013).

“I don't participate in activities because they don't involve me in the benefits.”

“Nothing, because I don't consider my responsibilities in politics. I'll vote so I won't have to register again.”

Conclusions

Political awareness can be seen among youth in Panabo City. In some manner, informants are conscious of the political situations of the city due to being actively engaged in social media. They also know the recent political conditions and the importance of their participation, especially during elections. They had a high interest and understanding in some political processes, especially the principle of suffrage; however, many, if not all, view political participation as a behavior, a mere compliance necessary to receive benefits in exchange for their engagement continually. There were self-serving attitudes to participating, such as during elections. Additionally, a lack of interest in

political matters, a lack of political cooperation, conflicts between personal beliefs and familial expectations, and a fear of political consequences where the reasons why youth tend to avoid associating themselves with any political activities.

The result is hinged to the theory of Mass Opinion (Zaller, 1991) that the youth have a high level of political awareness but they are confused, which results in their self-serving interest in political decisions. In doing so, their norms to do the right thing based on their political rights were somehow disrupted due to the information that was given to them. This result is also related to Siebert et al. (1956), the Normative theory guides the people on what ought to be done. Nevertheless, youth know what they need to do but they chose not to do so because of their fear of political consequences that will affect their personal lives.

These overall findings signify that the youth in Panabo City have knowledge and understanding of political matters, however, varying response in political behavior. Youth don't have enough will and courage to step out and present themselves in any political activities. If there are any, their perceptions and decisions are influenced by the people around them and the benefits they will receive, such as cash assistance or if there is any assistance given during political meetings or gatherings.

Implication for Practice

Republic Act 8044 established the National Youth Commission, initiates a national comprehensive program, allocate funds for youth development, and other purposes. The policy encourages the youth to carry out their role in nation-building. In adherence to this, National Comprehensive and Coordinated Program on Youth Development encourages youth involvement. However, the study reveals that while many youths are aware of political issues, there remains a significant hesitation to actively engage in political processes. This highlights the need for enhanced implementation strategies under the NCCP in which they may allocate a fund towards localized program, in partnership with Local Government Unit and youth organizations, focusing on political education and civic training by using this study as a basis in boosting the youth's political participation and civic engagement.

In doing so, this study significantly contributes to fostering political awareness among Filipino youth, reinforcing the broader aims of SDG 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institution which promotes peaceful and inclusive civic engagement, providing people access to justice and forming productive and responsible institutions, and is inclusive for sustainable development. Youth's awareness of political processes, political decisions, societal problems, and political rights are

significant factors in acquiring peace and justice in the recent and future generations, cultivated by accountable institutions that provide access to opportunities for youth to participate.

Implication for Future Research

This study can aid the evaluation and improvement of the implementation of Republic Act 8044 or known as "Youth in Nation-Building Act". This act should be strengthened based on the research relating to the youth, including this one. Moreover, future researchers may conduct a study to elaborate further on the level of political awareness of each stratum—out-of-school youth, in-school youth, and working youth—to determine whether each stratum has a different and similar level of political awareness since they have varying responses to the indicators. Future researchers could create an equal representation of the youth of Panabo City in each barangay to show which barangays have a high or low level of political behavior. They may also go beyond the 3 youths' profiles in categorizing their respondents and informants. In addition, future researchers could also evaluate the RA 8044 to measure its impact on political behavior and youth empowerment.

Acknowledgement

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals and entities for their invaluable support and cooperation, which makes this study possible.

To Sir Glenne B. Lagura, DPA, our research adviser, for his patience and dedication in sharing his professional ideas. His teachings, guidance, and motivation helped us persist until the successful completion of this study.

To Sir Paul L. Suyman, MPA, Ma'am Joanaros P. Fahit, RSW, MSW, and Sir Troy Jon N. Ancho, for the comments, advice, and suggestions that have greatly improved this study.

To our families who understand the importance of our study and continuously foster and support our education, thank you so much for believing in us. Also, to our friends and classmates who shared our laughter, sweat, and tears. Especially to Jo, Jen, Jay, and Mariel, who were one call away and helped us gather our data.

To the youth who responded to our surveys and interviews. Thank you so much for saying yes to answering our questions, even though we cannot offer something in return. Indeed, may the government foster more of our political awareness.

To Davao del Norte State College, our beloved institution, for its unwavering support, encouragement, and especially, as the funding source for our journal publication. Your commitment

to advancing research and education has been pivotal in the completion and dissemination of this study.

Above all, thank our Almighty Father for His unconditional love and showering us with blessings, strength, and perseverance to complete this research. Study. This would not have been possible without Your guidance and divine intervention.

Reference

- Ahmed, Z., Javaid, M., Muzaffar M., Fatima N., and Husain T. (2015). Comparing the level of political awareness among the students of social and natural sciences: a case study of public sector universities in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences*, 13(2), 64–67. https://pjsss.edu.pk/pdf_files/2015_2/64-67.pdf
- Alase, A. (2017). The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA): a guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 5(2), 9. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.5n.2p.9>
- Al-Khaza'leh, M. S., & Lahiani, H. (2021). University and Political Awareness among Students: A Study in the Role of University in Promoting Political Awareness. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 11(2), 204. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2021-0041>
- Badaru, K. A., & Adu, E. O. (2021). The political awareness and participation of university students in post-Apartheid South Africa. *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*, 6(3), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.46303/ressat.2021.22>
- Basinillo, C. T., Calixto, F. L., Ordinal, J. M., & Tenero, M. J. (2024). THE UNHEARD VOICES: THE DECLINE OF YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE PHILIPPINES. *Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(4), 1678–1688. <https://doi.org/10.17613/2mv6-4046>
- Bauml, M., Smith, V. D., & Blevins, B. (2022). “Who cares?”: Young Adolescents’ Perceived Barriers to Civic Action. *RMLE Online*, 45(3), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19404476.2022.2033069>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Calawa, G. L. E., Decuzar, E. J. M., Terrible, D. G. M., & Alubong, V. M. N. (2023). Youth in Nation-Building: A Qualitative Study on National and Local Participation in Socio-Political Issues among Students. *Diversitas Journal*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.48017/dj.v8i3.2675>
- Campbell S, Greenwood M, Prior S, et al. (2020). Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 25(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Canare, T. A., Mendoza, R. U., & Lopez, M. A. (2018). An empirical analysis of vote buying among the poor. *South East Asia Research*, 26(1), 58–84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967828x17753420>

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Dagohoy, R. (2024, May 20). *Exploring the dimensions of youth volunteerism in times of crisis: A framework development*. National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP) Journal. SSRN. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4834376>
- Fowler, A., & Margolis, M. (2014). The political consequences of uninformed voters. *Electoral Studies*, 34, 100–110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2013.09.009>
- Futri, I. N., Risfandy, T., & Ibrahim, M. H. (2022). Quota sampling method in online household surveys. *MethodsX*, 9, 101877. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mex.2022.101877>
- Gidengil, E., Blais, A., Nadeau, R., & Nevitte, N. (2001). Women to the left? Gender differences in political beliefs and policy preferences. In R. Inglehart & P. Norris (Eds.), *Gender and utopia: The postindustrial revolution and the unexpected consequences of the second demographic transition* (pp. 140–169). Cambridge University Press.
- Grasso, M., & Giugni, M. (2021). Youth doing politics in times of increasing inequalities. *Politics*, 42(1), 3–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02633957211042738>
- Johnson, M. R. (2017). Understanding college students' civic identity development: A grounded theory. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 21(1), 31–60.
- Kiess, J. (2021). Learning by doing: The impact of experiencing democracy in education on political trust and participation. *Politics*, 42(1), 75–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395721990287>
- Kim, T. K. (2017). Understanding one-way ANOVA using conceptual figures. *Korean Journal of Anesthesiology*, 70(1), 22. <https://doi.org/10.4097/kjae.2017.70.1.22>
- Klass, P. (2016, November 7). *What really makes us vote? It may be our parents*. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/07/well/family/what-really-makes-us-vote-it-may-be-our-parents.html>
- Kramon, E. (2016). Where is vote buying effective? Evidence from a list experiment in Kenya. *Electoral Studies*, 44, 397–408. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.09.006>
- Kulachai, W., Lerdtomornsakul, U., & Homyamyen, P. (2023). Factors influencing voting decision: A comprehensive literature review. *Social Sciences*, 12(9), 469. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12090469>

- Levy, B. L., & Akiva, T. (2019). Motivating political participation among youth: An analysis of factors related to adolescents' political engagement. *Political Psychology, 40*(5), 1039–1055. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12578>
- Memon, M. A., Ting, H., Cheah, J., Thurasamy, R., Chuah, F., & Cham, T. H. (2020). Sample size for survey research: Review and recommendations. *Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling, 4*(2), i–xx. [https://doi.org/10.47263/jasem.4\(2\)01](https://doi.org/10.47263/jasem.4(2)01)
- Mokhzan, N. S., Sutan, R., & Yasin, R. (2023). Motives for volunteering among youth in Promoting Healthy Well-Being. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.55057/ijares.2023.5.3.49>
- Moser, A., & Korstjens, I. (2017). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 1: Introduction. *European Journal of General Practice, 23*(1), 271–273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375093>
- Nashmena, H., Malik, S., & Nadeem, M. (2022). Impact of Civic Responsibility on Decision to Vote among Adults. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences, 10*(2), 31–50. <https://doi.org/10.52015/jrss.10i2.188>
- National Council for the Social Studies. (2013). *The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for enhancing the rigor of K-12 civics, economics, geography, and history* [PDF]. <https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.pdf>
- Nyutu, E., Cobern, W. W., & Pleasants, B. A. (2020). Correlational Study of Student Perceptions of their Undergraduate Laboratory Environment with respect to Gender and Major. *International Journal of Education in Mathematics Science and Technology, 9*(1), 83–102. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijemst.1182>
- Orzal, L. B. B., Toring, L. A. G., Coton, M. A. A., Lucenecio, D. M. P., Nunez, R. M. C., Bordon, K., ... Almazan, M. C. R. (2023, October). *Understanding voters' preference for candidates in the Philippine presidential elections*. *Cognizance Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 3*(10), 109–118. <https://doi.org/10.47760/cognizance.2023.v03i10.009>
- Philippine Statistics Authority. (2023). Barangays in the Panabo City. <https://psa.gov.ph/>

- Rahman, S., & Razali, C. H. C. M. (2019). Political awareness among students. *Gading Journal for Social Sciences (e-ISSN 2600-7568)*, 22, 130–133. <https://www.gadingss.learningdistance.org/index.php/gadingss/article/download/207/201>
- Siebert, F. S., Peterson, T., & Schramm, W. (1956). *Four theories of the press: The authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and Soviet communist concepts of what the press should be and do*. University of Illinois Press.
- Tomy, L., Jose, M., & Chesneau, C. (2022). A Statistical Study on Political Awareness among Youngsters in India. *Deleted Journal*, 5(2), 22–37. <https://doi.org/10.61186/ijes.5.2.22>
- Turan, E., & Tıraş, Ö. (2017). Family's impact on individual's political attitude and behaviors. *International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences*, 6(2), 103-110. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1254813.pdf>
- Van Der Meer, T. W. G. (2016). Political trust and the “Crisis of democracy.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.77>
- Victor, D. (2024). Youth participation in Local Government elections in Tanzania: Challenges and Measures for increasing Youth Participation in LGAS Elections. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4758492>
- Vizcaíno-Laorga, R., Catalina-García, B., & De Ayala-López, M. L. (2019). *Participation and commitment of young people in the digital environment. Uses of social networks and perception of their consequences*. <https://doi.org/10.4185/rlcs-2019-1345en>
- White, C., Bruce, S., & Ritchie, J. (2000). Young People's Politics: Political interest and engagement amongst 14-24 year olds. In *Joseph Rowntree Foundation eBooks*. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA61128001>
- Zaller, J. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. Cambridge University Press.