



VOTING BEHAVIOR IN 2022 NATIONAL ELECTION: A CAUSAL-COMPARATIVE AND CORRELATIONAL STUDY

**Madeloso, Lorienel D.¹,
Mahinay, Honeylyn M.²,
Mahinay, Sergio, Jr. D.³ⁱ,
Escote, Aileen D.⁴,
Catulong, Rea Mae S.⁵,
Sagun, Fretzie Sam B.⁵,
Jorillo, Vince Ivan B.⁵,
Cabluy, Jessa Mae A.⁵,
Masukat, Shiara K.⁵,
Tagol, Anwar C.⁵**

¹MPA, Notre Dame of Midsayap College,
Quezon Avenue, Poblacion 5, Midsayap,
North Cotabato, Philippines

²EdD, Notre Dame of Midsayap College,
Quezon Avenue, Poblacion 5, Midsayap,
North Cotabato, Philippines

³JD, MPA, Notre Dame of Midsayap College,
Quezon Avenue, Poblacion 5, Midsayap,
North Cotabato, Philippines

⁴LPT, Notre Dame of Midsayap College,
Quezon Avenue, Poblacion 5, Midsayap,
North Cotabato, Philippines

⁵Notre Dame of Midsayap College,
Quezon Avenue, Poblacion 5, Midsayap,
North Cotabato, Philippines

Abstract:

The core of this study is the voting behavior of college students in the 2022 elections. It made use of the causal-comparative and correlational research designs to compare the voting behaviors of the respondents in terms of age and sex, and to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variable characteristics of the political candidates and the variable political process with respect to their influence on voting behavior. It included as respondents 41 purposively chosen Social Studies students of Notre Dame of Midsayap College. They were 18 to 23 years old, mostly females, and were all registered voters. Data were gathered through an online survey. Findings revealed that having a degree was considered by the respondents as a very

ⁱ Correspondence: email sergsmjr@gmail.com

important personal characteristic for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, while being a member of a well-known family was considered by them as unimportant. Being honest and trustworthy was also considered by the respondents as a very important leadership characteristic for the said candidates. Meanwhile, being clear in their priorities is a political process that is very much likely to influence the respondents in choosing their president and vice-president while the giving of money or goods to voters is unlikely to influence them. Similarly, candidates being talked about in their locality is a political process that is likely to influence the respondents in choosing those candidates. The endorsement of candidates by a local leader is a political process that is likely to influence them in choosing those candidates, while endorsement by a church is very unlikely to influence them. Results bared that there is no significant difference on the voting behavior of the respondents with respect to their age and sex. Finally, there is a moderately strong positive relationship between the characteristics of the political candidates and the political process as to their influence on the voting behavior of the respondents, and such a relationship is highly significant.

Keywords: voting behavior, leadership characteristics, political machinery

1. Introduction

Politics is a range of activities linked with group decision-making or other power relations among individuals, such as resource distribution or status. According to Laswell, politics can be defined as *“who gets what, when, and how”* (as cited in Fadakinte, 2019). The imposition of one person’s or group’s interests on another by force and without any element of consent seems far from what most people understand by ‘politics’ (Crick, 2007). On the other hand, a situation in which a group in total agreement (as to goals and methods) proceeds to achieve more and more of its objectives does not sound like a political process either.

Thus, “politics” encompasses a broad range of situations in which people’s objectives vary, but in which they work together to achieve those aims they have in common and compete where aims conflict. Both cooperation and competition may involve bargaining, argument, and coercion. Politics may often be more an art than a science, and the art of politics may often be to see the potential for alliances rather than antagonisms amongst differing groups.

In the Philippines, the plurality system has been enshrined in the 1935, 1973, and 1987 constitutions. Under the 1987 constitution, all elective officials – president, vice-president, senators, members of the House of Representatives, local chief executives and local legislators – are chosen by a direct vote of the people through a *“first past-the-post system”* (Teehankee, n.d.). The existence of elections and parliaments also conveys a certain degree of legitimacy to the outside world. As noted by Joshi et al. (2016), *“elections have become the primary mechanism since the Cold War for regulating political contestation*

among conflict parties emerging from the civil war through a negotiated settlement". The credibility of elections presents a multifaceted problem that may depend on several factors—whether elections occur, how soon they occur, and if they appear on time (Cheibub and Hays, 2015).

Campaigning for National Election in the year 2022 has become highly contentious due to high-profile candidates. In this regard, presidential and vice-presidential debates are held to assist voters in making informed decisions and to encourage candidates to focus on policy issues. However, some candidates have gone too far in shaming and comparing themselves to other candidates rather than focusing on their own platforms. Voters and supporters have also begun to exhibit different behaviors when campaigning and promoting their candidates. Literature reviews reveal seemingly conflicting findings and inconsistencies regarding the behavior of voters (Hayes, 2011; Jonason et al., 2014; Justesen, 2014; Murcia and Bolo, 2017; Nai et al., 2019; and Tandoc-Juan et al., 2019). Braha (2017) found out that social interaction among young voters and social limitations influences uncommitted voter choices. Few studies have focused on the youth's voting behavior.

2. Research Questions

- 1) What are the respondents' demographic profiles in terms of age, sex, and year level?
- 2) What are the personal and leadership characteristics of the candidates perceived by the respondents as important in choosing the president and the vice-president?
- 3) What processes influence the respondents in choosing the president and vice-president?
- 4) Is there a significant difference in the characteristics perceived by the respondents as important in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to age and sex?
- 5) Is there a significant difference in the influence of the electoral processes on the respondents in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to age and sex?
- 6) Is there a significant relationship between the characteristics of candidates perceived by the respondents as important and the processes that influence them in choosing the president and vice-president?

2.1 Significance of the Study

- **Students.** This study may serve as a stimulus for uplifting students' competencies and raising their consciousness on electoral processes and political issues.
- **Educators.** This study may raise the level of awareness of teachers and open opportunities for political discussions with and enlightenment of students.

- **Politicians.** This study will furnish political leaders with the knowledge on the behavior of the voters on their preferred candidates and how they vote.
- **Government.** This study may guide the government in conducting electoral processes that will truly reflect the people's will.

2.2 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on the voting behavior of students in the 2022 national elections, specifically in choosing their president and vice-president. The respondents of this study were set at forty-one (41) social studies students who were registered voters and were enrolled in Notre Dame of Midsayap College in academic year 2021-2022. The characteristics of the candidates were restricted to their personal and leadership characteristics while the political processes were confined to their political machinery, popularity, and endorsements.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Personal Characteristics of the Candidates

Politics is a medium of collective action to resolve differences, conciliate interests and values, and make public policies (Hermosa, 2022). Choosing leaders with a particular personality profile can lead to serious political consequences, such as policy accomplishments, relationships with the legislative branch, use of executive orders, and the likelihood of unethical behavior (Nai et al., 2019). It was found out that humans are cognitively limited information processors and cannot consider all the possible factors in a typical campaign and election simultaneously (Anderson and Ditonto, 2018).

The perception of a candidate's personality traits is a direct function of partisan preferences, but distinguishing the specific effect of personality from the effects of partisanship is not an easy task (Nai et al., 2019). Candidates often attack their opponents' integrity, honesty, and leadership qualities in commercials, stump speeches, and debates; and the citizens' casual political discussions often focus on the characteristics of candidates. It was found out that the political experience of the presidential candidate is the most important attribute, while occupation/profession is the least important (Murcia and Bolo, 2017).

3.2 Leadership Characteristics of the Candidates

Leadership abilities are essential for politicians to make informed judgments about their country's mission and goals and allocate resources appropriately (Alqarni et al., 2022). Pitutecha and Silpcharu (2019) argued that a new approach to public governance, administration, and leadership is needed. He proposed four fundamental elements of service, humility, and stewardship as characteristics of servant leadership. Early on Douglas MacArthur contented that a true leader has the self-assurance to stand alone, the

courage to make difficult decisions, and the compassion to listen to others' needs (Muteswa, 2016).

Political leadership requires a blend of charm and honesty, as well as the ability to assess a situation and make a decision based on what is best for the majority (B.PAC, 2020). Lee (2021) added that leadership skills include knowing who to listen to, inspiring others to collaborate, and listening to and improving on the ideas of others. In fact, effective leaders engage in certain behaviors, which Kouzes and Posner (as cited in Krishnan, 2002) characterize as leadership practices and commitments.

3.3 Political Machinery of Candidates

Voting preferences and the factors that impact them are a hot topic in political science and sociology. Kurtbas (2005) argued that the voter can benefit from sociologic factors such as collective and social links in making a choice. Hayes (2011) found out that campaign statements and news directly influence voters during US Senate elections, and that this link is strongest among those with limited political awareness. Fiva and Smith (2018) argued that intra-party networks can explain dynastic persistence and Tantri and Thota (2017) found out that marginal dynasties underperform regular politicians. Micro-targeting in elections has received a lot of attention, but we don't know how successful they have been.

Meanwhile, vote-buying during elections is a phenomenon in Philippine politics clandestinely practiced as underground activity by political candidates. Examining the patterns of vote-buying among low-income voters in Metro Manila, Philippines, it is very common with the most prevalent form using more benign goods such as food and clothing, though money offers still reported by more than a quarter of respondents. Additionally, vote buying is a form of political clientelism, i.e., the direct exchange of rewards and material goods by political patrons in return for electoral support by voters (Stokes, Hicken, Linos, Robinson and Verdier, as cited by Jensen and Justesen, 2014). Vote buyers often don't explicitly demand a vote in exchange for their payment. The effectiveness of vote buying is debated in the literature. The swing-voter hypothesis suggests that the payment really does act to purchase the support of an uncommitted voter.

3.4 Popularity of Candidates

Politicians have taken advantage of the social media space to reach a large population and prospective voting audience. However, voters are becoming increasingly cynical about politics due to the distinct set of features and propositions that each candidate brings to the table (Murcia and Bolo, 2017). Young voters are also being dissuaded from voting for traditional politicians in favor of TV performers and personalities with no experience or education (Anderson, 2007). Filipino voters are often inconsistent in their preferences and political convictions, leading to the election of inept government officials (Tandoc-Juan et al., 2019). Due to a lack of understanding regarding voting decisions,

people choose a candidate who they believe is preferred by the general public and are swayed by platforms that are distant from reality. Millennials are more likely to vote for a candidate based on popularity and who will benefit them the most. But Mondack & Huckfeldt (2006) discovered that when partisanship is low, people are more inclined to base their candidate selection on issues or their opinion of the current president.

3.5 Endorsements of Candidates

Celebrity endorsers are still a "big plus" to a political candidate's election campaign, as they can increase the public's awareness of a candidate and their memorability. Their endorsements have become increasingly popular in politics due to their influence on political socialization. Studies have looked into the impact of celebrity endorsements on products or brands (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016), but little research has been done on politics. Presently, social media can provide free advertisement, highlight important advocacy work, make speeches and statements readily available, and help candidates promote their campaign messages widely and freely.

Political actors use celebrities' celebrities to inspire others to vote for them and to affect their beliefs and voting habits (Sikorski, 2017). To break this monopoly, the 1987 Constitution required marginalized groups, such as indigenous people, women, the poor, youth, and the like, to hold 20% of all House of Representatives seats. Voters are interested in what features and propositions each election candidate has to offer, and young voters have been dissuaded from voting for traditional politicians, preferring instead to vote for TV celebrities and personalities with no experience or education (Atun, 2015).

4. Theoretical Framework

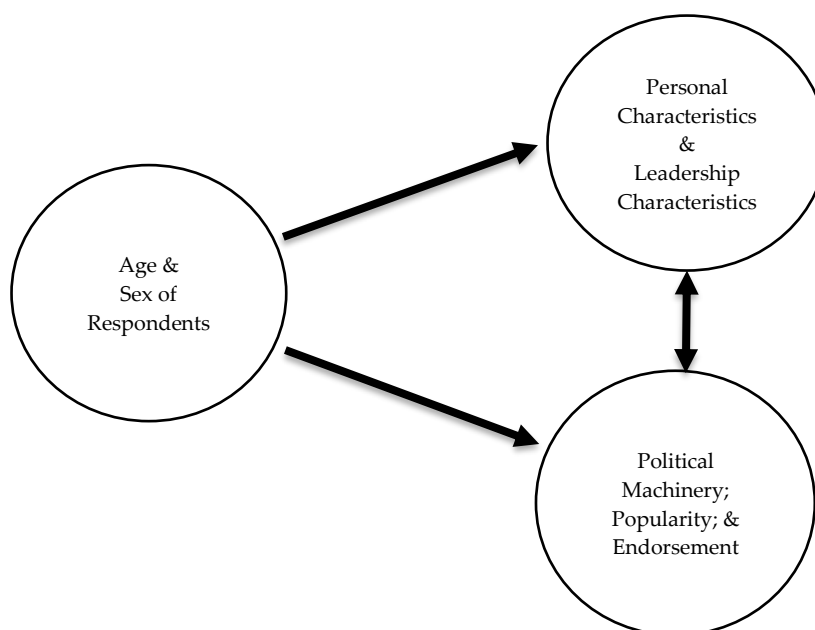
This study is driven by the **Rational Choice Theory** enunciated by Smith (1776) as cited by Lockert (2022), and further applied by Downs (1957). It states that individuals behave according to their own self-interests. As applied in elections, everyone involved in the democratic election system is primarily self-interested. Candidates are interested in their own election; citizens are interested in getting policies adopted that benefit themselves (as cited in Hardin, n.d.). As rational choice assumptions can explain market behavior, they can also explain political behavior.

This study is framed by the **Attribution Theory** proposed by Heider (1958) as cited by Gordon (2022), and further applied by Yalch (1975). It is concerned with how people translate events around them and how their translations affect their thinking and behavior. As applied in elections, voter behavior and attitudes reflect self-attributions. The decision to vote in an election is based on factors in addition to one's attitudes toward the candidates in the election. An individual's perception of himself as the type of person who votes frequently is also one of these factors.

5. Conceptual Framework

This study postulates that the respondents have varied perceptions on the characteristics which are important in choosing their candidates. This study also presumes that there are different processes that influence the respondents in choosing their candidates. Such variations are caused by the differences on the age and sex of the respondents. Finally, the research assumes that there is a relationship between the characteristics perceived by the respondents as important and the processes that influence them (respondents) in choosing their candidates. The relationship is visualized in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Schematic Presentation of the Conceptual Framework



As shown in the figure, there are two main variables: the independent and the two dependent variables. The first circle contains the independent variable of the sex and age of respondents. The second and third circles contain the dependent variables of the characteristics perceived by the respondents as important and the processes that influence them in choosing their candidates. The single head arrow that points from the first circle to the second circle, illustrates that the differences on the perception of the respondents vary depending on their sex and age. The single head arrow that points from the first circle to the third circle, illustrates that the differences on the processes that influence the respondents likewise vary depending on their sex and age. The two-way arrow that connects the second circle and the third circle illustrates the relationship between the characteristics and the processes.

6. Hypothesis

The following propositions are drawn for testing:

Ho1: There is no significant difference on the personal and leadership characteristics of candidates perceived by the respondents as important in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to age.

Ho2: There is no significant difference on the personal and leadership characteristics of candidates perceived by the respondents as important in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to sex.

Ho3: There is no significant difference on the influence of the electoral processes on the respondents in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to age.

Ho4: There is no significant difference on the influence of the electoral processes on respondents in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to sex.

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between the characteristics of candidates perceived by the respondents as important and the electoral processes that influence them in choosing the President and Vice-President.

7. Methods

7.1 Research Design

This study made use of the causal-comparative research design to compare the voting behaviors of the respondents in terms of age and sex, and correlational research design to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variable characteristics of the political candidates and the variable political process with respect to their influence on voting behavior. Causal-comparative research is an attempt to identify a causative relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable, and that the variable either cannot be manipulated, e.g., sex, or should not be manipulated, e.g., smoking (Maheshwari, 2018). A correlational research design investigates relationships between variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them (Bhandari, 2022).

7.2 Locale and Respondents of the Study

This study was conducted at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Poblacion 5, Midsayap, North Cotabato from January 2022 to April 2022. The respondents were social studies students, first year to the fourth year, who were registered voters and were enrolled in the college during the second semester of the Academic Year 2021-2022.

7.3 Sampling Technique

This study made use of a purposive sampling technique. The respondents were thus selected based on the criteria that (1) they are social studies college students, and (2) they are registered voters who intend to vote in the forthcoming 2022 elections. There were forty-one (41) respondents selected for this study.

7.4 Instrumentation

This study made use of a researcher-made structured questionnaire. It consisted of three main parts: Part I drew-out the personal profile of the respondents; Part II elicited the personal and leadership characteristics of the presidential and vice-presidential candidates considered by the respondents as important; Part III considered the electoral processes that influence the respondents in choosing their presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

7.5 Data Gathering Procedure

This study made use of online surveys to gather data. They sent a letter to the Dean of the College of Education asking the latter permission to distribute the questionnaires to the respondents. After securing the needed permission, the researchers sent letters to the respondents inviting them to participate in the study. The researchers sent messages through electronic mail (e-mail) to respondents containing the survey link, clicking on which would take them to a secure online survey form created and prepared by the researchers through Google form. From there, they could fill in the survey questionnaire.

7.6 Data Analysis

The descriptive statistical tools of frequency and percentage distributions were used to characterize the respondents in terms of age, sex, and year level. Distribution (or frequency distribution) refers to the number of times a data point occurs. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to describe the perceptions of the respondents on the personal and leadership characteristics of the candidates perceived by them as important in choosing the president and the vice-president, the processes that influence them in choosing their candidates (Hayes, 2023). The inferential statistical tool of t-test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference on the perception and voting behavior of the respondents when they are grouped according to age and sex (Hayes, 2022). The bivariate inferential statistical tool of Pearson-r was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the characteristics of candidates and the processes that influence the respondents in choosing the president and vice-president (Kenton, 2022). The bivariate inferential statistical tool of t-test was applied to ascertain if such a relationship is statistically significant.

8. Results and Discussion

8.1 Profile of Respondents

The greater number (41.46%) of the respondents were 21 years old, and the majority (78%) of them were females. The greater number (41.46%) of respondents were third-year social studies students. This finding implies that the respondents are young adults who can make decisions on their own, establish good reasoning in their choices, take part in the electoral process and exercise civil rights (Council of Europe, 2023). A voter's background has the largest influence on that voter's decision. A voter's background means the voter's social identity, such as economic class, ethnicity, gender, race, and religious preference (Dugger, 2021).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
18	1	2.44
19	2	4.88
20	10	24.40
21	17	41.46
22	7	17.07
23	4	9.67
Total	41	100
Sex		
Male	9	21.95
Female	32	78.05
Total	41	100
Year Level		
1 st year	8	19.51
2 nd year	9	21.95
3 rd year	17	41.46
4 th year	7	17.07
Total	41	100

8.2 Personal and Leadership Characteristics of Candidates

Table 2: Personal Characteristics of Candidates

Item	Mean	SD	Description
1. Being good-looking.	2.46	1.27	Not Important
2. Being financially stable/secured.	3.56	1.07	Important
3. Being a holder of a college degree.	4.39	0.89	Very Important
4. Being able to speak native dialects.	3.98	1.01	Important
5. Being a resident of a nearby locality.	4.15	1.11	Important
6. Being a member of well-known family.	2.41	1.00	Not Important
7. Being able to speak English language.	3.76	1.09	Important
8. Being a member of particular ethnicity.	2.90	0.86	Moderately Important

9. Being at rightful age relative to the position.	3.85	1.04	Important
10. Being a practitioner of particular profession.	3.85	0.88	Important
11. Being a member of particular religious group.	3.10	1.11	Moderately Important
12. Being a male or female relative to the position.	2.85	1.06	Moderately Important
Composite mean	3.11	1.03	Moderately Important
Scale	Range	Description	
1	1.00 to < 1.80	Not Important at All	
2	1.80 to < 2.60	Not Important	
3	2.60 to < 3.40	Moderately Important	
4	3.40 to < 4.20	Important	
5	4.20 to 5.00	Very Important	

The composite mean for “personal characteristics” is 3.11 (Moderately Important). The highest mean is 4.39 (Very Important), indicating that *being a holder of a college degree* is a characteristic that a candidate needs to possess, followed by 4.15 (Important) for *being a resident of a nearby locality*. The lowest mean is 2.41 (Not Important), indicating that *being a member of a well-known family* is a characteristic that a candidate need not possess. According to Harris (2019), the importance of education has continued to grow and has become too important for politicians at any level to ignore. Contrary to the findings of Cruz et al., (2017), candidates for public office are disproportionately drawn from more central families and family network centrality contributes to higher vote shares during the elections.

Table 2b: Leadership Characteristics of Candidates

Item	Mean	SD	Description
13. Being easy to approach.	4.88	0.40	Very Important
14. Being helpful to the needy.	4.93	0.26	Very Important
15. Being an experienced leader.	4.68	0.47	Very Important
16. Being honest and trustworthy.	4.95	0.22	Very Important
17. Being an accomplished leader.	4.71	0.56	Very Important
18. Being a strong supporter of progress.	4.83	0.38	Very Important
19. Being aware of international concerns.	4.71	0.68	Very Important
20. Being knowledgeable to current issues.	4.85	0.42	Very Important
Composite Mean	4.82	0.42	Very Important
Scale	Range	Description	
1	1.00 to < 1.80	Not Important at All	
2	1.80 to < 2.60	Not Important	
3	2.60 to < 3.40	Moderately Important	
4	3.40 to < 4.20	Important	
5	4.20 to 5.00	Very Important	

The composite mean for “leadership characteristics” is 4.82 (Very Important). The highest mean is 4.95 (Very Important), indicating that *being honest and trustworthy* is a characteristic that a candidate needs to possess, followed by 4.93 (Very Important) for *being helpful to the needy*. The lowest mean is 4.68 (Very Important), indicating that *being*

an experience leader is the least characteristic that a candidate needs to possess. Voters judge candidates by their personal characteristics and among the relevant characteristics are experience, honesty, morality, compassion, competence, and leadership ability (Prysbly and Scavo, n.d.).

Table 2c: Overall Mean of Characteristics of Candidates

Characteristics of Candidates	Composite Mean	SD	Description
Personal Characteristics	3.11	1.03	Important
Leadership Characteristics	4.82	0.42	Very Important
Overall Mean	3.99	0.79	Important

The composite means for the personal characteristics of the candidates is 3.11 (Moderately Important), and for leadership characteristics is 4.82 (Very Important). The overall mean for the characteristics of candidates is 3.99 (Important).

8.3 Electoral Processes: Political Machinery, Popularity and Endorsement of Candidates

Table 3a: Political Machinery of Candidates

Item	Mean	SD	Description
1. Good in public speaking.	4.32	0.76	Very Much Likely
2. Clear in his/her priorities.	4.41	0.81	Very Much Likely
3. Engaged in the intensive campaign.	3.83	1.00	Much Likely
4. Participation in public debates.	4.10	0.80	Much Likely
5. Affiliated with a big political party.	3.39	0.92	Likely
6. Seen in posters and streamers.	3.27	0.90	Likely
7. Giving money/goods to voters.	2.00	0.87	Unlikely
8. Being firm in his/her position on critical issues.	4.24	0.92	Very Much Likely
Composite Mean	3.70	0.87	Much Likely
Scale	Range	Description	
1	1.00 to < 1.80	Very Unlikely	
2	1.80 to < 2.60	Unlikely	
3	2.60 to < 3.40	Likely	
4	3.40 to < 4.20	Much Likely	
5	4.20 to 5.00	Very Much Likely	

The composite mean for “political machinery” is 3.70 (Much Likely). The highest mean is 4.41 (Much Likely), indicating that *being clear in his/her priorities* will much likely influence the respondents, followed by 4.32 (Much Likely) for *being good in public speaking*. The lowest mean is 2.00 (Likely), indicating that *giving money / goods to voters* does not influence the respondent’s decision in choosing their candidate. Political leadership requires a blend of charm and honesty, as well as the ability to assess a situation and make a decision based on what is best for the majority (B.PAC, 2020). However, the

findings negate the observation of Jensen and Justesen (2014) that vote buying is used as a direct exchange of rewards by political patrons in return for electoral support by voters.

Table 3b: Popularity of Candidates

Item	Mean	SD	Description
9. Talked about in our locality.	3.90	1.04	Much Likely
10. Subject of advertisements.	3.12	0.95	Likely
11. Featured in jingles or songs.	2.80	0.95	Likely
12. Posted in social media pages.	3.00	0.95	Likely
13. On top of pre-election surveys.	3.37	0.86	Likely
14. Covered in news (printed or electronic).	3.12	0.87	Likely
15. Subject of discussions in the classrooms.	2.93	0.96	Likely
16. Heard over radios and television programs.	3.32	0.93	Likely
Composite Mean	3.20	0.94	Likely
Scale	Range		Description
1	1.00 to < 1.80		Very Unlikely
2	1.80 to < 2.60		Unlikely
3	2.60 to < 3.40		Likely
4	3.40 to < 4.20		Much Likely
5	4.20 to 5.00		Very Much Likely

The composite mean for “popularity” is 3.20 (Likely). The highest mean is 3.90 (Much Likely), indicating that *being talked about in our locality* will much likely influence the respondents. The lowest mean is 2.80 (Likely), indicating that *being featured in jingles or songs* does not influence the respondent’s decision in choosing their candidate. According to Coleman (2004), people vote to conform to the social norm. In the Philippines, social norms are a result of the interaction of people in the locality. According to NEDA (2017), there are values that are common to Filipinos and that are important for social cohesion, e.g., *Pakikisama*.

Table 3c: Endorsements of Candidates

Item	Mean	SD	Description
17. Endorsed by a church.	1.71	0.98	Very Unlikely
18. Endorsed by my peers.	2.56	1.10	Very Unlikely
19. Endorsed by a politician.	2.93	1.19	Likely
20. Endorsed by a local leader.	2.93	1.08	Likely
21. Endorsed by pastor/priest.	1.88	1.14	Unlikely
22. Endorsed by my family/relative.	3.05	1.00	Likely
23. Endorsed by a civic organization.	2.93	1.03	Likely
24. Endorsed by the social media influencer.	2.54	1.19	Unlikely
Composite Mean	2.57	1.09	Unlikely
Scale	Range		Description
1	1.00 to < 1.80		Very Unlikely
2	1.80 to < 2.60		Unlikely
3	2.60 to < 3.40		Likely

4	3.40 to < 4.20	Much Likely
5	4.20 to 5.00	Very Much Likely

The composite mean for “endorsement” is 2.57 (Unlikely). The highest mean is 3.05 (Likely), indicating that *being endorsed by family/relative* will much likely influence the respondents. The lowest mean is 1.71 (Very Unlikely), indicating that *being endorsed by a church* does not influence the respondent’s decision in choosing their candidate. Abramson et al. (2021) contended that endorsements from family and friends have positive effects on voters’ preferences.

Table 3d: Overall Result of Electoral Processes

Processes that influence	Composite Mean	SD	Description
Political Machinery of the Candidates	3.70	0.87	Much Likely
Popularity of Candidates	3.20	0.94	Likely
Endorsement of Candidates	2.57	1.09	Unlikely
Overall	3.16	0.56	Likely

The composite means for “political machinery” is 3.70 (Much Likely); for “popularity” is 3.20 (Likely); and for “endorsement” is 2.57 (Unlikely). The overall mean for political process is 3.16 (Likely).

8.4 Difference on the Perceptions of the Respondents on the Characteristics of Candidates

Table 4: Difference on the Respondents’ Perception on the Characteristics of Candidates When Grouped According to Age

Age	f	Mean	SD	p-value	Indication	Decision
18	1	4.25	0.00	.53	Not Significant	Do not reject the H ₀ 1
19	2	3.88	0.32			
20	10	3.90	0.39			
21	17	3.97	0.48			
22	8	4.23	0.44			
23	3	3.78	0.08			

Significant at alpha (α) \leq 0.05.

The p-value of 0.53 which is greater than alpha (level of significance) of 0.05 means that there is no significant difference on the characteristics perceived by the respondents as important in choosing the president and vice-president when they (respondents) are grouped according to age. The first null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained.

Table 5: Difference on the Respondents' Perception on the Characteristics of Candidates When Grouped According to Sex

Sex	f	Mean	SD	p – value	Indication	Decision
Male	9	4.03	.94	.91	Not Significant	Do not reject the H ₀₂
Female	32	3.98	.85			

Significant at alpha (α) \leq 0.05.

The p-value of 0.91 which is greater than alpha (significance level) of 0.05 means that there is no significant difference on the characteristics perceived by the respondents as important in choosing the president and vice-president when they (respondents) are grouped according to sex. The second null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained.

8.5 Difference on the Influence of Electoral Processes on the Respondents

Table 6: Difference on the Influence of Electoral Processes when Respondents are Grouped According to Age

Age	f	Mean	SD	p-value	Indication	Decision
18	1	3.13	0.00	.71	Not Significant	Do not reject the H ₀₃
19	2	3.56	0.62			
20	10	3.23	0.63			
21	17	2.99	0.66			
22	8	3.33	0.52			
23	3	3.04	0.42			

Significant at alpha (α) \leq 0.05.

The p-value of 0.71 which is greater than alpha (significance level) of 0.05 means that there is no significant difference on the influence of political processes on the respondents in choosing the president and vice-president when they are grouped according to age. The third null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained.

Table 7: Difference on the Influence of Electoral Processes when Respondents are Grouped According to Sex

Sex	f	Mean	SD	p – value	Indication	Decision
Male	9	3.24	.69	.61	Not Significant	Do not reject the H ₀₄
Female	32	3.13	.76			

Significant at alpha (α) \leq 0.05.

The p-value of 0.61 which is greater than alpha (significance level) of 0.05 means that there is no significant difference on the influence of electoral processes on the respondents in choosing their president and vice-president when they are grouped according to sex. The fourth null hypothesis, therefore, is sustained.

8.6 Relationship between the Characteristics of Candidates and Electoral Processes

Table 8: Relationship Between the Characteristics of Candidates and Electoral Processes that Influence Respondents in Choosing their Candidates

Variables	Mean	Correlation Coefficient (r-value)	Indication	P-value	Indication	Decision
Characteristics of Candidates	3.99	0.56	Moderately strong positive	0.00	Relationship is highly significant	Reject H ₀
Political Processes	3.16					

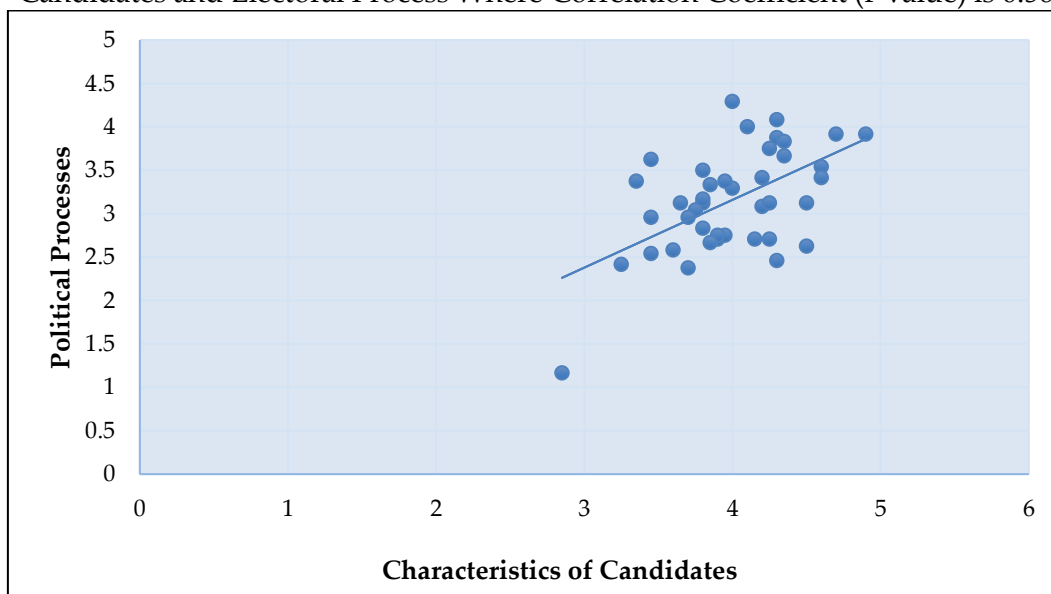
Significant at alpha (α) \leq 0.01

Correlation r-index	
r-value	Indication
± 1.00	Perfect positive / negative correlation
From ± 0.80 to $< \pm 1.00$	Very strong positive / negative correlation
From ± 0.60 to $< \pm 0.80$	Strong positive / negative correlation
From ± 0.40 to $< \pm 0.60$	Moderately strong positive / negative correlation
From ± 0.20 to $< \pm 0.40$	Weak positive / negative correlation
From $> \pm 0$ to $< \pm 0.20$	Very weak positive / negative correlation
0	No correlation

Entries show that the correlation coefficient (r-value) for the variable “characteristics of candidates” in relation to the variable “political processes” is 0.56. This value indicates that there is a moderately strong positive correlation between the said variables. Moreover, the p-value for the relationship of the two variables is 0.00 which is less than alpha (significance level) of 0.01. This indicates that the relationship between the variables is highly significant and did not occur merely by chance. The null hypothesis, therefore, is rejected. That is to say - there is a significant relationship between the characteristics perceived by the respondents as important for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates and the electoral processes that influence them in choosing their candidates.

Figure 2 illustrates that the correlation curve slopes upward from left to right. It means that as the value in the x-axis (characteristics of the candidates) increases, the value in the y-axis (electoral processes) also increases; and as the value in the x-axis decreases, the value in the y-axis also decreases; and vice-versa. This implies that the respondents who signify that the personal and leadership characteristics of candidates are important are also those who are influenced by the political machinery, popularity and endorsement of candidates.

Figure 2: Scatter Plots and Correlation Curve for Characteristics of Candidates and Electoral Process Where Correlation Coefficient (r-value) is 0.56



9. Conclusion

The voting behavior of the respondents was invariably linked to the personal and leadership characteristics of the national candidates, as well as to the electoral processes surrounding their election, such as political machinery, popularity, and endorsement. The respondents gave importance to a national candidate who is a holder of a college degree as his/her personal characteristic and being honest and trustworthy as his/her leadership characteristic. They would be very much likely to choose a national candidate who is clear on his/her priorities, as well as one who is being talked about in their locality. Conversely, they do not give importance to a candidate who is coming from a well-known family or relatives, as a personal characteristic, and were unlikely to be influenced by the endorsement of a church. Finally, those respondents who gave importance to the personal and leadership characteristics of the national candidates were also those who were likely to be influenced by electoral processes such as political machinery, popularity, and endorsement.

9.1 Recommendations

a. For possible courses of action

Students in social studies should find ample time for examining the details of their preferred candidates to vote for. The school heads should emphasize the importance of being politically aware and knowledgeable, particularly on the suitable qualities to consider for leadership. Teachers should include in their instructions the political issues emphasizing the importance of responsible voting behavior during election periods.

b. For possible policy formulation

The educational institutions, the national agencies charged with the conduct of elections, and other non-partisan organization should institutionalize the holding of symposiums to raise the level of awareness and deepen the understanding of voters on political processes and exercises.

c. For future research directions

Research should include political issues at the local, national, and international levels, and make use of mixed methods of study to keep track of the trends on voting behaviors.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Authors

Lorienel D. Madeloso is the program head of the Bachelor of Public Administration of Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Honeylyn M. Mahinay is the dean of the College of Education of Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3201-1049>

Sergio D. Mahinay, Jr. is a faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines. <https://orcid.org/0000-00027125-250X>

Aileen D. Escote is a faculty of the College of Education of Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Reza Mae S. Catulong is a senior college student currently enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Fretzie Sam B. Sagun is a senior college student currently enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Vince Ivan B. Jorillo is a senior college student currently enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Jessa Mae A. Cablay is a senior college student currently enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Shiara K. Masukat is a senior college student currently enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

Anwar C. Tagol is a senior college student currently enrolled in Bachelor of Secondary Education at Notre Dame of Midsayap College, Philippines.

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