

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND THE LEVEL OF POLITICAL AWARENESS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF BALIUAG UNIVERSITY TEACHING PERSONNEL

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship of educational attainment and political awareness and participation of Baliuag University teaching personnel. Towards this purpose, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of 60 teaching personnel. This scale included an understanding of teaching personnel's political awareness and participation. The instrument was structured around three main sections: socio-demographics, level of political participation and level of political awareness. The statements were conceptually built. The result of the study shows that there was no correlation between the level of political awareness and educational attainment of the respondents. It also shows that there was a weak positive correlation between the level of political participation and educational attainment.

Keywords: political awareness, political participation, educational attainment

Introduction

Education plays a major role in shaping the knowledge and awareness of students regarding current issues, be it environmental, social, or political. It is a steppingstone for the students to open their minds as they become aware of the happenings in society. In higher education, the students are taught to understand, to evaluate, and to respond to real world situations.

The researchers, who are Political Science students, took interest in this study as it relates to their course. The aim of the study is to determine whether educational attainment of teaching personnel in Baliuag University significantly correlates with the level of their political awareness and participation.

In this study, political awareness focuses on issues at the local and national level. While political participation is the concept of political science that can be seen in the actions of citizens which support or influence the government (Bergstrom, 1997). This study hypothesizes that the educational attainment of teaching personnel in Baliuag University has a significant relationship with the level of their political awareness and participation.

One way to determine the level of political maturity among teaching personnel is looking into their political awareness and their involvement in politics. It serves as a foundation for an understanding of an individual. It is said that a person's knowledge is inherited from his/her family, but education shapes and develops it. Education makes an individual aware. Therefore, it is a path that leads a human to become mindful of their surroundings. The higher level of education teaches students to engage in situations that happen in the real world.

In higher education, opportunities for classroom discussions about politics often arise. Politics can be a subject of argumentations and debates in the classroom. Evaluation of political issues in the class can become an eye-opener for the students to understand the important problems and controversies in their society. These discussions then help students know what their rights are, it opens their minds and makes them realize that their potential and capability to vote can contribute to further improve the society.

Through political engagement, one has an opportunity to see beyond his/her own political beliefs and gain greater knowledge and understanding of political ideologies. Since politics is dynamic, and political issues emerge from time to time; education helps an individual to adapt to these changes.

Nowadays, education is perceived as a treasure that no one could ever steal. Being educated seems synonymous with being intellectual. In this era, the only weapon that a person can bring throughout his/her daily battle against ignorance is the knowledge that he/she gained from acquiring education.

Over the years, the Philippines has progressed its education for all advocacies. From the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article XXVI* stating that everyone has right to education' to the *1987 Philippine Constitutions* which guarantees the Filipinos' access to elementary education by making it compulsory; to the current *Republic Act No. 10931* wherein tuition fees in state colleges are now free. These legislations allowed the Filipinos access to higher education.

The researchers selected the teaching personnel at Baliuag University to be the respondents of the study. They are specifically selected in consideration of the generation group where the respondents belong to. Their generation was not a beneficiary of the *Republic Act No. 10931* declaring free tuition fee for all state colleges in the Philippines. Other criteria that the researcher considered was the teaching personnel at the university have bachelor's, master's, and/or doctorate degrees. These criteria made it favorably to investigate the relationship of educational attainment and political maturity of the respondents.

Significance of the study

Since politics is an integral part of life in society, this study will benefit all, especially those that will be most affected.

Students. They would find out the importance of education by realizing that it will transform them into politically mature citizens. They will learn to value the opportunity of being enrolled in college by knowing that their potential and capabilities can contribute to the improvement of society.

School Administrators. This study would help them to design programs that will enhance the students' level of awareness, political participation and raise their consciousness.

Government Administrators. They are the body of men who are responsible for carrying out plans and policies. This study would help them formulate ways to develop the educational system. It would also enhance their ideas on how to utilize the youth's role in nation-building.

Review of Related Literature

This chapter shows the review of related literature and studies.

Politics

Politics as defined by Campanilla et. al. (2004) "is the pursuit and exercise of political power necessary to make binding policy decisions for the community and to distribute patronage and governmental benefits". From this definition, the importance of politics in the community and the relevance of exercising political power by that knowledge in the field is emphasized. Based on this definition, the

community will gain its governmental benefits if the political leader, who holds the political power, has taken its proper political education.

Political Awareness

Political awareness as defined by Zallar (1992) is "the extent to which an individual pays attention to politics and understands what he/she has encountered". There are also scholars who have suggested that political awareness is vital for political participation, where low awareness may work as a barrier for political involvement, and that the highly aware counterparts of the public are overrepresented. There are also others who defined political awareness as the formation of public opinion about politics.

Görtz (2018), a Sweden professor from the University of Orebro School of Humanities, Education and Social Science, stated that the political awareness is defined as the attention an individual pays to politics; consisting of what he/she understands of his/her political encounters.

Political Participation

Political participation in a democratic country can be manifested in different forms; it could range from voting for representatives during election seasons, or voting on passing policies in referenda, to forming political parties, to even engaging in legal or illegal protests (Winters et. al., 2008). Hence, political participation is inevitable; cause even in social media, one can express his/her political stand, and be involved in the programs of the government.

Nowadays, social media platforms garner attention because of their ability to be tools for the politicians. Social media can be used to promote political movements and campaigns which can amplify the information dissemination and invigorate groups into action (Granger-Frye, 2018).

As stated by Lundasen (2014), “participation in civil society organizations seems to be able to provide a social network infrastructure that connects individuals in a local community.” Hence, a person’s participation in politics can connect them to the community.

The importance of political participation is crucial in a democratic country. Menocal (2014) reported that a population who is informed and aware, who can participate in political processes, hold the government to account, exercises its civil rights, and executes its civil duties and responsibilities effectively is considered indispensable for strengthening the quality of a democratic government.

Political Awareness and Educational Attainment

Educational attainment, as defined by UNESCO (2017) is the “highest level of education that an individual has completed”. It is an indicator to measure one’s progress; De Leon (2005) even stressed the importance of education in his book *“Textbook on the Philippine Constitution”* where he wrote that education is a key player in the development and progression of a country. Furthermore, he also noted on his book that studying the basic concepts of Philippine government and constitution is essential to the citizen’s liberal education.

Augustus and Claudio (2007) found that the scope of the politics-related subjects in higher education includes lesson about citizenship, state, democracy, the constitution, as well as the basic rights of every Filipino.

In relation to the mentioned literature, Rosenstone and Hansen reported that those who are well-educated possesses the necessary skills people need to understand the abstract subject of politics, they are able to follow political campaign, to research and educate themselves regarding political issues and the candidates. In addition, those who are

educated can understand the basic areas of politics such as voting and assessing political issues surrounding a candidate. In another study of Berinsky and Lenz (2010) they found that the people who participate in politics are those who tend to stay in school. They also emphasized the benefits of being educated as a citizen. According to them, the necessary skills and resources needed by an individual to learn and understand politics are acquired through education. In another dissertation by Wilson (2014), he cited that the resources and motivation to engage in politics such as occupation, academic experiences, co-curricular involvement, and the likes may be a tool for a person to develop skills leading to willingness to be politically involved.

In another dissertation published by Hillygus (2014), she explored the relationship of higher education and political engagement. The investigation involved students who were enrolled in higher education. A pre-test was given to them while they were still freshmen and after four years, Hillygus gave a post-test to these students. The results of her investigation yielded that those who pushed through and graduated are more likely to participate in elections through voting.

Theoretical Framework

The main concept of this study is anchored on the Theory of Civic Education by Dr. Sunshine Hillygus (1992). The Theory of Civic Education (1992) claims that “Higher education imparts the knowledge, skills and political familiarity that help in navigating the political world”. In other words, the skills needed to become politically aware is being provided by acquiring education at the higher level. This theory is further supported by Rosenstone and Hansen (1993). According to them, “Well- educated participate at higher rates because their schooling provided them with the skills people need to understand the abstract subject of politics, to follow the political campaign, and to research and

evaluate the issues and candidates“. To highlight the relationship of tertiary education and political awareness, Bederio et. Al. (2004) have claimed that the liberal education of citizens is essential as well as understanding the basic concepts and principles of politics which leads to political awareness.

Statement of the Problem

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between the teaching personnel's educational attainment and their level of political awareness and participation. This study included the teaching personnel of Baliuag University. The study specifically sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, in terms of:
 - a. age;
 - b. sex; and
 - c. number of years teaching?
2. How may the educational attainment of the respondents be described in terms of:
 - a. Bachelor's degree;
 - b. Master's degree; and
 - c. Doctorate degree?
3. How may the level of political awareness of the respondents be described, in terms of:
 - a. Local issues;
 - b. National issues; and
 - c. Global issues?
4. How may the level of political participation of the respondents be described, in terms of:
 - a. Social media;

- b. Community; and
- c. Political party and voting?

5. Is there a significant difference between socio-demographic profile and the level of political awareness of teaching personnel?
6. Is there a significant difference between socio-demographic profile and the level of political participation of teaching personnel?
7. Is there a significant relationship between educational attainment and the level of political awareness of the respondents?
8. Is there a significant relationship between educational attainment and the level of political awareness of the respondents?

Methods

Research Design

This quantitative study used descriptive-correlational design. The study described the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and it also investigated the relationship between the teaching personnel's educational attainment and their political maturity.

Sampling

The study used stratified-random sampling technique to select the respondents. The population is composed of teaching personnel employed at Baliuag University for the school year 2020-2021. Seven college departments were included: College of Business Administration and Accountancy (CBAA), College of Liberal Arts and General Education (CLAGE), College of Environmental Design and Engineering (CEDE), College of Information Technology (CITE), College of

Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CNAHS), College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), and College of Hospitality Management and tourism (CHMT).

The researchers also made use of the Slovin's formula to compute for the desired sample size for this study.

Research Instrument

A survey questionnaire was used to gather the needed data for the study. The questionnaire composed of three sections. The first section aimed to gather the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, which include their name, age, sex, and the degree(s) they attained. The second section of the questionnaire evaluates the political awareness of the respondents; the items were formulated to assess the political awareness of teaching personnel about the local, national, and global political issues. The last section of the questionnaire evaluates the political participation of the teaching personnel in social media, community, and political party and voting.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The researcher gathered data from the first week of January 2021 and ended at the first week of March the same year. The questionnaires were administered through Google forms via link sharing. The data were then processed through Microsoft Excel for encoding and tallying. Then, the encoded data were treated using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for tabulation.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents According to Age Group

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25-35	10	35.7
36-45	6	21.4
46-55	5	17.9
56-65	5	17.9
66-75	2	7.1
Total	28	100.0

It shows the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The results revealed that in terms of age, the respondents were mostly ranging from 23-35 years old, 10 or 35.7%.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents According to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	16	57.1
Male	12	42.9
Total	28	100.0

Table 2 shows the sex distribution of the respondents. There are 16 or 57.1% out of 28 respondents are female while only 12 or 42.9% are male.

Table 3
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents According to Number of Years Teaching

Number of Years Teaching	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	7	25.0
6-10	4	14.3
11-20	7	25.0
21 and above	10	35.7
Total	28	100.0

Table 3 shows numbers of teaching, most of the respondents have teaching experience of 21 years and above, 10 or 35.7%.

Table 4
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents According to Degree

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree	4	14.3
Master's Degree	20	71.4
Doctor's Degree	4	14.3
Total	28	100.0

Table 4 shows the respondents' educational attainment as described in their degrees attained. The results showed that most of the respondents attained master's degree which obtained 20 or 71.4% compared to those who attained bachelor's degree only (4 or 14.3%) and doctor's degree (4 or 14.3%).

Table 5
Summary Table for the Level of Awareness of Respondents in Local Issues

Statements	Not aware	Somewhat Aware	Aware to some extent	Very much aware	Total
1. Local Government units or LGU are divided into three levels namely the provinces and independent cities, component cities, and barangays.	0	1	8	19	28
2. Local Government Code of the Philippines is enacted to provide for a more responsive and accountable local government structure.	0	3	9	16	28
3. Autonomous regions have more power than other local governments.	1	3	8	16	28
4. The barangay is the smallest political unit in the Philippines.	0	0	4	24	28
5. The barangay captain, members of barangay council, and members of lupang tagapamayapa are considered persons in authority within their areas of jurisdiction	1	1	7	19	28

Legend: 3 – Very much aware 2 – Somewhat aware 1– Aware to some extent

Table 5 shows the level of awareness of respondents on local issues. The results of the study show that the respondents have a high level of awareness on local issues as reflected on the data. It showed that they were very much aware that: "LGU are divided into three levels namely the provinces and independent cities, components cities, and barangays". It was represented by 19 or 67.9 % of the respondents. They were also very much aware that "Local Government Code of the Philippines is enacted to provide for a more responsive and accountable local government structure". as it obtained a percentage of 57.1% or 16 among the respondents. In addition, the data shows that 57.1% or 16 were very much aware that "Autonomous regions have more power than other local government". Furthermore, 24 or 85.7% were very much aware of that. "The barangay is the smallest political unit in the Philippines". Lastly, 19 or 67.9%

were very much aware that " The barangay captain, members of barangay council, and members of lupong tagapamayapa are considered persons in authority within areas of jurisdiction.

Table 6
Summary Table for the Level of Awareness of Respondents in National Issues

Statements	Not aware	Some-what Aware	Aware to some extent	Very much aware	Total
1. The Philippines is governed as a unitary state wherein the President functions as both the head of the state and the head of the government of the country.	0	1	6	21	28
2. The government has three interdependent branches namely the executive, legislative, and judiciary.	0	1	3	25	283
3. The Senate and the House of Representatives consist of the Congress of the Philippines.	1	3	8	16	28
4. Tax is the lifeblood of the government. As a rightful citizen, it is my duty to pay taxes.	0	1	2	25	28
5. The three constitutional commissions are the commission on Elections, Civil Service Commission, and Commission on Audit.	1	4	10	13	28

Table 6 presents the frequency distribution of level of awareness in national issues. The data shows that the respondents have a high level of awareness on national issues. It shows that 21 or 75% of the respondents were very much aware that "The Philippines is governed as a unitary state wherein the President functions as the head of the state and the government of the country". 26 or 92.9% were very much aware that the government has three interdependent braches namely the executive, legislative and judiciary. Also, 25 or 89.3% were very much aware that the "Senate and the House of representative consists the Congress of the

Philippines". Furthermore, 25 or 89.3% were very much aware that" Tax is the lifeblood of the government and as a rightful citizen, it is their duty to pay taxes". Lastly, 13 or 46.4 percent were very much aware that the" three constitutional commissions are the Commission on Elections, Civil Service Commission, and Commission on Audit.

Table 7
Summary Table for the Level of Awareness of Respondents in Global Issues

Statements	Not aware	Some-what Aware	Aware to some extent	Very much aware	Total
1. The purpose of the United Nations is to foster cooperation between existing National governments rather than exert authority over them.	0	3	9	16	28
2. The United Nations Security Council decides certain resolutions for peace and security of the countries.	1	2	10	15	283
3. The International Court of Justice settles disputes between states in accordance with the International Law and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues.	0	3	10	15	28
4. The World Bank is a financial institution recognized internationally. Its goal is the reduction of poverty.	0	2	13	13	28
5. The Philippines is a member-state of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations in which its primary objective is to accelerate economic growth and cultural development.	0	1	7	20	28

Table 7 presents the frequency distribution and distribution of level of awareness in global issues. The results of the study showed that 16 or 17.1% were very much aware that " The purpose of the United Nations is to foster Cooperation between existing national governments rather than exert authority over them. 15 or 53.6% were very much

aware that " The United Nations Security Council decides certain resolutions for peace and security of the countries". In addition, 15 or 53.6% were very much aware that the "International Court of Justice settles disputes between states accordance with international law and gives advisory opinions on international legal disputes". Furthermore, 13 or 46.4% were very much aware that " The World Bank is a financial institution recognized internationally and its goal is the reduction of poverty". Lastly, 20 or 71.4% were very much aware that "The Philippines is a member state of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in which its primary objective is to accelerate economic growth and cultural development".

Table 8
Summary Table for the Level of Awareness of Respondents Political Participation

Statements	Not participated	Least Participated	Much Participated	Highly Participated	Total
1. Sharing posts regarding politics that oppose or agree to my political stand.	10	11	4	3	28
2. Giving comments to the posts about politics as a way of expressing my views and opinions.	10	10	5	3	283
3. Using your personal account on Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks to voice my concern about how the administration carries out its policies.	13	9	2	4	28
4. Joining online protests and signing petitions whenever the government is planning to implement a law or program that opposes my political stand.	14	6	4	4	28
5. Sharing links about political stories or articles for others to read.	9	10	3	6	28

Table 8 revealed that they were least participated (4 or 39.3%) in sharing posts regarding politics that oppose or agree to their political stand. 10 or 35.7% do not participate and least participated on giving comments to the posts about politics as a way of expressing their views and opinion. 13 or

46.4 % do not participate in using their personal Facebook, Twitter, and other social media accounts to voice out their concerns about how the administration carries out its policies. 14 or 50 % do not participate in joining online protests and signing of petitions whenever the government is planning to implement a law or program that opposes their stand. Lastly, 10 or 35.7 revealed that they were least participated in sharing links about political stories and articles for others to read.

Table 9
Summary Table for the Level of Awareness of Respondents Political Participation in Community

Statements	Not participated	Least Participated	Much Participated	Highly Participated	Total
1. Raising concern to government officials by giving suggestions and recommending programs that would help in improving your community.	2	15	6	5	28
2. Attending assemblies in your barangay and municipality.	8	12	5	3	283
3. Member of an organization that advocates social justice and helps the poor by educating them about their rights as citizens of the country.	6	13	6	3	28
4. Joining protests and strikes whenever I think that a policy of the government is a deprivation of your rights and freedoms.	21	4	0	3	28
5. Abiding the law to promote orderliness in society to avoid violation.	2	0	4	22	28

Table 9 presents that 15 or 53.6 were least participated in raising their concerns to government officials by giving suggestions and recommending programs that would help in improving their community. 12 or 42.9% were least participated in attending assemblies in their barangay and municipality 13 or 46.4% were least participated for being a member of an organization that advocates social justice and helps the poor by educating them about their

rights as citizens of the country. Furthermore, 21 or 75% do not participate in joining protests and strikes whenever they think that a policy of the government is a deprivation of one's rights and freedoms. Lastly, 22 or 78.6% were highly participated in abiding the law to promote orderliness in society and to avoid violation.

Table 10

Summary Table for the Level of Awareness of Respondents Political Participation in Community

Statements	Not participated	Least Participated	Much Participated	Highly Participated	Total
1. Watching election debates and causes because it helped me to choose the best candidate.	1	4	10	13	28
2. Not accepting bribes. Also, I do not sell my vote during election	6	0	1	21	283
3. Running as a candidate in a government position. (Used to run as a candidate in a government position)	22	1	2	3	28
4. Supporting a certain candidate whose platforms captivate my political interest.	3	7	7	11	28
5. I am loyal to one political party voting for all of its candidates.	13	8	5	2	28

Table 10 presents the frequency distribution of political participation in political parties and voting. It shows 13 or 46.4 % were highly participated in watching election debates and causes because it helps them choose the best candidate. 21 or 75% were highly participated in not accepting bribes and does not sell their votes during elections. 22 or 78.6% did not participate in running as a candidate in a government position. Furthermore, 11 or 39.3% were highly participated in supporting a certain candidate whose platforms captivate their political interest. Lastly, 13 or 46.4 % were not participated on being loyal to one political party by voting for all of its candidate.

Table 11

Summary Analysis of a Significant Difference Between Socio-demographic Profile and Level of Political Maturity of Baliuag University Teaching Personnel

	F:	Sig:
Number of years Teaching:	.852	.439
Age:	870	.431
sex	1.355	.276

To determine if there is significant difference between socio-demographic profile and level of political maturity of teaching personnel, one-way within subjects ANOVA was utilized to compare it. According to the results, there was a significant difference in the respondents' ages and level of political maturity $F=.870$, $P=.431$. In addition, there was a significant difference in terms of sex $F=1.355$, $p=.276$. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in number of years teaching $F=.852$, $p=.439$.

Table 12

A Summary Analysis of a Significant Relationship Between Educational Attainment and Political Maturity of Baliuag University Teaching Personnel

Correlations		Political Awareness (Mean)	Degrees Attained	Political Participation (Mean)
Political Awareness (Mean)	Pearson Correlation	1	.056	.389*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.778	.041
	N	28	28	28
Degrees Attained	Pearson Correlation	.056	1	.288
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.778		.138
	N	28	28	28
Political Participation (Mean)	Pearson Correlation	.389*	.288	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	.138	
	N	28	28	28

To determine if there is significant relationship between educational attainment and level of political maturity of teaching personnel, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was utilized to assess the stated variables. According to the results, there was no correlation (.56) between the level of political awareness and educational attainment. In addition, there was a positive, moderate correlation between the level of political awareness and the level of political participation (.389). Furthermore, there was a positive, weak correlation between the educational attainment and the level of political participation.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, these conclusions were drawn:

- a. The hypothesis stating that “the higher degrees attained, the higher the level of political awareness” is rejected. The level of education attainment has no relationship with the political awareness of the teaching personnel.
- b. The hypothesis stating that “the higher the degrees attained, the higher the level of political participation” is accepted. The level of educational attainment has a weak relationship with political participation of the teaching personnel.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations offered based on the findings of the study:

1. In order to increase the level of political awareness and participation among the students. The academe needs to design programs that would contribute to the former’s interest in politics.

2. In order to have a high educational attainment, the government must implement laws that would give scholarships and financial assistance to the needy. Quality education must be accessible to everyone.
3. There must be programs for the citizens that would help them utilize their political awareness. Being politically aware would be pointless if one does not involve himself in platforms where he can utilize his rights and freedom as a citizen of his country.
4. When one involves himself with political matters, he must be cautious in carrying out ideologies and suggestions.

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