

Political awareness and civic behaviors of youth organizations during the Covid-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The role of youth organizations in the community has become increasingly visible during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in the Philippines, where they are recognized for their proactive stance in addressing government shortcomings. This study aimed to examine the association between youth organization members' political awareness and their civic behavior during the pandemic. Specifically, it addressed the research question: How does youth political awareness affect their civic behavior during the time of Covid-19 pandemic? The study employed a descriptive-correlational quantitative approach, utilizing a self-administered survey questionnaire tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Statistical analyses, including Pearson Correlation, One-Way ANOVA, and Fisher's Least Significant Difference, were applied to data collected from 103 respondents across 26 purposively selected youth organizations in Nueva Ecija. The study was grounded in the Political Awareness Model by Baddeley and James and the Normative Democratic Theory inspired by Dewey. Findings revealed a significant association between political awareness and civic behavior during the pandemic. The nature of the organization emerged as a significant factor in political awareness, particularly on political issues, with politically based organizations reporting the highest levels of awareness. Additionally, the position held within an organization significantly influenced engagement in volunteerism, with officers more actively participating in non-electoral organizations compared to non-officers. The study concludes that youth organizations serve as critical mechanisms for enhancing political awareness and fostering civic participation, highlighting their role in upholding democratic values during crises like the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. Introduction

The youth play a critical role in nation-building, leveraging their energy, knowledge, and capabilities to drive social progress and address societal challenges. Historically, young people, particularly those in youth organizations, have been at the forefront of creating transformative solutions, demonstrating their importance as agents of change (Andolina et al., 2003). During crises, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, youth involvement becomes even more vital. The United Nations Development Programme & United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2020) noted that young people adapt quickly, mobilizing to support their communities through innovative actions. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2020) highlighted how youth organizations during the pandemic addressed issues like healthcare, food insecurity, and misinformation, showcasing their leadership and civic responsibility.

The pandemic amplified pre-existing social issues like hunger, unemployment, and systemic inequalities, particularly in countries like the Philippines, which endured prolonged lockdowns (Garcia, 2021; UNICEF Philippines, 2020). Amid these challenges, gaps in governance and militaristic pandemic measures sparked discontent and calls for accountability (Beltran, 2020). Youth organizations stepped in, providing aid, advocating for marginalized communities, and leading grassroots initiatives (Roels et al., 2022). Their actions reflected both civic engagement and political awareness, defined as the ability to understand political systems and respond effectively (Althubetat & Jarrar 2013). This awareness, shaped by education, events, and cultural factors, drives young people's involvement in societal improvement, particularly during crises (Wilson & Beard, 2013).

This study examines the relationship between youth political awareness and civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic, focusing on youth organization members in Nueva Ecija, Philippines. Using indicators like public policies, political institutions, and political issues (Dioso & Mendana, 2019), alongside measures of civic behavior such as volunteering and community problem-solving (Andolina et al., 2003), the study seeks to answer the central research question: How does youth political awareness affect their civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic? By expanding theories on political participation beyond electoral contexts, this research highlights the role of political awareness in fostering grassroots initiatives and community resilience. Findings aim to inform policies and programs that empower youth and encourage active participation in addressing societal challenges, emphasizing their indispensable role in navigating crises.

2. Theoretical basis

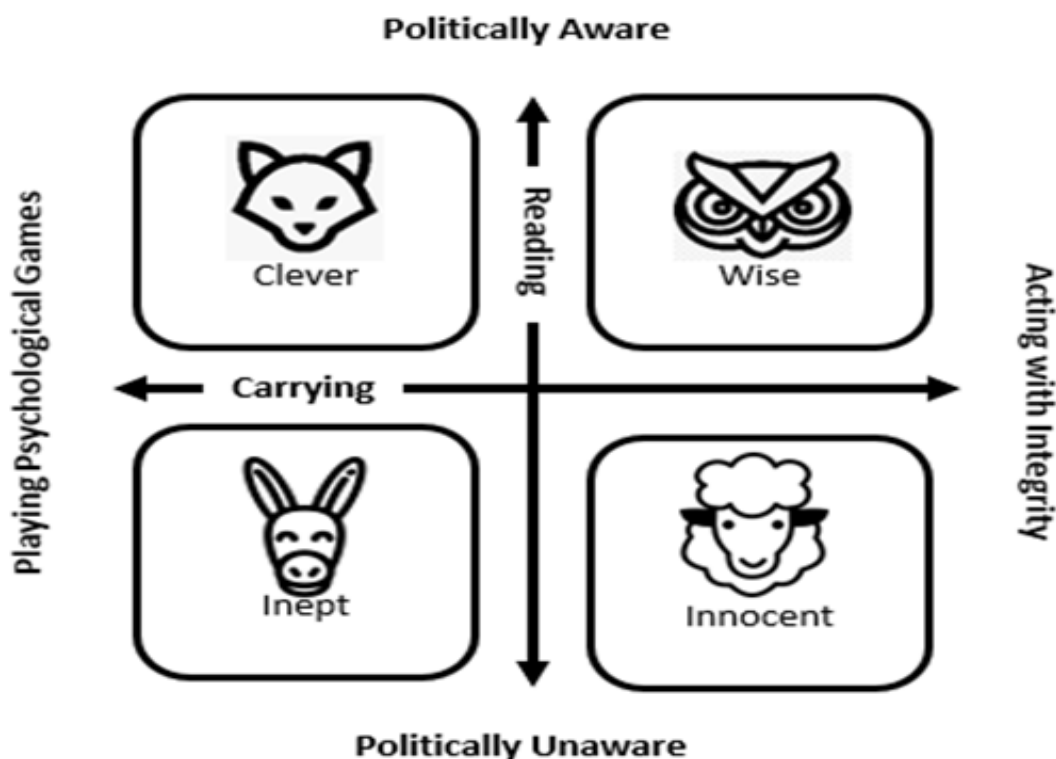
This study examines the socio-demographic characteristics, political awareness, and civic behavior of youth organization members using the Political Awareness Model by Simon Baddeley and Kim James and Dewey's Normative Democratic Theory (Baddeley & James, 1987; Dalbosco & Mendonca, 2020). Political awareness, defined as the ability to understand power dynamics and use this knowledge effectively, is an internal skill critical for navigating organizational politics (Brandon & Seldman, 2004; Weber & Waeger, 2017). Organizational politics extends this awareness to describe informal power relationships, often driven by individual political skills rather than formal hierarchies (Hochwarter et al., 2000).

The Political Awareness Model, as shown in Figure 1, categorizes organizational behaviors using two dimensions: Reading (understanding external contexts) and Carrying (applying internal insights). These dimensions form four archetypes: sheep (innocent but unaware), donkey (politically inept), fox (manipulative and self-interested), and owl (strategic and ethical). While sheep and donkeys lack political awareness, foxes and owls are skilled in navigating power structures, with owls acting with integrity to promote organizational success (Baddeley & James, 1987).

Dewey's Normative Democratic Theory complements this model by framing democracy as a participatory way of life centered on education, collaboration, and active civic engagement (Dewey, 1916, 1939). Dewey emphasized that education fosters critical thinking and compassion, enabling individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities and democratic ideals (Bernstein, 1986). Civic behavior, in this framework, involves active participation and cooperation, essential for sustaining democratic values and strengthening community bonds. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive lens to explore the interplay between political awareness and civic behavior.

Figure 1

Political Awareness Model

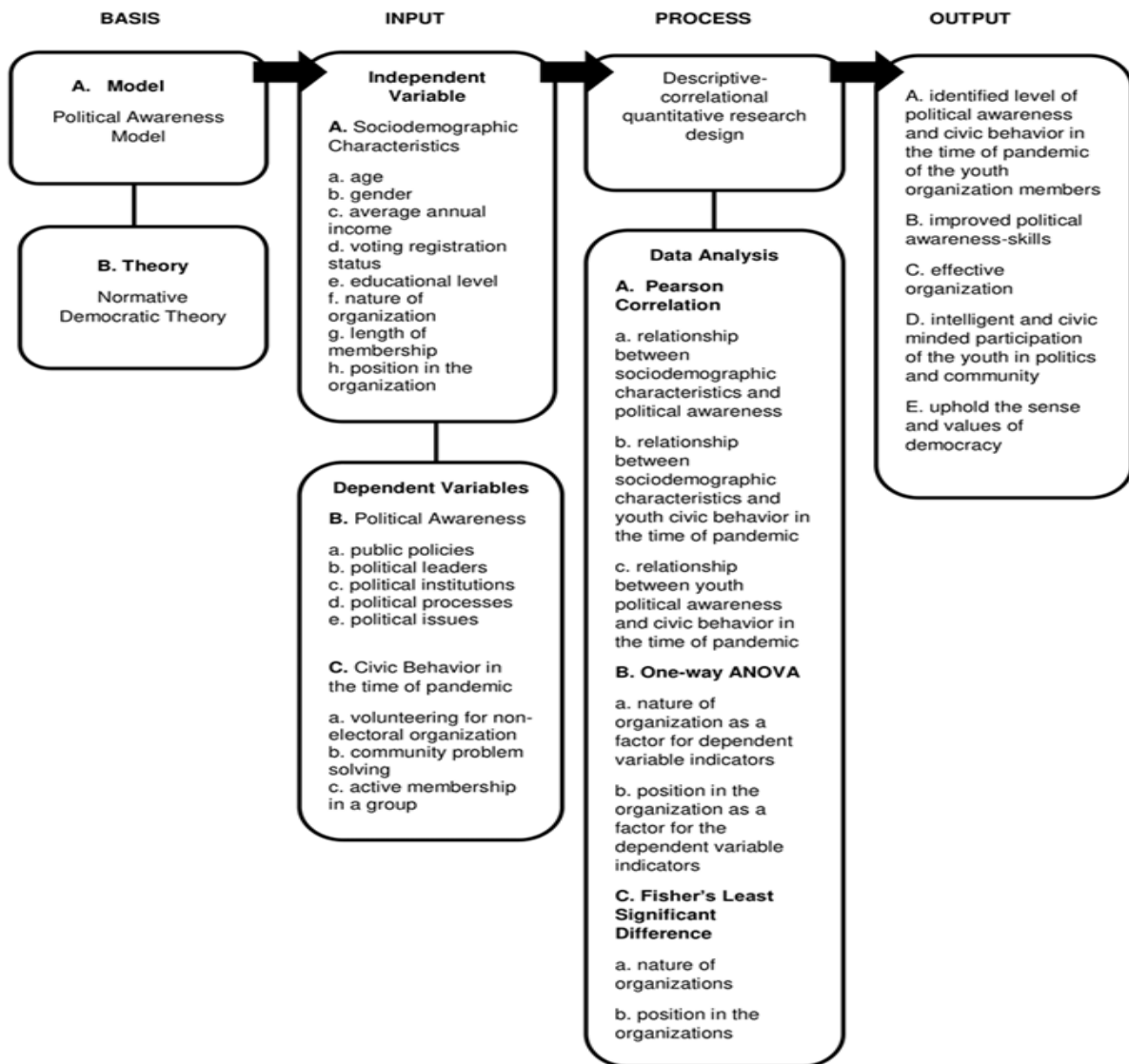


Note. The data are from "Owl, fox, donkey, or sheep: Political skills for managers" by S. Baddeley and K. James, 1987, *Management Education and Development*, 18(1), pp. 3-19 (<https://doi.org/10.1177/135050768701800101>)

2.1. Research paradigm

Figure 2

Research Paradigm



Note. Authors

The research framework, illustrated in Figure 2, outlines the study's logical flow, connecting its foundation, variables, methodology, and expected outcomes. It is divided into four sections: *Basis*, *Input*, *Process*, and *Output*, which collectively highlight how the study is grounded in theory, operationalized, and directed toward meaningful results. The Basis draws from the Political Awareness Model and Normative Democratic Theory, emphasizing democracy as a participatory way of life based on active collaboration, education, and engagement. These frameworks provide the theoretical foundation for exploring political awareness and civic behavior among youth organizations.

The *Input* focuses on the study's key components: independent variables (socio-demographic characteristics) and dependent variables (political awareness and civic behavior). These variables are central to understanding how individual factors shape broader social behaviors and awareness within the study's context. The *Process* outlines the descriptive-

correlational quantitative design and the methods used for analysis. Statistical tools, including Pearson Correlation, One-way ANOVA, and Fisher's LSD, are employed to examine relationships and group differences systematically. This ensures the rigor of the study by connecting socio-demographic factors, political awareness, and civic behavior through reliable quantitative methods.

The *Output* represents the study's expected contributions: identifying levels of political awareness and civic behavior, enhancing awareness skills, and promoting youth engagement. These outcomes underscore the value of civic-minded youth participation in strengthening democratic values and community involvement. The framework's interconnected sections reflect the study's logical progression, from theoretical foundations to actionable insights, ensuring a coherent approach to achieving its objectives.

2.2. Hypothesis

Understanding the relationship between youth socio-demographic characteristics, political awareness, and civic behavior is crucial in evaluating the role of young individuals within a democratic society, especially during critical periods such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Socio-demographic factors, such as age, gender, educational level, and organizational involvement, often influence how individuals perceive and engage in political processes and civic activities. Political awareness, as described by Dewey's concept of participatory democracy, reflects an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and respond to political issues, while civic behavior highlights active involvement in community-oriented initiatives.

The Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the need to explore how these relationships manifest, as youth organizations emerged as key agents of change and resilience during the crisis. The study aims to analyze whether socio-demographic characteristics significantly influence the political awareness and civic behavior of youth organization members and to assess whether political awareness itself has a measurable impact on civic behavior. Establishing these relationships provides insights into how youth engagement can be better supported and enhanced to foster informed, active citizenship.

To address these objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

HA1: There is a statistically linear relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the youth organization members and their political awareness

HO1: There is no statistically linear relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the youth organization members and their political awareness

HA2: There is a statistically linear relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the youth organization members and their civic behavior in the time of Covid-19 pandemic

HO2: There is no statistically linear relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the youth organization members and their political awareness

HA3: There is a statistically linear relationship between the level of youth political awareness and the level of civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic

HO3: There is no statistically significant linear relationship between the level of youth political awareness and the level of civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic

3. Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational quantitative research design to analyze relationships between variables and provide a comprehensive understanding of the current situation. This design enabled objective measurements and statistical analysis to identify patterns, generate averages, and assess relationships between the independent variable (socio-demographic characteristics) and the dependent variables (political awareness and civic behavior). This approach ensured validity and reliability, facilitating strong conclusions and meaningful insights.

3.1. Sampling techniques

Purposive sampling was employed to select youth organizations based in Nueva Ecija, Philippines. The province, a hub for youth organizations across political, community-based, faith-based, and school-based sectors, has seen a rise in youth-led initiatives, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. To ensure inclusivity, both registered and non-registered organizations were included, as formal recognition does not necessarily reflect an organization's activity or impact.

Quota sampling was also applied to ensure proportional representation across different organizational categories. The sample included eight (8) political, seven (7) community-based, six (6) faith-based, and seven (7) school-based organizations, reflecting the diversity of youth engagement in Nueva Ecija. Snowball sampling further supplemented this approach, particularly for identifying members in informal or newly formed organizations, by leveraging referrals from initial participants.

The chairperson or contact person of each selected organization identified respondents to ensure diversity, including both active and inactive members, mitigating potential biases. A total of 103 respondents from 26 organizations participated in the study, providing a robust and representative dataset (refer to Table 1 for details). This approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of youth engagement across diverse contexts.

Table 1

Organizations Categorized Based on their Nature

Organizations	n
Political	
Organization	
Lumanog for Leni	8
Anakbayan Nueva Ecija	3
Bahaghari Nueva Ecija	6
Kabataan Party List NE Chapter	1
Youth for Leni - Cabanatuan	1
Youth for Leni - Licab	5
Sangguniang Kabataan ng Magtanggol, Science City of Muñoz, NE	2
Tindig CLSU	1
Total	27

Organizations	n
Community	
Organization	
Kaya Tayo Taya	8
The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls - Guimba Chapter	1
Nueva Ecija Youth Action Network	4
Hiraya: Kabataang Rizaleño	2
Narra Chapter No. 42 Order of Demolay	1
Pinas Forward Nueva Ecija Chapter	2
Kappa Epsilon - Guimba Chapter	1
Kilos Novo Ecijano	0
Total	19
Faith	
Lakas Angkan Student Organization	8
Knights of the Altar - St. John the Evangelist Parish	8
Every Nation Campus Cabanatuan	6
Parish Youth Ministry - St. John the Evangelist Parish	4
Life Changers	0
Parish Youth Ministry - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish	0
Total	26
School	
Alpha Phi Omega Xi Chapter - CLSU	7
Junior Philippine Computer Society - OLSHCO	3
Malayang Samahan ng Agham Panlipunan - CLSU	7
Sigma Alpha-Alpha Sigma - CLSU	5
College of Students Council - OLSHCO	1
Young Mentors of the Future - OLSHCO	7
Ranchers Club Philippines - CLSU	1
Gamma Epsilon International - CLSU	0
Veterinary Circle For 10	0
Total	31
TOTAL	103

Note. Authors

3.2. Instrumentations and data collection procedure

The study relied on scholarly materials, such as theses, journals, books, and credible online sources, to support its research foundation. For primary data collection, a self-administered survey questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms. This method was chosen due to the restrictions posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, allowing researchers to ensure safety while reaching a wider geographical audience. Google Forms' accessibility and user-friendliness enabled respondents to participate conveniently, addressing challenges of limited mobility and communication difficulties.

Formal letters requesting participation were sent to 31 purposively selected youth organizations in Nueva Ecija through email, social media, and chat platforms. These letters outlined the research purpose, survey content, confidentiality assurance, and researcher contact details. Out of these, 26 organizations consented to participate verbally or via chat. Due to scheduling conflicts and communication issues caused by the pandemic, the target of five respondents per organization was not met. Instead, the number of respondents varied across organizations, resulting in uneven representation. Political-based organizations contributed 27 respondents, community-based 19, faith-based 26, and school-based 31, totaling 103 participants.

The survey questionnaire had three sections: socio-demographic characteristics, political awareness, and civic behavior. To ensure reliability, the survey underwent pilot testing with four organizations, involving 18 respondents. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess internal consistency, yielding a high reliability score of 0.92, which indicated excellent internal consistency and ensured the validity of the data collected (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

$$\alpha = (K / (K - 1)) * [\Sigma s^2y / s^2x] \quad (1)$$

Where:

K is the number of tests in the item

Σs^2y is the sum of the item variance

s^2x is the variance of total score

Table 2

Cronbach's Anpha Result

VARIABLES	VALUES
K	40
Σs^2y	42.78
s^2x	434.67
A	0.92

Note. The data are from "Making sense of Cronbach's Alpha" by M. Tavakol and R. Dennick, 2011, *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, Article 53

3.3. Plan for the data analysis

The data collected from the respondents were statistically analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the statistical features of Microsoft Excel. These tools were chosen for their efficiency, accuracy, and widespread acceptance in quantitative

research. SPSS, in particular, is highly regarded for its ability to handle large datasets and perform complex statistical analyses with precision. The analysis was conducted at a 95% confidence level, ensuring that the results are statistically significant and reliable.

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, were employed to determine the socio-demographic profiles of respondents, their level of political awareness, and their level of civic behavior. Descriptive analysis was chosen because it provides a clear summary and visualization of the data, allowing for easy interpretation of trends and patterns.

To assess relationships between the study's key variables, the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient was utilized. This non-parametric test was selected because it is appropriate for determining the strength and direction of associations between ordinal data (e.g., Likert-scale responses) and continuous or ranked data (Field, 2013). It is particularly useful when data do not meet the assumptions of normality required for Pearson correlation (Field, 2013). The formula for Spearman's correlation is as follows:

To determine the level of political awareness and civic behavior of the respondents, the following scales were used with their corresponding response meanings.

$$\rho = 1 - (6 * \sum d_i^2) / [n * (n^2 - 1)] \quad (2)$$

Where:

ρ is Spearman rank correlation coefficient

d_i is the difference between the two ranks of each observation

n is the number of observations

Table 3

Five-point Likert Used for Survey Questionnaire

Scale	Response Meaning
Political Awareness	
1	not at all aware
2	slightly aware
3	somewhat aware
4	moderately aware
5	extremely aware
Civic Behavior	
1	Never
2	Rarely
3	Sometimes
4	Often
5	Always

Note. Authors

Here also lies the metric used for correlation coefficient interpretation.

Table 4

Correlation Metric

Interval Coefficient	Relationship Level
0.80 - 1.000	Very Strong
0.60 - 0.799	Strong
0.40 - 0.599	Moderate
0.20 - 0.399	Weak
0.00 - 0.199	Very Weak

Note. The data are from “Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics” by A. Field, 2013, Sage Publications Limited

Additionally, One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to investigate whether variations in specific independent variables-nature of organization and position in the organization-had statistically significant effects on the dependent variables (political awareness and civic behavior). One-way ANOVA was chosen because it is ideal for comparing the means of three or more independent groups to determine if there are measurable differences between them (Tabachnick et al., 2013). The formula for One-way ANOVA is as follows:

$$F = MST / MSE \quad (3)$$

$$MST = [\Sigma(T_i^2 / n_i) - G^2 / n] / (k - 1) \quad (4)$$

$$MSE = [\Sigma\Sigma(Y_{ij}^2) - \Sigma(T_i^2 / n_i)] / (n - k) \quad (5)$$

Where:

F: is the variance ratio for the overall test

MST: is the mean square due to treatments/groups (between groups)

MSE: is the mean square due to error (within groups, residual mean square)

Y_{ij}: is an observation

T_i: is a group total

G: is the grand total of all observations

n_i: is the number in group i, and n is the total number of observations

$$LSD_{A,B} = t_{0.05/2,DFW} * \text{sqrt}[MSW * (1/n_A + 1/n_B)] \quad (6)$$

Where:

t: is the critical value from the t-distribution table

MSW: is the mean square within, obtained from the results of your ANOVA test

n: is the number of scores used to calculate the means

Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the data, providing a clear understanding of the respondents' profiles and survey responses. To analyze the relationships between variables, Spearman Rank Correlation was chosen for its robustness in handling ranked and ordinal data, which are typical in survey-based Likert-scale responses. Additionally, One-way ANOVA was utilized to determine the effects of categorical independent variables, such as the nature of an organization, on continuous dependent variables like political awareness and civic behavior. To further examine significant differences between group means, Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was conducted as a post hoc analysis, allowing for an in-depth understanding of where the variations occurred.

4. Results and discussion

The results of this study provide critical insights into the relationship between youth political awareness and their civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic. By focusing on the role of socio-demographic characteristics, political awareness, and civic engagement, the findings illuminate how youth organizations function as agents of change during global crises. This section discusses the statistical relationships observed in the study, emphasizing their theoretical and practical implications while addressing the broader research question: *How does youth political awareness affect their civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic?*

4.1. Results

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents highlight their diversity. The majority were aged 21 - 22, aligning with college-level educational attainment, though younger (16 - 20) and older (23 - 29) age groups were also represented. Females constituted 51.46%, followed by males (42.72%), with a small percentage identifying as non-binary or preferring not to disclose their gender. Most respondents (93.2%) resided in Nueva Ecija, with a few from nearby provinces, reflecting the study's focus on Nueva Ecija-based youth organizations. A significant majority (90.29%) were registered voters, while those unregistered were mostly younger participants below the voting age of 18.

Educationally, 67% of respondents were at the college level, with others distributed among high school graduates, college graduates, and post-graduate students. Income data showed variability, with the majority reporting annual family incomes above 50,001 pesos, though some indicated incomes below 10,000 pesos, likely due to student respondents' confusion. The largest group of respondents (30.10%) came from school-based organizations, followed by political (26.21%), faith-based (25.24%), and community-based organizations (18.45%). Leadership roles were held by 42.72%, while 57.28% were non-officers. Membership length varied, with 42.72% engaged for over 32 months and 29.13% for six months or less.

In terms of political awareness, respondents showed moderate to high awareness levels. They were most aware of public policies (mean = 4.47), such as mandatory mask-wearing and the Enhanced Community Quarantine, and political issues (mean = 4.53), including alleged corruption in PhilHealth and inadequate pandemic responses. Awareness of political leaders (mean = 3.77) and processes (mean = 3.69) was moderate, as was awareness of institutions (mean = 4.09), particularly LGUs and initiatives like the Vaccine Express Project.

Civic behavior was notable, with frequent participation in volunteering (mean = 3.60), community problem-solving (mean = 3.51), and active membership (mean = 4.09). Activities

included donation drives, community pantries, and awareness campaigns, with active participation in meetings and organizational initiatives. These findings underscore the youth's engagement and sensitivity to policies and issues affecting their communities during the pandemic.

4.2. Correlation

4.2.1. Socio-demographic characteristics and political awareness

In the correlation of the socio-demographic characteristics (independent variable) and political awareness (dependent variable) indicators, namely public policies, political leaders, political issues, political institutions, and political institutions, as shown in Table 5, only a few are significantly related. This implies that age, educational level, and length of membership had significant relationships but a weak correlation to the specific political awareness indicator, political issues. On the other hand, the variable income had a significant relationship but weak correlation to that political awareness indicator (public policies).

Table 5

Relationship of Socio-demographic Charactics and Political Awareness

	PPol	PLea	PIIns	PPro	PIss
Age	0.035	-0.056	-0.125	0.075	-0.229*
	0.729	0.572	0.210	0.449	0.020
Voting Status	-0.122	-0.099	-0.109	0.004	-0.140
	0.218	0.321	0.272	0.972	0.159
Education Level	-0.050	-0.166	-0.130	0.001	-0.208*
	0.618	0.094	0.190	0.990	0.035
Income	0.257**	0.027	0.099	0.109	0.173
	0.009	0.789	0.319	0.272	0.081
Length of Membership	-0.086	-0.030	-0.143	0.025	-0.320**
	0.386	0.760	0.150	0.806	0.001
Position in the Org	0.101	0.105	0.009	0.121	-0.013
	0.311	0.290	0.927	0.222	0.900

Note. Authors

The results indicate that the variables in this study move in opposite directions; as one increases, the other decreases, suggesting no strong relationship between the independent and dependent variables. While a few significant correlations were observed, these were weak and did not demonstrate substantial influence. Formal education plays a critical role in fostering political awareness, as highlighted by Dioso and Mendana (2019) and Alsati and Ghanem (2017), who emphasize the role of educational institutions in shaping political consciousness. The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XIV, Section 3, mandates the inclusion of constitutional studies in educational curricula to ensure youth awareness of their rights, governance, and political systems. Kuotsu and Amer (2016) further note that education provides direct exposure to political information, showing a strong association between educational attainment and political awareness.

However, the findings reveal that educational level significantly affects political awareness only in relation to political issues. Niemi and Niemi (2007) argue that while curricula impart political knowledge, the teaching methods and educator-student interactions play a more pivotal role. Dewey's theory of democracy, as interpreted by Bernstein, supports this, highlighting the value of active educator-student dialogue in enhancing political understanding and preparing students to become informed, engaged citizens. A weak but significant correlation was found between educational level and political issues, reinforcing Dioso and Mendana's (2019) assertion that political events and crises shape political awareness. During the Covid-19 pandemic, youth organizations actively addressed community needs, exemplifying the responsiveness highlighted by United Nations Development Programme & United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2020). Althubetat and Jarrar (2013) define political awareness as the ability to understand and respond to political events, which aligns with Barrett's (2017) findings that youth involvement in crises fosters both political awareness and participation.

4.2.2. *Socio-demographic characteristics and political awareness*

For the correlation of the socio-demographic characteristics and civic behavior indicators, namely volunteering for non-electoral organization, community problem solving, and active membership, as shown in Table 6, there are only two that have significant relationships. The specific socio-demographic characteristics, length of membership, and position in the organization have a significant relationship but a very weak correlation to the civic behavior indicators active membership and volunteering for non-electoral organizations.

Table 6

Relationship of Socio-demographic Characteristics and Civic Behavior

	VEO	CPS	AM
Age	0.103	0.083	-0.115
	0.299	0.405	0.247
Voting Status	0.006	-0.028	-0.102
	0.954	0.782	0.303
Education Level	0.072	0.032	-0.176
	0.471	0.749	0.075
Income	-0.031	-0.012	0.060
	0.753	0.904	0.547
Length of Membership	-0.015	-0.040	-0.194*
	0.881	0.689	0.050
Position in the Org	0.197*	0.172	0.161
	0.046	0.083	0.104

Note. Authors

The results indicate that socio-demographic characteristics and political awareness are inversely correlated, meaning that when one variable increases, the other decreases. This suggests that these variables do not significantly influence each other. For example, education, often cited as an essential tool for political awareness (Abonu et al., 2013), does not appear to have a direct impact on civic behavior. This highlights a gap in educational institutions where youth may lack practical applications of democratic values. Levine and Youniss (2006) also suggest that youth often view democracy unrealistically, emphasizing the need for institutions to instill more reasonable expectations.

Dewey's theory of democracy, as interpreted by Bernstein, emphasizes the importance of visible and active civic participation in fostering a strong sense of community. Classroom learning, when combined with community experiences, creates a balance of formal and informal education, reinforcing both academic and civic learning (Doolittle & Faul, 2013). Participation in extracurricular activities and youth organizations allows young people to explore public engagement, build reciprocity between rights and obligations, and develop a practical understanding of citizenship.

The study also found that the length of membership in organizations significantly impacts active civic behavior, while holding a position correlates with volunteering in non-electoral organizations. This aligns with findings by Flanagan and Levine (2010), which show that civic engagement increases in structured settings like youth organizations. Baddeley and James' (1987) Political Awareness Model further supports this, as organizational roles foster active membership, collaboration, and effective participation, enhancing integration and democracy within groups. A sense of solidarity, as noted by Faison and Flanagan (2001), motivates youth to commit to public-interest goals and community service.

4.2.3. Political awareness and civic behavior

Research highlights the importance of viewing youth as assets to their communities and contributors to societal development, emphasizing their potential in civil society-building with adequate support from public institutions and research organizations (Brennan et al., 2007; Lerner et al., 2005; Lerner & Lerner, 2013). This study reveals that most political awareness indicators, except political issues, have a significant positive correlation with civic behavior indicators, specifically community problem-solving and active group membership. These correlations, significant at the 0.01 level (02-tailed), indicate a weak relationship for public policies and political institutions with both civic behavior indicators, and for political processes with active group membership. Meanwhile, political leaders and political processes show a moderate relationship with community problem-solving.

These findings suggest that correlated variables move in the same direction-when one increases or decreases, the other follows. However, the weak relationship level indicates that additional factors outside these variables likely influence the outcomes. The study also shows that political leaders exhibit a weak positive correlation, while political processes display a moderate positive correlation with volunteering in non-electoral organizations. These relationships further affirm that an increase or decrease in one variable corresponds with a similar change in the other. Overall, the results provide strong evidence to accept the alternative hypothesis, confirming a statistically significant linear relationship between youth political awareness and civic behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 7*Relationship of Political Awareness and Civic Behavior*

	VEO	CPS	AM
Public Policies	0.171	0.254**	0.361**
	0.084	0.010	0.000
Political Leaders	0.352**	0.462**	0.339**
	0.000	0.000	0.000
Political Institutions	0.188	0.378**	0.289**
	0.057	0.000	0.003
Political Awareness	0.420**	0.467**	0.279**
	0.000	0.000	0.004
Political Processes	0.057		
	0.565	0.087	0.451

Note. Authors**4.3. Nature of organizations and position in the organization: One-way ANOVA**

One-Way ANOVA test was utilized to determine and analyze if there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores. In this sense, the nature of organizations was considered a factor for the level of political awareness and civic behavior. Table 8 shows that at least one group of means in the political awareness level differs from the rest of the group's mean answers. The result found that among all the indicators, only political issues have a significance value below 0.05, which is .034. The value between groups under the sum of squares by which it explains the value of total variation is 2.03, and has 44.32 value within groups. The F value is 4.635, which is also the highest among the rest of F values. This implies that for this variable, the nature of organization is determined a significant factor in political issues awareness.

Table 8*One-way ANOVA Result on the Nature of Organization*

	Source	Sos	df	MS	F	Sig.
Public Policies	Between Groups	0.47	3	0.474	1.197	0.277
	Within Groups	40.04	99	0.397		
	Total	40.51	102			
Political Leaders	Between Groups	0.13	3	0.133	0.168	0.683
	Within Groups	79.92	99	0.791		
	Total	80.05	102			
Political Institutions	Between Groups	0.27	3	0.273	0.46	0.499
	Within Groups	59.94	99	0.593		
	Total	60.21	102			

	Source	Sos	df	MS	F	Sig.
Political Processes	Between Groups	0.64	3	0.64	0.839	0.362
	Within Groups	77.02	99	0.763		
	Total	77.66	102			
Political Issues	Between Groups	2.03	3	2.034	4.635	0.034**
	Within Groups	44.32	99	0.438		
	Total	46.35	102			
Volunteering for Non-electoral Organization	Between Groups	1.63	3	1.63	1.961	0.164
	Within Groups	83.97	99	0.831		
	Total	85.6	102			
Community Problem Solving	Between Groups	0.18	3	0.184	0.267	0.606
	Within Groups	69.55	99	0.689		
	Total	69.73	102			
Active Membership	Between Groups	0.21	3	0.211	0.317	0.575
	Within Groups	67.2	99	0.665		
	Total	67.41	102			

Note. Authors

The particular Post Hoc Test, Fishers' Least Significant Difference was applied to identify the particular group/s on the nature of variable that has/have a significant mean difference. Based on the result in Table 9, political, community, and faith-based organizations have the mean response value of 4.80, 4.65, and 4.57, respectively, and therefore are identified under the group a. This implies that these groups are extremely aware and have statistically significantly higher levels of political issues. On the other hand, school-based organizations have the mean response value of 4.20 and are identified as group b. The youth members under this nature of organization generally have a moderate level of awareness of political issues, and therefore, it was significantly lower than the awareness level in this certain variable of the youth members compared to the other three natures of organizations. School-based organization is not necessarily political in nature and could be the underlying reason behind the result. Meanwhile, political and community-based ones have a wider array of scope to deal with such political issues. Non-school organizations tend to be smaller and have looser structure than schools, but they have broader missions (Pittman, 1991). They are also backed with traditions and philosophies, and rely non-heavily on educational methods.

Table 9

Post Hoc Test - LSD Result on the Nature of Organization

	Mean Response on Political Issues	Groups	Interpretation
Political-based Org	4.80	a	Extremely Aware
Community-based Org	4.65	a	Extremely Aware
Faith-based Org	4.57	a	Extremely Aware
School-based Org	4.20	b	Moderately Aware
Grand Total	4.53		Extremely Aware

Note. Authors

One-Way ANOVA was also utilized to consider position in the organization as a factor for the dependent indicators. Based on the result in Table 10, the position in the organization to volunteer for the non-electoral organization has a significance value of 0.046, with the sum of squares value 3.322 between groups and 82.277 within groups. Thus, the F value is 4.078. This implies that the variable position in the organization has a significant factor on the variable volunteering for non-electoral groups. To identify the significant mean difference, the positions were brought down into two categories/groups, officer and non-officer. The value of the mean response under the group officer is 3.80, while it is 3.44 for non-officer.

Table 10*One-way ANOVA Result on the Nature of Organization*

	Source	Sos	df	MS	F	Sig.
Political Issues	Between Groups	0.007	1	0.007	0.016	0.900
	Within Groups	46.344	101	0.459		
	Total	46.351	102			
Public Policies	Between Groups	0.411	1	0.411	1.036	0.311
	Within Groups	40.100	101	0.397		
	Total	40.511	102			
Political Leaders	Between Groups	0.885	1	0.885	1.129	0.290
	Within Groups	79.169	101	0.784		
	Total	80.054	102			
Political Institutions	Between Groups	0.005	1	0.005	0.008	0.927
	Within Groups	60.203	101	0.596		
	Total	60.208	102			
Political Processes	Between Groups	1.142	1	1.142	1.508	0.222
	Within Groups	76.516	101	0.758		
	Total	77.658	102			
Volunteering on Non-electoral Organization	Between Groups	3.322	1	3.322	4.078	0.046**
	Within Groups	82.277	101	0.815		
	Total	85.598	102			
Community Problem Solving	Between Groups	2.057	1	2.057	3.069	0.083
	Within Groups	67.681	101	0.670		
	Total	69.738	102			
Active Membership	Between Groups	1.755	1	1.755	2.699	0.104
	Within Groups	65.659	101	0.650		
	Total	67.414	102			

Note. Authors

The findings suggest that youth organization officers are more likely to volunteer in non-electoral organizations than non-officers, possibly due to their leadership roles and responsibilities, which encourage greater civic engagement. Leadership traditionally requires skills and knowledge, enabling officers to engage more actively in volunteerism. As Ponett (2020, para. 3) emphasized, “Young volunteers have the power to deliver change.” Supporting this, Zeldin et al. (2003) highlighted the importance of youth involvement in governance and community-based organizations as catalysts for civic engagement.

Youth organizations depend on the contributions of all members, making political awareness vital both within and outside the organization. Baddeley and James’s (1987) Political Awareness Model underscores the need for members to understand organizational processes, power dynamics, and culture (reading dimension) and to act accordingly in complex environments with varying interests (carrying dimension). The study reveals that officers are more skilled at navigating these dynamics, leading to higher participation in volunteer activities compared to non-officers.

School-based organizations, which accounted for the highest number of respondents, had only 09 officers among 31 members. This contrasts with community, political, and faith-based organizations, where members displayed greater awareness of political issues and were more adept at balancing internal and external organizational dynamics. According to Baddeley and James (1987), for an organization to function harmoniously, members must engage with both external environments and internal processes, emphasizing the need for interaction and integration. These findings suggest that school-based organizations may benefit from fostering stronger member connections and awareness to enhance civic engagement.

4.4. Discussion

The findings provide nuanced insights into the relationships between socio-demographic characteristics, political awareness, and civic behavior. For HA1, which hypothesizes a linear relationship between socio-demographic factors and political awareness, weak but significant correlations were found. Age, educational level, and length of membership showed weak associations with political issues, while income correlated with public policies. These findings partially support HA1, as the influence of socio-demographic factors on political awareness appears limited and context-specific.

For HA2, which posits a relationship between socio-demographic factors and civic behavior, significant associations were observed. Length of membership correlated with active membership in organizations, and holding an officer position was linked to volunteering for non-electoral organizations. However, these relationships were weak, suggesting that while leadership roles and organizational tenure encourage civic behavior, other factors may also shape youth engagement. Thus, HA2 is partially accepted.

The results strongly support HA3, demonstrating a significant linear relationship between youth political awareness and civic behavior. Positive correlations were identified between political awareness indicators, such as public policies, political leaders, political institutions, and political processes, and civic behaviors like community problem-solving, volunteering, and active group membership. Political leaders and processes showed moderate relationships with community problem-solving, affirming that greater political awareness drives higher civic engagement, particularly during societal disruptions like the Covid-19 pandemic. HA3 is accepted, and HO3 is rejected.

The study underscores the role of youth political awareness in fostering civic action while highlighting the contextual influence of socio-demographic factors. These findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions to enhance political awareness and sustain youth engagement in community development.

Empirically, the study demonstrates that socio-demographic characteristics, such as organizational tenure and leadership roles, enhance civic behavior. It also underscores the catalytic role of youth organizations, political, faith-based, and community-based in fostering political awareness and engagement. Theoretically, the findings strengthen frameworks like Dewey's participatory democracy and Baddeley and James's Political Awareness Model by linking political awareness to active civic behavior. The study challenges traditional views that education alone drives civic participation, showing that exposure to political issues and organizational involvement play critical roles.

For policymakers, the findings call for curricular reforms to promote active citizenship and democratic participation. Supporting youth organizations through funding, leadership programs, and training will further amplify their role in fostering civic engagement. By bridging the gap between political awareness and civic behavior, this study highlights the resilience and resourcefulness of youth during global crises, establishing them as key contributors to community resilience and democratic development.

5. Discussion and recommendations

5.1. Discussion

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of youth in addressing societal needs, especially amidst the government's shortcomings in responding to the crisis. Youth organizations took remarkable initiatives to support communities in need. This study explored the political awareness and civic behavior of youth during the pandemic, revealing key relationships between sociodemographic characteristics, political awareness, and civic engagement.

The analysis found weak but significant correlations between certain sociodemographic factors and political awareness. For instance, age, educational level, and length of membership negatively correlated with political issues awareness, while average annual family income had a weak positive correlation with public policies awareness. Additionally, the length of membership and holding an officer position showed weak but significant relationships with civic behaviors like volunteering and active group membership. Overall, sociodemographic factors did not exhibit strong linear relationships with political awareness or civic behavior.

Conversely, a linear relationship was observed between political awareness and civic behavior. Youth awareness of public policies, political leaders, institutions, and processes was strongly reflected in their contributions to civic activities like community problem-solving and volunteering. These findings emphasize the pivotal role of politically aware youth in fostering societal progress and building a better nation.

Organizational factors also played a significant role. Members of political, community, and faith-based organizations exhibited higher political issues awareness than those in school-based groups. Officers were more actively engaged in volunteering than non-officers, underscoring the importance of leadership roles in fostering civic participation. These results counter the notion of youth disengagement from politics, highlighting their critical contributions to democratic ideals and societal change.

The study underscores the need to recognize and nurture the political awareness and civic behavior of youth as they prepare to become future leaders. Through organizational involvement and democratic engagement, youth develop skills in political awareness, which, as emphasized by Baddeley and James (1987), can be cultivated not just for individual benefit but for the collective good of organizations and society. Their active participation and collaboration within their organizations reflect their potential to drive meaningful change, ensuring a prosperous democratic future.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and limitations, several recommendations are proposed for future research. The sampling process, limited to selected youth organization members in Nueva Ecija, may have introduced selection bias due to reliance on organization leaders for respondent recruitment. To address this, future studies should adopt random sampling techniques and broaden the geographic scope to ensure a more representative and unbiased sample. Employing advanced statistical tools, such as Spearman Correlation analysis, would further enhance data reliability and generalizability.

Time constraints posed another challenge, as the study's data collection period was less than six months, leading to a smaller sample size than initially planned. Future research should allow for longer data collection periods and aim for larger sample sizes to ensure richer data and stronger generalizations. This would also improve the statistical power and reliability of the findings.

Adopting a mixed-method approach in future studies is recommended to combine quantitative data with qualitative insights, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between variables. Designing targeted survey questionnaires and incorporating additional statistical analyses would strengthen the correlations between political awareness and civic behavior. Expanding the range of political and civic behavior indicators would offer a broader and more detailed examination of these variables.

Furthermore, more extensive research into the existing literature is needed to build a stronger theoretical foundation. Future studies should explore specific indicators of political awareness and civic behavior in greater depth, yielding more precise and nuanced correlations. These recommendations aim to enhance the robustness and significance of future research, offering deeper insights into the dynamics of youth political awareness and civic engagement.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION

The manuscript clearly identifies a research gap; the manuscript extends or refines existing theories; the manuscript introduces or improves research methods; the manuscript provides new datasets or empirical evidence; the manuscript presents statistically and practically significant findings; the manuscript offers policy implications; the manuscript opens new directions for further research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

CRedit: **Vienna Castillo and Janinna Domingo**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Writing - Original Draft; **Ella Joy Avellanoza Ponce**: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing, Project Administration; **Oliva Borja Parico**: Investigation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing.

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All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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