

Level of Knowledge and Attitude Among College Students Towards Political Dynasties

Charmaine H. Honculada¹, Mark Mauris E. Cabahug², Chrislyn Jean O. Maniwang³, Rey Noel C. De la Peña⁴, Jevy Carl R. Ferraren⁵, Angelmae T. Gingo⁶, Catherine Chelo S. Luega⁷

¹Holy Name University, Bohol, Philippines- 6330

^{2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7}Bohol Island State University-Main Campus, Bohol, Philippines, 6300

Email address: chhonculada@gmail.com, markmauris.cabahug@bisu.edu.ph

Abstract— The Political Dynasty refers to a situation where a family holds multiple electoral offices simultaneously or is hereditary within the government. This study's primary purpose is to determine the level of knowledge and attitude among college students toward political dynasties. A quantitative research method, specifically a correlational study was utilized using a modified questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the modified questionnaire's reliability. Weighted Mean and Spearman Correlation were used to analyze the data collected. This study collected necessary data from second-year students enrolled in various programs under the College of Teacher Education at Bohol Island State University-Main Campus. The programs include BSED-Mathematics, BSED-English, BSED-Filipino, BSED-Social Studies, BEED, BTLED, and BTVTED. Based on the findings of the study, the survey found respondents' moderate understanding of political dynasties, indicating potential gaps in knowledge that could impact informed decision-making and critical thinking. Although moderate acceptance of the concept suggests moderate agreement, the findings raise questions about the depth of understanding and critical evaluation. The significant relationship found between respondents' knowledge and attitudes underscores the need for further investigation and education on the subject. Therefore, while not alarming per se, these findings highlight the importance of continued research and awareness efforts to foster a more informed and critically engaged public discourse on political dynasties.

Keywords— Level of attitude: level of knowledge: political dynasty

I. INTRODUCTION

Political dynasties, prevalent in many democratic countries, have a big impact on sustainable development beyond environmental protection, particularly within political institutions essential for the realization of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The importance of fostering open and peaceful communities, guaranteeing that everyone has access to justice, and building strong, inclusive, and accountable institutions at all levels is emphasized by SDG 16, which is focused on peace, justice, and strong institutions. In the context of democratic cultures, where freedom of public service and political involvement is recognized irrespective of race, gender, or religion, the issue of political dynasties emerges as interrelated and noteworthy (Ali, 2016). A political dynasty occurs when individuals from the same family are elected successively to the same government position or simultaneously hold various government positions (Mendoza, 2013).

Undoubtedly, the prevalence of political dynasties is a subject of widespread discussion globally, as highlighted by George & Ponattu (2018), with their presence noted in over 144 nations. However, among these nations, the Philippines is recognized for having one of the highest rates of political dynasties. The Philippine electoral landscape is characterized by several notable features, including a weak party structure, limited voter information access, historical patterns of dynastic influence, and the prominence of media figures in elected positions. These observations have led researchers to conclude that candidate viability in the country often revolves around a dichotomy between "personality versus program issues," emphasizing the significance of candidates' backgrounds (Batara, 2021).

The primary reason for conducting this research at Bohol Island State University-Main Campus extends beyond mere convenience and geographical proximity; rather, it is rooted in the relevance of the chosen respondents and the academic setting. Thus, the chosen respondents of this study were second-year students in the College of Teacher Education of the programs: BSED-Mathematics, BSED-English, BSED-Filipino, BSED-Social Studies, BEED, BTLED, and BTVTED. This selection was deliberated for several reasons: firstly, these students were recent graduates of senior high school, where they have been exposed to learning areas addressing politics and the concept of political dynasties. Secondly, given their aspirations to become educators in the future, it is imperative to discern their political inclinations to ensure they are equipped to impartially teach political subjects, including the intricate topic of political dynasties. Moreover, this research study exerted an effort to investigate the level of knowledge and attitude of college students toward political dynasties as well as the significant relationship between the college student's level of knowledge and attitude toward political dynasties. The findings of this study hold potential utility as a reference for school administrators and teachers, serving as a tool to enhance political empowerment and foster responsible suffrage among students.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The political and social structure of the Philippines has evolved and changed over the course of the nation's colonial history, which includes more than three centuries (333 years)

under Spanish rule, nearly five decades (46 years) under American rule, and three (3) years under Japanese rule (Buendia, 2021). In the political arena, family ties acquire a new significance and meaning that extends beyond the family home, as McCoy (1994) notes. Powerful politicians often try to pass on their power and status to their children, effectively turning the public office they have achieved into a private legacy for their families. This is known as a "political dynasty," as it is something that many politicians aim to turn into long-term family assets.

Political clans have long been a part of the state-society dynamics in the Philippines. From 1987 to 2016, they accounted for 70.4 percent of district representatives elected to the House of Representatives. According to Gutierrez et al. (1992), p. 8, they are mostly made up of "a family and its extended relatives or network, whose members have dominated the official elective seats in a locality or political subdivision for a long time". Political clans, generally seen as a subset of Philippine society's elites, usually perform various economic, social, and political functions (McCoy 1994). A political dynasty is a family that holds multiple electoral offices simultaneously or hereditary within the government. Just 250 families dominate local and national politics in the Philippines (Pabello, 2013). Putnam (1976), quoted in Sujarwoto (2015), stated that poverty reduction efforts and good governance would fail in the event of a bureaucratic disease epidemic (sponsorship, nepotism, nepotism). The political dynasty of the Philippines is documented in detail in the literature. (Mendoza et al. 2016) discovered that the political dynasty exacerbated poverty in Visayas and Mindanao.

The 1987 Constitution eventually incorporated a provision aimed at ensuring equal access to public office for all Filipinos, yet it delegated to Congress the task of implementing this directive (Mendoza et al., 2020). Article II, Section 26 of the Constitution affirms, "The State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law." Notably, during the 16th Congress, efforts towards political reform were evident, particularly at the Sangguniang Kabataan level. The passage of Republic Act (RA) 10742, also known as the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Reform Act, was hailed by legislators and government representatives as a landmark achievement, as it purportedly included the first-ever anti-dynasty provision in the nation's history. However, according to Dulay (2016), as cited by Go (2021), the enactment of the new SK law merely underscores the persistent dominance of political dynasties in Philippine politics and democratic institutions.

The primary legal foundation for this research is Section 26 of Article II of the Philippine Constitution, which states that the state must ensure equal access to opportunities for all public services and ban political dynasties as defined by law. According to the constitution, everyone should be allowed to run for government jobs, not just one family (Evangelio et al., 2015). This legal basis is central to this study as if people know; a positive or negative attitude toward the political dynasty in existence in Bohol. Bohol is no excuse for political dynasties and is manifested in the May 9, 2022 Election. "Old and familiar names in Bohol politics won in the May 9, 2022

elections, based on the official results from the Commission on Elections" (Udtohan, 2022, paragraph 1).

Padrino System

According to Hutchcroft and Rocamora (2003), the "Padrino system" of political patronage and clientelism includes political dynasties in the Philippines. "Padrino System" is a term used to describe a form of patronage politics. Under this system, powerful people who are known as "padrinos" or godfathers hold significant political sway and serve as patrons to their constituents or clients.

Clientelism

Clientelism refers to the distribution of private goods, both monetary and physical, to politicians' constituents to ensure their reelection and power. Filipino politicians often create some kind of agency dilemma for voters and the rule of law by their use of political influence, social connections, and favoritism in the building and utilization of political capital.

The aforementioned theories explain why voters elect politicians from political clans or dynasties and their relationships, as well as how they affect society as a whole. The related studies of local and international political dynasties concluded with positive and negative results on political dynasties in the government, economy, and democratic processes. These studies gave additional insights into the research being conducted. Overall, however, mechanisms linking political dynasties and their possible consequences for socio-economic outcomes remain poorly understood. Moreover, given the numerous confounding variables at play, establishing a causal link between dynasties and their socioeconomic effects is difficult (Geys & Smith, 2017).

Political dynasties are still widespread in democratic democracies, even though many countries democratized to do away with hereditary power (George et al., 2019). Political development in the Philippines has been a long and difficult process. It considers and is related to the occasions that molded its colonial history. Though the country's past has influenced its present, its future will be determined by the way the government and people handle politics. The nation's constant pursuit for national identity and nationhood is fundamentally dependent upon and intricately connected to its endeavors to carve out its political and national advancement.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design

This study was quantitative research, specifically a correlational study. The data was collected using the descriptive normative survey approach through a modified questionnaire.

Respondents

This study gathered the needed information from the respondents. When identifying respondents, the inclusion criteria took into account the second-year college students on the programs: BSED-Mathematics, BSED-English, BSED-Filipino, BSED-Social Studies, BEED, BTLED, and BTVTED.

Environment

The locale of this study is in Bohol Island State University Campus. This environment is purposively chosen. Situated in

the City of Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines, the aforementioned University is a public university.

Instrument

To facilitate data gathering, this study developed a modified questionnaire on published journals for this study. The modified instrument was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha, a test developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951. The test questionnaire was used to assess the respondents' level of knowledge and attitude toward political dynasties.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Knowledge of the Respondents Towards Political Dynasties

Table 1 presents the level of knowledge of the students of Bohol Island State University-Main Campus regarding the political dynasty in the Philippines.

TABLE I. Level of Knowledge of the Respondents Towards Political Dynasties

No.	Statement	Weighted Mean	Description
1	Political dynasty is tantamount to favoritism.	2.50	Somewhat knowledgeable about
2	The political dynasty is part of the wider "Padrino system" of political patronage and clientelism.	2.36	Somewhat knowledgeable about
3	The political dynasty prevents the electorate from electing those who do not belong to political clans.	2.60	Knowledgeable about
4	Political dynasty occurs to circumvent term limits.	2.25	Somewhat knowledgeable about
5	The Constitution fixed the term limits of elected government officials.	2.55	Knowledgeable about
6	A political dynasty exists when a family whose members are related up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity, whether legitimate, illegitimate, half-blood, or full-blood, maintains political control through succession or by simultaneously running for or holding elective positions.	2.90	Knowledgeable about
7	The spouse of or any person related to an incumbent elective official within the second civil degree of consanguinity or affinity can run for the same position immediately following the election.	2.30	Somewhat knowledgeable about
8	The spouse or children of any incumbent elective official can run for the same position, whether local or national.	2.40	Somewhat knowledgeable about
9	The Congress failed to enact legislation governing political dynasties in the country.	2.17	Somewhat knowledgeable about
10	Political dynasty is prohibited in the Constitution. However, there is no enabling law to enforce it.	2.28	Somewhat knowledgeable about
11	There is a proposal to amend the constitution and provide anti-political dynasty provisions.	2.20	Somewhat knowledgeable about
12	There exists a political dynasty in Bohol.	2.70	Knowledgeable about
13	Filipinos have access to opportunities for public service.	2.65	Knowledgeable about
14	The Philippines is not the only country that has a political dynasty.	2.86	Knowledgeable about
15	Some lawmakers want to prohibit political dynasties.	2.40	Somewhat knowledgeable about
16	Sangguniang Kabataan candidates cannot run in any office if they have a relative within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity, who is incumbent elected national, regional, provincial, city, municipal, or barangay official, in the locality where the candidate seeks to be elected.	2.05	Somewhat knowledgeable about
17	When a congressperson, governor, and mayor are all members of the same family, there will be a lack of checks and balances.	2.14	Somewhat knowledgeable about
18	Political dynasties are detrimental to economic performance.	2.34	Somewhat knowledgeable about
19	Potential rivals of a political dynastic official are deterred by the belief that they are difficult to dethrone, which may chill political competition.	2.35	Somewhat knowledgeable about
20	The Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2016 is the first political reform that has an anti-political dynasty provision in the country.	1.98	Somewhat knowledgeable about
Composite Mean		2.39	Somewhat knowledgeable about

The table shows that most of the respondents answered "somewhat knowledgeable about." Item number 6 obtained the highest weighted mean of 2.90 with the description of "knowledgeable about". This suggests that the majority of respondents are familiar with the criteria used to define a political dynasty. On the other hand, the item that gained the least weighted mean is item number 20 with a description of "somewhat knowledgeable about". It indicates that the respondents have knowledge of political dynasties but least about political reform laws that are in effect.

The result relates to the study of Bautista (2020) where it is observed that the respondents have political knowledge, according to Carpini and Keeter (1996), which is a factor in how someone develops a political stance.

Studies, however, have also demonstrated that even young persons with insufficient political understanding develop their political attitudes (Sherrod, 2003). Political participation is also considered to be related to one's knowledge of politics (Claes et al., 2009; Dudley & Gitelson, 2003 citing Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Sherrod, 2003; Torney-Purta, 2002).

Level of Attitude of the Respondents Towards Political Dynasties

In this section, there will be 2 tables (Table 2 and Table 3) presenting the favorable and unfavorable attitudes of the respondents.

Table 2 presents the favorable attitude of the college students of Bohol Island State University-Main Campus towards the political dynasty.

TABLE II. Favorable Attitude of the Respondents Towards Political Dyansty

No.	Statement	Weighted Mean	Description
1	I believe that it is natural for members of the same family to serve the government.	2.73	Agree
2	I see that political families have good reputations to win the elections.	2.88	Agree
3	I believe that political clans frequently have a good chance of winning elections.	2.90	Agree
4	I trust that the political dynasty improves the delivery of public service.	2.47	Disagree
5	I believe that a political dynasty gives equal access to the opportunity for public office.	2.33	Disagree
6	I am confident that political dynasty promotes the development of government programs.	2.45	Disagree
7	I am confident that political dynasty promotes the development of government programs.	2.66	Agree
8	I see that political dynasties are the popular clans in a specific place.	2.95	Agree
9	I trust someone who runs a government position and who came from a political dynasty.	2.53	Agree
10	I believe that political dynasties have eliminated corruption.	2.17	Disagree
Composite Mean		2.60	Agree

TABLE III. Unfavorable Attitude of the Respondents Towards Political Dynasty

No.	Statement	Weighted Mean	Description
1	I believe that political dynasty is harmful to democracy.	2.55	Agree
2	I believe that poverty in the Visayas and Mindanao is worsened by political dynasty.	2.45	Disagree
3	I believe that political dynasty is the reason for poverty and underdevelopment to persist.	2.52	Agree
4	I believe that political dynasty can be considered as a family business.	2.84	Agree
5	I believe that one of the elites in the Philippine society are those in the political clans.	2.83	Agree
6	I believe that the political dynasty weakens the governance and accountability processes which is beneficial for political clans to remain in power.	2.81	Agree
7	I believe that political dynasty is the reason for the decline of political competition in the country.	2.70	Agree
8	I believe that anyone can aspire in politics and be given equal access and opportunities.	3.36	Strongly Agree
9	I believe that those pending anti-political dynasty bills in Congress should become law immediately.	2.92	Agree
10	I believe that those young, gifted, but poor candidates should be given chance to serve and run to compete with political clans.	2.83	Agree
Composite Mean		2.78	Agree

Item no. 8 obtained the highest weighted mean with a description of “Agree,” This was followed by item no. 3 with the same description as item no. 8. However, item no. 10 got the least weighted mean a description of “disagree”. Moreover, the result of Table 2 relates to Mendoza et. al's (2016) literature, that political dynasties can lead to a decline in political competition due to the concentration of political power because there are ruling clans in certain places i.e., municipalities or provinces. Formal political power is not the limit to why there are dynasty members may wield more political influence due to many observed and unobserved family qualities such as wealth, talent, popularity, or appearance, which are linked to political success and can be passed down to generations (Querubin, 2010).

For the statement in item 10, the respondents agree that corruption is not eliminated in governance that is run by a political dynasty which relates to Mendoza et al. (2016) that a political dynasty weakens the existing governance and accountability process, and Garces et al. (2021) when all members of the same family are ruling, there is a lack of checks and balances, which leads to corruption and inefficient investment, as seen by the negative association between economic spending share and economic progress.

Table 3 presents the level of attitude of the college students of Bohol Island State University-Main Campus which are unfavorable statements to political dynasties.

Item no. 8 garnered the highest weighted mean with a description of “strongly agree,” followed by item no. 9 with a weighted mean of 2.92 and with a description of “agree.” Whereas, the item that gained the lowest weighted mean is item

no.2 with a description of “disagree.” Furthermore, the result of the same table concurs with the Constitutional Commission's inclusion of the clause “The State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service”, but with limited choices in the political arena as those candidates that are not from political clans are discouraged to include themselves in the poll, despite the strong agreement of the public that any person can aspire to be a public servant through an election. On the other hand, in the statement with the lowest weighted mean, it is understood that they agree that the political dynasty does not worsen the poverty in the Visayas and Mindanao, which is contrary to Mendoza et al. (2016) that political dynasties exacerbated poverty in Visayas and Mindanao. The reason is that those political clans have long-time horizons that can provide runways for them to pursue their policies and programs as well as legacy-related aspirations which are visible and tangible in their political jurisdictions to prove that their place is in progress and developing in the perspective of their constituents, but when the time comes that their terms turn shaky, they will cave into populist demands to ensure reelection.

TABLE IV. Relationship Between Level of Knowledge and Level of Attitude Among the Respondents

Variable	Spearman r	Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Significance
Knowledge	0.170	Negligible	0.008	Reject Null Hypothesis	Significant
Attitude					

Table 4 shows the relationship between the knowledge and attitude of college students towards political dynasties. In the general average of the computed variables, it is found that the

r-value is 0.170 which implies a negligible correlation, and a p-value of 0.008 which suggests that the variables have a significant relationship, therefore rejecting the null hypothesis. The results claim that the students' level of knowledge affects their level of attitude towards political dynasties. The result of the study implies that the student's level of knowledge is related to their level of attitude toward political dynasties. This is somehow contrary to Canare et al., (2013) where it is observed that there is a lack of interest or even initiative on the part of the students in learning more about their choices. For example, most students will only go home on weekends or during election season, leaving them insufficient time to get to know their local politicians Bautista's (2020) study demonstrated that knowledge of and attitudes toward politics in the case of SK were mostly obtained through family and media use, notably internet. Moreover, Bautista's (2020) study findings all point to the fact that young people are not apathetic. They demonstrate a willingness to participate in both traditional and civic-focused forms of politics, but despite the existence of formal institutions designed to involve them, political participation is discouraged because of the negative information that individuals acquire, which adds to their negative perception in the case of SK. As a result, it's crucial to include what the youth know about the SK and politics when examining how knowledge affects attitudes and participation (Bautista, 2020).

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the survey found respondents' moderate understanding of political dynasties, indicating potential gaps in knowledge that could impact informed decision-making and critical thinking. Although moderate acceptance of the concept suggests moderate agreement, the findings raise questions about the depth of understanding and critical evaluation. The significant relationship found between respondents' knowledge and attitudes underscores the need for further investigation and education on the subject. Therefore, while not alarming per se, these findings highlight the importance of continued research and awareness efforts to foster a more informed and critically engaged public discourse on political dynasties.

Suggestions

The following are suggestions or recommendations that can be given based on the result of the research study that has been carried out.

1. Enhanced Education Initiatives: Create campaigns or educational programs to raise public awareness of political dynasties. These programs can take the shape of seminars, workshops, or instructional materials intended to give thorough and impartial information on the background, ramifications, and possible outcomes of political dynasties.

2. Promotion of Critical Thinking Skills: Put policies into place to support the public's ability to think critically and analytically, especially when it comes to political concerns like dynasty politics. This might entail adding debates or activities involving critical thinking to media campaigns, community-based projects, or educational curricula.
3. Support for Diverse Political Representation: To counteract the power of political dynasties, and promote inclusivity and diversity in political representation. This might be backing campaigns to find and develop candidates from a variety of backgrounds, pushing for election changes to level the playing field, and supporting laws that encourage underrepresented groups to participate in politics.
4. Encourage further study and discussion on the subject of political dynasties to expand knowledge and guide future policy initiatives. This can entail promoting cooperation between scholars, decision-makers, and civil society organizations as well as sponsoring public forums and debates.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ali, A., (2016), Do Political Dynasties Hinder Development? Evid. Nat. Disaster.
- [2] Batara, E., Labadan, A.K., & Roa, M., (2021). Factors Affecting Youth Voting Preferences in the Philippine Senatorial Election: A Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Analysis.
- [3] Buendia, R. G. (2021). Examining Philippine political development over three decades after 'democratic' rule: is change yet to come?. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 29(2), 169-191.
- [4] Evangelio, J., & Abocejo, F. (2015). Political dynasty as perceived by residents of selected villages in Badian, Cebu City, Philippines. *Countryside Development Research Journal*, 3(01), 86-95.
- [5] Go, L. (2021). Dynasties. *BusinessWorld*.
- [6] Geys, B., & Smith, D. M. (2017). Political dynasties in democracies: Causes, consequences and remaining puzzles.
- [7] George, S. E., & Ponattu, D. (2019). Like father, like son? The effect of political dynasties on economic development. *Work. Pap., Harvard Univ., Cambridge, MA Google Scholar Article Location*, 4
- [8] Hutchcroft, P. D., & Rocamora, J. (2003). Strong demands and weak institutions: The origins and evolution of the democratic deficit in the Philippines. *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 3(2), 259-292.
- [9] McCoy AE (1994). 'An anarchy of families': The historiography of state and family in the Philippines. In: McCoy AE (ed.) *An Anarchy of Families: State and Family in the Philippines*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- [10] Mendoza, R., Banaag, M., Hiwatig, J., Yusingco, H., & Yap, J. (PABELLO). Term Limits and Political Dynasties in the Philippines: Unpacking the Links. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 20(4).
- [11] Mendoza, R., Beja, E. Jr., Venida, V. & Yap, D. (2013): Political Dynasties and Poverty: Resolving the "Chicken or Egg" Question.
- [12] Mendoza, R., Beja, E. Jr., Venida, V. & Yap, D. (2016): Political dynasties and poverty: measurement and evidence of linkages in the Philippines, *Oxford Development Studies*.
- [13] Pabello, A. (2013). *An Inheritance of Power: Political Dynasties in the Philippines*.
- [14] Udtohan, L. (2022). Dynasties, reelections dominate local Bohol polls. *Inquirer.Net*.