

Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making as Moderated by Sex and Educational Attainment Among Residents of Davao Del Norte

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ABSTRACT

Studies have highlighted shortcomings of voters in choosing leaders and making decisions on political matters. Thus, this study investigated the moderating effect of demographic factors, such as sex and educational attainment, on the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making among the residents of Davao del Norte. Using a quantitative research design specifically descriptive correlational research approach, stratified random sampling was used to select the respondents of the study. Data utilized in this study were gathered through adapted and validated questionnaires. The study used statistical tools such as frequency and percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson r, and moderated multiple regression analysis. Results revealed that there were more female respondents than male and there are more college graduates. Additionally, the level of political awareness obtained a very high rating while the level of political decision-making gained a rating of high. Moreover, there was a positive correlation between political awareness and political decision-making. Further, sex and educational attainment significantly moderate the political awareness. However, sex and educational attainment do not significantly moderate political decision-making.

Keywords: Education, sociology, voting, political awareness, political decision-making, descriptive correlation design, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Political decision-making involves not only the selection of policies based on outcomes but also the ethical responsibilities of policymakers in influencing citizen behavior (Kemper et al., 2025). However, voters often face challenges such as information overload, limited political knowledge, personal biases, and lack of engagement with political issues, which can lead to uninformed decisions (Fiarni et al., 2024). These difficulties are further compounded by limited political awareness, feelings of marginalization, and distrust in political candidates and institutions, reducing participation and hindering informed political choices (Sitorus, 2024).

Globally, political decision-making is frequently shaped by social and contextual influences rather than rational evaluation. In Kenya, voting behavior is influenced by ethnic affiliation, social pressures, and personal interests (Long, 2019). In Germany, participation tends to become habitual, with individuals voting without carefully evaluating each election (Becker, 2022). In Romania, coercive practices and social dynamics pressure voters, resulting in decisions driven by external influences (Lup et al., 2021). Similarly, in the Philippines, voters face decision-making difficulties due to demographic factors, often relying on personal beliefs or conforming to social norms instead of objective assessment (Javines, 2024; Aznar et al., 2023; Carreon, 2022).

Political awareness plays a crucial role in improving decision-making. Individuals who are more politically aware are better able to evaluate policies, process information, and make reasoned judgments (Jordan, 2018; Görtz, 2022). Higher levels of awareness enhance civic consciousness and enable individuals to understand political issues, leading to more informed decisions (Shoab et al., 2024). Moreover, increased awareness

encourages voters to critically assess government actions and make sound political choices (Scheufele et al., 2022).

Demographic factors such as sex and educational attainment also influence political awareness and decision-making. Studies show that differences in political knowledge exist between men and women, often due to unequal access to opportunities, with men generally exhibiting higher levels of awareness and participation (Yolmo et al., 2024; Ferrín et al., 2019). In terms of decision-making, women tend to be more cautious, while sex-related biases can influence electoral choices (Kittilson, 2019; Paniamogan et al., 2025).

Educational attainment is likewise linked to political awareness and engagement. Higher levels of education are associated with increased participation and deeper understanding of political processes (Spruyt et al., 2015; Tihamiyu, 2022). Similarly, improved educational opportunities promote more informed electoral participation (Seventilofa, 2024), whereas lower educational levels may limit participation and lead to poorer political decisions (Zingher, 2023).

Despite existing studies, gaps remain, much of the research focuses on psychological aspects of political decision-making or specific groups such as students, with limited local studies in the Municipality of Asuncion (Bécharde et al., 2024; Ikponmwoosa et al., 2024; Durban et al., 2026). Thus, this study examines the moderating effect of sex and educational attainment on the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making in this context.

This study contributes to understanding the factors influencing citizens' participation in democratic processes and aims to enhance civic engagement, reduce electoral manipulation, and promote informed decision-making. Ultimately, it supports the development of more aware and responsible citizens and aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions.

The results of this study will be presented to the Local Government of Asuncion, Davao del Norte, in academic conferences, and through publication in a peer-reviewed journal for wider dissemination.

Research Questions

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of sex and educational attainment?
2. What is the level of political awareness among the residents of Davao del Norte in terms of:
 - 2.1 public policies;
 - 2.2 political figures; and
 - 2.3 public issues?
3. What is the level of political decision-making among residents of Davao del Norte in terms of:
 - 3.1 rational choice decision-making;
 - 3.2 confirmatory decision-making;
 - 3.3 fast and frugal decision-making;
 - 3.4 heuristic-based decision-making; and
 - 3.5 gut decision-making?
4. Is there a significant relationship between political awareness and political decision-making; and
5. Do sex and educational attainment significantly moderate the relationship between political awareness and decision-making?

Theoretical Lens

This study was anchored on Rational Choice Theory (Becker, 1976). Rational Choice Theory deals with which is one of several approaches social scientists use to try to make sense of human behavior. According to Becker, this theory helps the understanding of people's decision-making processes. It is predicated on the notion that

people specifically humans, act in a rational manner, contemplating the costs and benefits to maximize their own gains.

This theory will offer a framework for this study in comprehending how people rationally weigh the costs and advantages of political decisions. Through this it can understand voting behavior as voters who are well-informed tend to make better decisions, but those who are not may depend on their feelings or external factors. Additionally, it provides an explanation of political engagement, arguing that people vote or participate in politics when the advantages outweigh the drawbacks, yet some people continue to vote even when their influence is minimal. Because politicians craft campaigns and programs that speak to the interests of voters, it also aids in the analysis of political strategy.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative design, specifically descriptive correlational approach with moderation analysis. Quantitative design is a way of testing theories by examining the relationship among variables (Creswell, 2017). Moreover, the descriptive correlational design will be used. This approach is appropriate for identifying and analyzing the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them (Putri et al., 2025). This design is used to describe variables and examine the statistical relationships between variables and between them without manipulating any conditions (Ghanad, 2023).

Furthermore, to examine moderation effects, the study employed moderation analysis, which allows for the inclusion of interaction terms to assess whether the effect of political awareness on political decision-making changes depending on the respondents' sex and level of educational attainment. Moderation analysis examines the relationship between variable changes depending on the moderator (Igartua et al., 2021).

In this study, the descriptive correlational research approach allowed the researcher to determine whether there is a relationship between political awareness and political decision-making as mediated by sex and educational attainment among residents of the Municipality of Asuncion. Hence, this design was particularly fit to determine the existing relationship and the degree of relationship between the stated variables. Thus, the use of a descriptive correlational design integrated with moderation analysis is deemed appropriate for the present study, as it enabled the researcher to determine not only the existence and strength of relationships among the key variables but also the conditional effects of demographic factors on these relationships.

RESULTS

Profile of the Respondents

Presented in Table 1 the demographic factors of the political awareness and political decision making in terms of educational attainment and sex of the respondents. The table shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents. The respondents in this study there are 177 (47%) male, and 204 (53%) female. In terms of educational attainment, there are 180 (47%) college graduates, 58 (15%) senior high school graduates, 99 (26%) high school graduates, and 43 (11%) percent elementary graduates.

Table 1 Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Attainment		
College Graduate	180	47
Senior High Graduate	58	15
High School Graduate	99	26
Elementary Graduate	43	11

Sex		
Male	177	47
Female	204	53

Level of Political Awareness among the Residents of Davao del Norte

The data in Table 2 shows the overall level of political awareness among residents of Davao del Norte. It shows that the category mean of 4.23, which is described as very high, indicates that political awareness is always evident among the residents of Asuncion, Davao del Norte. In addition, the standard deviation is 0.48, which means that their answers are clustered near to the mean.

Table2 Level of Political Awareness of Respondents

A. Public Policies	Mean	SD	Description
1. the laws, ordinances and/or barangay resolution in my community /country.	4.28	0.78	Very High
2. public policies mostly aimed at protecting the rights of individuals.	4.32	0.69	Very High
3. the public policies are clearly implemented by the Government to all its citizens.	4.23	0.76	Very High
4. the participation of the community as well as the private sector are essential in the implementation of public policies.	4.29	0.77	Very High
5. the Legislative branch is the one which create or formulate public policies.	4.18	0.85	High
Category Mean	4.26	0.60	Very High
B. Political Figures	Mean	SD	Description
1. political leaders are referred as public servants.	4.38	0.73	Very High
2. Political leaders are the one responsible for creating and implementing guidelines and policies meant for the common good.	4.28	0.71	Very High
3. the qualification to be a leader are met by the officials.	4.16	0.87	High
4. elected political leaders are accountable to the people and not to their heads.	4.29	0.75	Very High
5. political leaders are either elected or appointed.	4.38	0.79	Very High
Category Mean	4.30	0.59	Very High
C. Public Issues	Mean	SD	Description
1. the government has implemented various programs to reduce crime and illegal drug activities in the country.	4.14	0.73	High
2. the government’s approach to territorial disputes with other nations has been handled appropriately.	3.95	0.83	High
3. the government has effectively responded to recent public health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.	4.11	0.78	High

4. the tax reform program has been beneficial in supporting national infrastructure and development projects.	4.18	0.82	High
5. recent issues about alleged ghost projects in flood control programs raise concerns about transparency and accountability in government spending.	4.33	0.71	Very High
Category Mean	4.14	0.53	High
Total Mean	4.23	0.48	Very High

Level of Political Decision-Making among the Residents of Davao del Norte

The overall level of political decision-making is displayed in Table 3. It displays a 3.63 overall mean, which is considered high and the standard deviation is 0.43, which means that it is concentrated near the mean.

Table 3 Level of Political Decision-Making of Respondents

A. Rational Choice Decision-Making	Mean	SD	Description
1. when they have an important choice to make, they like to gather as much information as they possibly can.	4.26	0.74	Very High
2. if they learn something about one candidate running for office, they try to find out the same information about other candidates.	4.20	0.73	Very High
3. they find it important to carefully consider all likely alternatives whenever they are making a decision.	4.33	0.69	Very High
4. when they have to make a quick decision, they try to be as objective and balanced as they possibly can.	4.24	0.76	Very High
Category Mean	4.26	0.57	Very High
B. Confirmatory Decision-Making	Mean	SD	Description
1. all they need to know when making a tough political decision is what party a candidate belongs to.	3.59	0.89	High
2. the parties are so polarized and distinct today that it is hard for me to imagine ever voting for a candidate from another party.	3.48	0.90	High
3. they usually see mostly good things about the candidates from my party and many bad things about the candidates from other parties.	3.28	1.00	High
Category Mean	3.45	0.78	High
C. Fast and Frugal Decision-Making	Mean	SD	Description
1. there are only one or two issues they really care about in most elections. They make their decision by comparing the candidates on those one or two issues.	3.62	0.90	High
2. whenever they have to make a tough choice, they focus on the most important aspects of the decision and leave it at that.	3.71	0.84	High
Category Mean	3.66	0.72	High

D. Heuristic-Based Decision-Making	Mean	SD	Description
1. choosing a familiar candidate is an easy way for them to make a reasonably good vote choice.	3.46	0.98	High
2. if one option meets my needs, they will save time and go with it without really looking at others.	3.05	1.00	Moderate
3. in deciding how to vote, they follow the recommendations of people or groups they trust.	3.02	0.98	Moderate
Category Mean	3.18	0.81	Moderate
E. Gut Decision-Making			
1. when making decisions, they usually just go with their gut.	2.94	2.94	Moderate
Total Mean	3.63	0.43	High

The Significance of the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

Presented in table 4 the correlation between political awareness and political decision-making. Based on the results, political awareness has a positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.1334$, $p = 0.0092$), where the p-value is less than 0.5 level of significance. However, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.1334$) suggests that the strength of the relationship is weak, meaning that while political awareness is related to political decision-making, its influence is relatively small. In practical terms, this implies that increases in political awareness are associated with improvements in political decision-making.

Table 4 The Significance of the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

Variables Paired	r	p value	Remarks
Political Awareness and Political Decision Making	0.1334	0.0092	Significant

Moderating Effect of Sex on the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

Presented on table 5.1 the moderating effect of sex on the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making. On the interaction between political awareness and sex, the p value is 0.0560 which is not significant.

Table 5.1 Moderating Effect of Sex on the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision Making

Singular Influence of the Predictor	Standardized Coefficient	t	p-value	Remarks
Political Awareness	0.2342	3.42	<.001	Significant
Sex	0.7479	1.91	0.0560	Not Significant
Interaction (Political Awareness*Sex)	-0.1912	2.08	0.0379	Significant

Combined Influence of the Predictors				
R	0.1827			
R ²	0.0334			
F	4.3284			
p	0.0051			Significant

Moderating Effect of Educational Attainment on the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

Presented in Table 5.2 is the result on the moderating effect of educational attainment on the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making shows the interaction between political awareness and educational attainment, specifically among high school graduate and elementary graduate, the p-value of the interaction is 0.0086 and 0.0161 respectively.

Table 5.2 Moderating Effect of Sex on the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision Making

Singular Influence of the Predictor	Standardized Coefficient	t	p-value	Remarks
Political Awareness	0.0391	0.57	0.5671	Not Significant
Educational Attainment				
Senior High Graduate	-0.2669	0.457	0.6478	Not Significant
High School Graduate	-1.1869	-2.49	0.0129	Significant
Elementary Graduate	-1.7591	-2.155	0.0312	Significant
Interaction (Political Awareness*Educational Attainment)				
Senior High Graduate	0.0931	0.66	0.5079	Not Significant
High School Graduate	0.2966	2.63	0.0086	Significant
Elementary Graduate	0.4762	2.41	0.0161	Significant
Combined Influence of the Predictors				
R	0.2677			
R ²	0.0716			
F	4.1015			
p value	<.001			Significant

DISCUSSION

The Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making as Moderated by Sex and Educational Attainment among Residents of Davao del Norte. This study delved with the level of political awareness with its indicators: *public policies, political figures, and public issues* among residents of Asuncion, Davao del Norte. In terms of respondents level of political awareness indicates that respondents have knowledge in political process and

know their roles and functions in a democracy. Additionally, the results also imply that residents exhibit a strong awareness in laws, responsibilities of leaders and the implemented programs to support the citizens.

Further, this finding supports the study of Anderson et al. (2021) that individuals who are politically aware are generally knowledgeable about laws and how government works. This is also in line with the study of Badaru et al. (2021) that it is important that citizens have awareness of the structure of the government and should have clearer understanding on how it works as it is intended to serve for common good. Furthermore, it agrees with Opalo (2020), where citizens awareness in politics plays a crucial role in ensuring political leaders remain accountable as they understand government responsibilities and policy implementation. In the studies of Jones (2020) and Castro et al. (2022), citizens having awareness of the political process and their roles and responsibilities in a democracy enables them to participate more effectively in political processes and make decisions that are informed by their understanding of how democracy works.

Public Policies. This category has a mean rating of 4.26 described as very high. Further the mean rating of the items ranges from 4.18 to 4.32. Specifically, the item respondents are being aware that the legislative branch is the one which create or formulate public policies has mean of 4.18 which is described as high, while the item respondents being aware of public policies mostly aimed at protecting the rights of individuals has a mean rating of 4.32 described as very high. This result indicates that awareness of laws, ordinances, and policy implementation is highly evident. This finding suggests that respondents believe that public policies protect rights and promote citizens' participation in democracy, making the actions of the government more credible.

Furthermore, the findings that public policies protect rights and promote citizens' participation align to the claims of Cerruti et al. (2023) that citizens awareness of the laws and the implementation of policies and how these policies safeguard their rights promote their participation in the democratic processes. The finding also aligns with the findings of Khatibi et al. (2023) that citizens knowing the policies let them participate in policy processes and support government initiatives. Additionally, the study findings of De Filippi et al. (2018) observed that awareness on the purpose of policies and how they are implemented make citizens realize that these were intended to protect the rights of the people. The study Zhou et al. (2022) and Grelle (2024) believe that citizens participate in government policy making processes as they know that there are policies that protect their rights.

Political Figures. The mean rating of this category is 4.30, described as very high. The mean ratings of the items ranges from 4.16 to 4.38. Consequently, the respondents are being aware that the qualification to be a leader are met by the officials" has a mean of 4.16, described as very high and the item respondents are being aware that political leaders are either elected or appointed" has a mean rating of 4.38 and is described as very high. It implies that respondents know that leaders must be qualified to provide service for the people whether they are elected or appointed officials.

Additionally, this result about awareness on the qualification of political figures are being met by the officials whether elected or appointed is in consonance with the study of Torfing and Sorensen (2019) that citizens perceptions of the leaders are those individuals who meet the qualifications before serving the people. The findings also agree with the study of Tosun et al. (2022) which explained that leaders that are elected must be qualified in order for them to give programs that will benefit government decisions for the people. Further, it aligns also on the study of Hendriks and Marshment (2019) that citizens acknowledge that there must be standards and qualifications for leaders which gives more understanding what public servants should be. In the study of Aarts et al. (2013) and Masciulli et al. (2016) citizens awareness of the qualifications of the leaders whether elected or appointed officials gives them confidence that leaders are making programs and services for the benefit of the people.

Public Issues. This discloses that the category mean is 4.14 described as high. The mean rating of items ranges from 3.95 to 4.33. Specifically, the respondents are being aware that the government's approach to territorial disputes with other nations has been handled appropriately has a mean of 3.95 described as high. Meanwhile the item respondents are being aware that recent issues about alleged ghost projects in flood control programs raise concerns about transparency and accountability in government spending has a mean of 4.33, described as very

high. This signifies that the awareness of government responses to crime, health crises, and infrastructure is often evident. This means that, respondents are alert to both tax reforms and concerns over transparency spending, indicating a critical yet hopeful outlook on national challenges.

Further, the result on public issues conforms to the study of Alessandro et al. (2021) that citizens having information about policies means that they are aware of government performance and at the same time the purpose of such programs in improving the lives of the people. Likewise, Mansoor et al. (2021) emphasized that people that are aware in how government responds to crises resulted to a more transparent governance. Further, Gabriel et al. (2019) explained that public knowing government's services and programs for the people makes them understand that these laws are made for the benefit of the people. The study of Head (2022) and Rosenbloom (2022) revealed that people are still involved in the democratic process as they are aware and still reacts to the policies that are implemented by the government.

Level of Political Decision-Making among the Residents of Davao del Norte

This study provided findings on the level of political awareness among residents of Asuncion, Davao del Norte. The following are the indicators: *rational choice decision-making*, *confirmatory decision-making*, *fast and frugal decision making*, *heuristic-based decision-making*, and *gut decision-making*. It suggests that the respondents have a great ability to make well-informed political decisions by weighing heuristics against logical analysis depending on loyalty and instinct on a different political party. Additionally, it implies that they can balance emotional and rational factors with careful evaluations before making political decisions at the same time, respondents are thoughtful and deliberate in their decision-making.

Further, this finding on political decision-making affirms the view of Jenke et al. (2020) which considered voters multiple factors in decision-making that includes candidate competence and personal values implying that political decisions involve careful evaluation rather than making impulsive decisions. The finding also supports the study of Webster et al. (2022), where respondents emotions also shape their political attitudes alongside cognitive judgement in making political decisions. Furthermore, this is also in line with the study of Lau et al. (2018) that citizens both often make thoughtful choices by combining rational and emotional consideration in the information they know about the government. Moreover, in the study of Sihombing and Ivanna (2024) and Arkorful et al. (2022), voters are adaptable and thoughtful in their decision-making and at the same time they carefully weigh their choices so that they can make more informed decisions may it be choosing leaders or even evaluating programs of the government.

Rational Choice-Decision Making. Its category mean is 4.26 which considered as very high. The mean rating ranges from 4.20 to 4.33. The item if they learn something about one candidate running for office, they try to find out the same information about other candidates is 4.20 which is described as very high while the item they find it important to carefully consider all likely alternatives whenever they are making a decision is 4.33, described as very high. This implies that the respondents place a high value on objectivity and thoroughness when making political decisions, demonstrate also a dedication do more evidence-based decisions in terms of choosing leaders.

Additionally, this finding is in support of the study of Héroux (2023) that voters find more information on candidates and related information for both then compare fairly before making choices. Further, Von et al. (2020) revealed that voters considered important issues which allows them to choose leaders based on facts, qualifications, and performance. Furthermore, Wang et al (2025) explained that many voters evaluate candidates based on their qualifications, facts about issues and other important information that needed to be considered before making choices in terms of political matters. Moreover, in the study of Baqutayan et al. (2024) and Uzonwanne (2023) voters carefully evaluate all possible options and information about candidate to make fair decision.

Confirmatory Decision-Making. As assessed by the respondents this category has a mean of 3.45 which is considered high. The mean rating ranges from 3.28 to 3.59. The mean rating of the item they usually see mostly good things about the candidates from my party and many bad things about the candidates from other parties is

3.28 described as high and the mean rating of the item all they need to know when making a tough political decision is what party a candidate belongs to is 3.59 which is described as high. This implies that the respondents have biases specifically on what party the candidates belong to and results to party-loyalty which may affect voting behavior.

Further, this result agrees with the claims of Green et al. (2019), which emphasized voters see more good things on the candidates on the political party they are associated with. Additionally, on the study of Mason (2022), political affiliation becomes part of a person's social identity and that voters favor candidates from their own political party, even when other information is available for consideration. Further, this is also supported by the study of Redlawsk et al. (2020), which voters are driven by what political party they are associated with in making political choices. The study of Okafor et al. (2022) and Christensen (2023) emphasized that voters favor information that confirms their pre-existing beliefs especially choosing candidates on the political party they support, making only slight adjustments to their opinions and choices.

Fast and Frugal Decision-Making. It reveals that its category mean is 3.66, which is described as high. The mean rating ranges from 3.62 to 3.71. Specifically, the item they make their decision by comparing the candidates on those one or two issues has a mean rating of 3.62 described as high and the item whenever they have to make a tough choice, they focus on the most important aspects of the decision and leave it at that has a mean rating of 3.71, described as high. This means that, the respondents simplify their political decisions by giving priority to the most crucial and important information they need to know that aligns with their views.

Additionally, this finding on fast and frugal decision-making conforms to the study of Lupia and McCubbins (2019), which highlighted that voters focus only with small number of issues and key information of candidates that shared with the same views with them and compare those before they make choices. The finding also supports the study of Popkin and Dimock (2018) that voters simplify their choices by only prioritizing on choosing candidates who shared the same views with them after comparing it to few issues. Further, this is in line with the study of Landa (2019), which emphasizes that voters focus only the most crucial and important information to simplify their way in deciding whose candidate they're going to choose through looking only into the most important issues that needed to be addressed by candidates. Furthermore, in the study of Ditonto et al. (2025) and Schoemaker (2025), voters tend to concentrate on a few but most important issues and easily accessible pieces of information then compare it if candidates meet their preferences and expectations.

Heuristic-Based Decision-Making. It reveals that the category mean is 3.18 described as moderate. The mean rating ranges from 3.02 to 3.46. The item in deciding how to vote, they follow the recommendations of people or groups they trust has a mean rating of 3.02 described as moderate and on the item choosing a familiar candidate is an easy way for them to make a reasonably good vote choice has a mean rating of 3.46, described as high. It implies that sometimes, respondents prefer to simplify or even shortened their approach in choosing leaders just to save time like choosing familiar and recommended which may result in less comprehensive evaluation to decision-making in politics.

Further, the heuristic-based decision-making affirms of Tóth and Chytilek (2018) that voters tend follow suggestions from people they trust in choosing leaders and judging issues. This result also confirms the study of Cunow et al. (2021), in which voters consider choosing candidates especially if they know it personally disregarding other considerations just to make faster decisions, even if this sometimes results in less comprehensive evaluations. Furthermore, this is consistent with the study of Walder and Strijbis (2023), which emphasizes that voters often rely on heuristics like familiar candidates in making choices. The study of Wynn et al. (2024) and Tunney (2024) revealed that voters use mental shortcuts or heuristics, such as endorsements from people they know, previous performance, or the candidate's attractiveness and familiarity, to make faster decisions.

Gut Decision-Making. It shows that its mean is 2.94 which is described as moderate on its item when making decisions, they usually just go with their gut. This means that sometimes, respondents make political decisions based more on intuition rather than examining thoroughly the choices they make which influenced by their personal experiences or individual biases.

Additionally, the result on gut decision-making aligns with the study of Christensen (2022) that voters tend to make simplified judgments or intuitive decisions when dealing with making political choices. The finding is also consistent with the study of Azrout and de Vreese (2018) that voters make voting decisions based on their intuitions and feelings towards political leaders. In addition, the findings of the study of Nasr (2021) showed that voters emotions and intuitive thoughts towards certain candidate which they feel like can contribute to the government. The study of Yasin et al. (2023) and Zhang et al. (2024), indicates that voters tend to use intuition, emotions, experience, or unconscious biases when casting their votes.

The Significance of the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

This study examined the significance of the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making. It revealed that despite the limited correlation between two variables, political awareness still plays a significant role in improving political decision-making. This implies that political decision-making may be improved by initiatives aimed at increasing political consciousness.

Further, this study finding supports the declaration of Bali (2023) which emphasized that political awareness is complex and affects political decisions in a deeper way than just mere involvement and that informed citizens use their knowledge in evaluating and making political choices. Additionally, Mair et al. (2019) supports this finding as it showed in their study that citizens who are well-informed and able to think critically are better in evaluating political options and making right decisions in politics. Further, Cramer et al. (2017) study findings emphasized that the level of awareness of individuals help them make more informed decisions in politics. In the study of Lee et al. (2021) and Weitz-Shapiro et al. (2017), citizens who are more informed tends to provide precise factual basis and can be more accurate in terms of making decisions in politics and citizens with higher awareness because of their educational background help them differentiate between credible and less credible information which will lead to a more accurate assessment of political leaders and can make appropriate choices in politics.

Moderating Effect of Sex on the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

This study delved into the moderating effect of sex on the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making among the respondents of Asuncion, Davao del Norte. It was found out that sex do not moderate the relationship between political awareness and political decision making. It implies that both men and women have similar political awareness which affects their political decision making.

Additionally, this finding contradicts the study of Fraile and Marinova (2024) which found that women tend to have lower internal political efficacy than men. Similarly, the result contrast with the study of Ferrín et al. (2022), which revealed that men and women differ in their responses to political knowledge questions, as women tend to take longer to confess when they do not know the answer, which is linked to variations in confidence and information processing. Additionally, this doesn't support the study of Fortin and Ramstetter (2021) discussed that men tend to have higher scores than women in terms of political knowledge in Europe which suggests that sex influences confidence in choices in politics as well as political engagement. Further, the study of Kulachi et al. (2023) and Schneider and DiFilippo (2022), emphasized that men and women have different level of political awareness, different way in making political decisions and considerations of choosing political leaders as men are more of looking into factors which will not be influenced easily with personal biases.

Moderating Effect of Educational Attainment on the Relationship between Political Awareness and Political Decision-Making

This study explores the moderating effect of educational attainment on the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making among the respondents of Asuncion, Davao del Norte. The result indicates that an individual's educational attainment specifically high school and elementary graduate individuals' moderates the relationship between political awareness and political decision making. This implies that high school and elementary graduates have different political awareness which affect their political decision making.

Further, this finding from the study is consistent with the work of Larreguy and Liu (2024) found that education leads to greater political participation because it enhances people's information, knowledge, and confidence in political activities. This implies that education enables citizens to be more informed and competent to make rational political decisions. Further, the findings also supported the study of Weinschenk and Dawes (2019), who found that the more education an individual has their political knowledge is enhanced, which enables them to understand political issues and make decisions based on the information they have. Moreover, the study conducted by Jamal et al. (2025) also highlighted the importance of political awareness in participating, as first-time voters who have more information about political issues tend to be more actively involved and make well-informed and responsible decisions.

Furthermore, in the study of Hansen and Tyner (2021) and Ahearn et al. (2023) found that people with higher educational attainment tend to take part in the electoral process because education enhances their sense of civic duty, political interest, and engagement. This research states that education not only equips people with the knowledge and skills to engage in the political process, but it also enables people to develop social networks and values that promote active engagement in the political process, which results in more responsible and informed political decisions.

In line with the Rational Theory of Becker (1976), the findings of the study suggest that individuals make political decisions based on careful evaluation and consideration rather than relying solely on demographic factors. Rational Choice Theory proposed that individuals make decisions by gathering information, weighing alternatives, and choosing the option that maximizes their benefits and, in this study, aligns with the idea voters effectively make political decisions depends more on political awareness than sex alone and educational attainment.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the demographic profile, political awareness, and political decision-making of residents, as well as the relationship between these variables. The findings revealed that most respondents were female and largely college graduates, indicating a relatively educated population. The results showed that residents have a very high level of political awareness and a high level of political decision-making. This suggests that they are well-informed about political matters and tend to make careful, rational choices, particularly in selecting leaders and participating in community activities.

Additionally, the study also found a significant positive relationship between political awareness and political decision-making, highlighting that greater political knowledge leads to more informed and reliable decisions. Further, sex was found to have no moderating effect, indicating that both males and females respond similarly in this relationship. However, educational attainment showed a moderating effect, suggesting that individuals with higher education are better able to evaluate political information and make sound decisions.

Furthermore, since the level of political awareness among residents of the Municipality of Asuncion was found very high, the Local Government Unit of Asuncion and other concerned agencies like Commission on Elections may retain and sustain and as well as strengthen their campaigns in making sure that the voters are still well-informed with information they need to know in politics. Moreover, given that educational attainment was found to significantly moderate the relationship between political awareness and political decision-making, schools and other learning centers may integrate lessons about political literacy in all levels.

Overall, the study underscores the importance of continuous voter education and equal access to political information, as well as the role of education in enhancing citizens' ability to make informed political decisions. For future research, may consider integrating interviews or focus groups to capture the lived experiences behind quantitative trends.

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