

# Mental Well-Being and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters in Relation to Their Political Orientation

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**Abstract:** - This study aims to know the relationship between mental well-being and life satisfaction to Political Orientation of Filipino voters. It answers the following questions, what the political orientation of Filipino voters in terms of their cognitive, evaluative, and affective orientation is, the state of the mental well-being of Filipino voters, their level of life satisfaction, the relationship between mental well-being and life satisfaction to the political orientation of Filipino voters. The researchers used quantitative and correlational research design to determine if there is a relationship between mental well-being and life satisfaction to Political orientation. They used self-made political orientation questionnaires, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale, and the Satisfaction with Life Scale. The researchers collected the data with questionnaires. It was found that there is moderate positive correlation between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters to their Political Orientation ( $r = .603, n = 100, p = .001$ ). This implies that the moderate positive correlation between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters is significant. It shows that mental well-being and life happiness are important variables in Filipino voters' political orientation. When viewed as whole, the findings revealed substantial link between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction in the Political Orientation of Filipino Voters. This study may serve as a wake-up call to continue exploring, including, and accepting that mental well-being is a part of Filipino health and a reminder of how the actions of the government may affect the mental well-being, life satisfaction, and orientations of the citizens.

**Keywords:** Political Orientation, Mental Well-being, Life Satisfaction, Filipino Voters, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale, Satisfaction with Life Scale

## I. Introduction

The latest results of the concluded elections were done in the middle of a pandemic and have been a rollercoaster of emotions for Filipinos as they are excited to know who won in various positions and if their voted candidates won. Some are pleased, and some are not with the concluded election results, as Filipinos' feelings and opinions towards the government differ from one person to another (Velmonte, 2019). According to Rodolfo (2021), Filipino voters cast their votes in the minds of our countrymen and with good cause. It is their chance to play a part in the future of the Philippines, as elections only happen every six years. Election outcomes may not have an immediate impact, but they will, for better or worse, in six years. Voters actively contribute to guaranteeing an equal and uncorrupted political process, assisting local communities, and establishing a nation as more and more of them are persuaded to vote through organizational campaigns, family influence, or social media. The pandemic became a wake-up call for everybody all around the world. This is where citizens realize how important their votes are (Beilstein et al., 2021), the importance of mental health (Arevalo et al., 2022), and life satisfaction in their country (Dymecka et al., 2021).

According to Knudsen (2021), studying political orientation is crucial because it influences what sorts of future worries citizens have and what problems are brought to the attention of formal political decision-makers. The theory of Almond and Verba (1963) is used in this study as a definition of political orientation. It discussed culture as a group of the distributed orientation of each individual towards the government. They have three categorizations of orientation. These are cognitive, evaluative, and affective. Cognitive orientation refers to the knowledge and the belief of the person towards the government, and Affective orientation refers to the feelings of a person towards the government. Lastly, Evaluative orientation refers to the person's judgment toward the government. The study utilizes these orientations as how the citizens view the government of the Philippines. In order to effectively function, a democratic country citizen's needs to share a set of fundamental beliefs and perspective towards different problems in the society, hence the importance of studying the orientation of the citizens regarding to the political system because it will help to determine the impact they have on political participation and can also be a new factor in explaining political behavior (Pastrana Valls, 2018).

According to Park et al. (2010), as cited by Yalnizca-Yildirim and Cenkseven-Önder (2022), mental well-being includes our inner workings and how we express how we feel in our lives. In general, despite ups and downs, mental well-being is the

condition of thriving in different aspects of life, such as relationships, jobs, recreation, and so on. It is the understanding that we are apart from our difficulties and can deal with them. The World Health Organization (2022), states that Mental well-being affects anyone. No matter if the person is young or old, they can experience good or bad mental well-being. It conceptualizes that good mental well-being is a part of a person's behavior that results in being happy, healthy, and meaningful. According to Nortje (2022), Mental well-being has different definitions, and it is complicated to define because each person has a different intake of external and internal environment hence the different definitions of being mentally well. In her study, she also defined mental well-being as a part of subjective well-being, which means that it is the individual's own perception and evaluation of life. Mental Well-being has been considered a low-salience issue before, and because of Covid-19, the public has started to focus more on its importance and continues to urge the government to take action (UN NEWS, 2020). The study of Mental well-being and politics is considered new, hence the recent appearance of literature that links mental well-being and politics, but this research mainly focuses on different spectrums, such as depression and political predisposition (Bernardi, 2020) and depression and attitudes (Bernardi & Johns, 2020). According to Maravilla and Tan (2021), there is a relationship between the orientation and mental health of Filipinos, such as uncertainty and distrust of the government's capability to manage the financial needs of the citizen makes them unhappy and shapes the orientation such as distrust of a citizen that affects their decision making as well. This shows that the government's action directly affects how the citizens think about the government, hence its influence on the citizen's mental well-being and orientation.

"A person's cognitive and affective judgments of his or her life" have been characterized as "life satisfaction"; it is when a person perceives their life as a whole, meaningful, and achieved its purpose (Diener et al., 2021). Life satisfaction, purpose, and hope are essential aspects influencing an individual's thoughts and sentiments in dangerous situations. Furthermore, these characteristics influence how the current and future are assessed if the risk persists for an extended period of time and people's quality of life begins to degrade. Higher levels of life pleasure and purpose can help people manage harmful abnormalities. It is also recognized as one of the essential measures of one's well-being. Societal issues such as poverty, unemployment, and an inadequate response to the needs of the citizens significantly affect the mental well-being of the Filipinos, which leads to low life-satisfaction in the Philippines and results in migration to another country to support their family (Castro-Palaganas et al., 2017). According to Ward (2019), subjective well-being is defined as the happiness and satisfaction of the citizens in a country. In her study, she concluded that people who are happy and content in life show lower interest in politics (e.g., political issues, political activities, and participation) because they already reach the comfortableness of life.

The gaps that the researchers encountered are the lack of literature that is connected to the study, as most of the studies that the researcher stumbled upon mainly focused on the relationship between mental well-being and life satisfaction (Lombardo et al., 2018) and political participation (Mukti Tyasmoro et al., 2022; He et al., 2022), and a small literature have studied the correlation of mental well-being and life satisfaction together with political orientation. Very little research to date has explicitly considered the influence of life satisfaction on political orientation —treating life satisfaction as an independent variable as most research utilized life satisfaction as a dependent variable, such as politics and well-being (Mukti Tyasmoro et al., 2022) and government response to urgency and life satisfaction (Abbas et al., 2022). The study aims to find the relationship between Mental well-being and Life satisfaction, Political Orientation and the political orientation of Filipino voters.

## II. Theoretical Framework

According to Almond and Verba (1963), Civic Culture is a set of political views, practices, feelings, and behaviors relevant to the democratic regime's performance. This political culture refers to how people perceive the political system as a whole as well as their belief in its legitimacy rather than views toward particular prominent politicians, such as a president or prime minister. Culture plays a vital role in citizens and their own country, especially if the system of the country's government is democratic, where people can exercise their rights to participate through voting. Meanwhile, citizens sometimes do not participate in politics, yet they know their political rights and the consequences of decisions that influence their lives and society.

This study aims to know the relationship between mental well-being and life satisfaction to the political orientation of Filipino voters. Moreover, this study attempts to identify answers to the following sub-problem:

1. What is the Political Orientation of Filipino Voters in terms of their:
  - a. cognitive orientation;
  - b. evaluative orientation; and
  - c. affective orientation?
2. What is the level of mental well-being of Filipino Voters?
3. What is the level of life satisfaction of Filipino Voters?

4. Is there a significant relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction?
5. What is the relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction to Political Orientation of Filipino Voters?

**Theoretical Framework**

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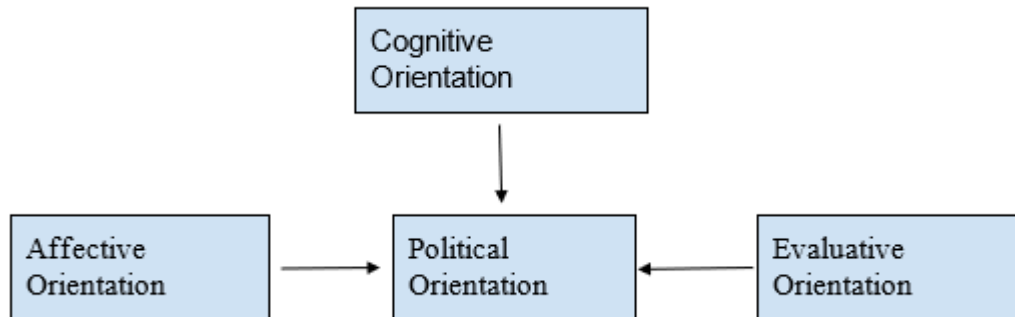


Figure 1. Political Culture Theory “Civic Culture” by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963)

It explains in civic culture the specific distribution of political object orientation patterns among a nation's people. In other ways, they connected the political culture and the individuals' affective cognitions and evaluations. The three (3) types of attitudes in political orientation; cognitive, affective, and evaluative. According to this theory, cognitive orientation is related to understanding and knowledge of the political system, including its roles, information, and outcomes. Affective orientation is about viewpoints on the political system based on feelings, duties, values, and knowledge. And lastly, evaluative orientation is based on assessments and views about specific political objects, the input and output processes, their occupants, and their performance. Despite its broadness, the primary role of the political orientation is to simplify the political environment so that people can make decisions about politics (such as voting) with relative ease (Lep & Kirbis, 2021). It is done by comparing the leadership roles of political parties or candidates with their views and perceptions.

This theory implies Filipino voters and how their attitude understands the government toward political orientation. Filipino shape the orientation that influences their decision-making and become more aware. This is where Filipinos realize their votes' importance (Beilstein et al., 2021). Moreover, this is not being participated only yet to be politically oriented. It may not only prefer to accept the left-right wing, the liberal and conservative. The structure does not perfectly capture everything about politics (Millard, 2021). The subsequent political orientation helps to categorize the attitude of Filipino voters toward the government.

**Conceptual Framework**

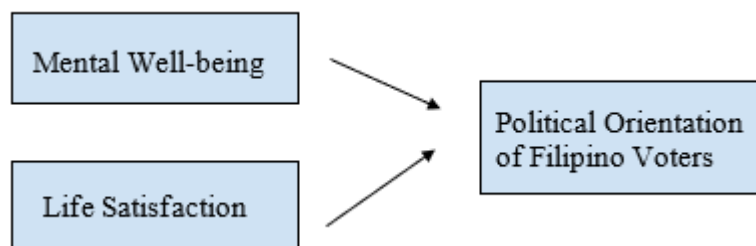


Figure 2 Relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction to Political Orientation of Filipino Voters

This conceptual framework represents the process flow of being studied to determine the relationship between the variables. This study investigates the relationship between Filipino voters' mental well-being, life satisfaction, and political orientation. This study investigated the relationship between mental well-being and life satisfaction and registered voters' political

orientation during the post-election system in the context of the Philippine voting culture. Mental health refers to "mental health is a state of mental well-being that allows people to cope with stressful experiences, realize their abilities, learn and work effectively, and contribute to their local community" (WHO, 2022).

Furthermore, factors such as Filipinos' satisfaction with the government's ability to meet their needs and the country's economy in which they live can impact one's mental well-being (Jackson, 2019; Maravilla & Tan, 2021).

Meanwhile, there are several working definitions of life satisfaction, including one proposed by well-being and life satisfaction researcher Ed Diener. Subjective well-being is classified as "an individual's affective and cognitive assessment of his or her life," with self-reported life satisfaction serving as an indicator (Pavot & Diener, 1993, as cited by Bakkeli, 2021). Another interpretation of life satisfaction is "an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes toward one's life at a specific point in time, varying from negative to positive" (Buetell, 2017; Daily, 2020).

According to Badri et al. (2017), life satisfaction and mental well-being are often synonymously used. Most people regard life satisfaction as an assessment of one's life. Life satisfaction usually reflects our overall attitude toward our lives. It is an essential aspect of health and mental well-being that forms the basis of our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, form relationships, and shape the world. Furthermore, multidimensional factors contribute to life satisfaction and well-being, such as government performance, personal relationships, and other factors. According to the World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews (2021), life satisfaction is a link to psychological well-being and how the government or political institution works.

It shows that the variables above correlate with each other, which supports the concept above that can help to connect mental well-being and life satisfaction to the political orientation of Filipino voters.

### III. Method

The researchers collected quantitative data and evaluated the findings using a quantitative research design and correlational design. The researchers used quantitative research design as it is our aim to determine if mental well-being and life satisfaction affects the Filipino voters, it also produces data that can be clearly communicated through statistics and numbers. Given the nature of this instrument, correlational analysis is used for discovering if there is a relationship between the variables that have been assessed (Mental well-being, life satisfaction, and political orientation) and how strong that relationship may be. This study embodies purposive sampling that helps the researchers identify the right participants for this research. Purposive sampling, also known as "critical, specific, or subjective sampling," is a non-probability sampling method in which samples are chosen based on population characteristics and the goals of the study Crossman (2020). The researchers applied the purposive sampling to effectively choose participants who meet the requirements for this study.

The researchers formed criteria to provide the literature collected was relevant and credible to the study. The following are based on the requirements needed for the study:

**Source of Information:** If the literature is from existing research that can provide information about the Relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction of Political Orientation Among Filipino Voters.

**Year of Publication:** If the related literature or journal is published between 2017 and 2022.

**Content:** If the literature or the source provides information about; First Political Orientation. Second, the level of mental well-being of Filipino Voters. Next, the level of life satisfaction of Filipino Voters. Then the relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction. Lastly, the relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction to the Political Orientation of Filipino Voters.

The researcher utilized the questionnaires with Three (3) parts to gather the needed data. Part I is self-made questionnaire, the tool for political orientation with the guide of "Civic Culture" (Almond and Verba, 1963). The three (3) political orientations are used when creating questionnaires with subparts to determine the respondents' cognitive, affective, or evaluative answers with Cronbach's alpha coefficient = 0.93. used the Likert Scale question, which often has a four-pointer scale for choosing the respondents and how much they strongly agree or strongly disagree.

Part II is about the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). The WEMWBS is a 14-item scale that measures psychological functioning and subjective well-being (Taggart et al., 2015). In the study of Ringdal et al. (2018), with a net sample size of  $n = 1814$ , questionnaires were distributed to students from five middle schools in Norway using cross-sectional data. The Cronbach's alpha for the WEMWBS was .93. Each item's response on the scale, which ranges from 1 to 5, is added to determine the score (Taggart et al., 2015).

Part III is the Satisfaction with Life Scale, a 5-item scale created to measure global cognitive judgment of one's life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985). The study of Gokalp and Topal (2019), this project used a non-probabilistic sample from the

general population for a cross-sectional investigation. With .84 item-total correlation of the items varied between .57 and .64. In this part, the desired participants indicated and used the scale of how much they agree or disagree with five items formed with the use of a 7-point scale that ranges from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree.

After achieving the purpose of the study, the researchers spent much time brainstorming and cooperating in preparing the questionnaire to enable the study to measure participants when identifying mental well-being and life satisfaction of political orientation among Filipino voters. The survey contained questions made by the researchers with validation of professionals who fit in this study. After the validation, the researcher authorizes the questionnaire to the professor to formally start. Before proceeding with the questionnaires provided, the respondents have the right to continue or not the survey. Consent was provided, and the respondents answered the prepared questionnaires after agreeing. The researchers collected the survey online when the respondents completed the questionnaires. The researchers wished that the study could be of great help in correlating between mental well-being and life satisfaction of political orientation among Filipino voters.

**IV. Results and Discussion**

This chapter discusses the results and findings that the researchers gathered and discusses the interpretation of the data gathered. The information presented in this section is based on 100 Filipino voter's respondents to a survey.

**Table 1.** Political Orientations of Filipino Voters

	Political Orientation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Cognitive Orientation	3.51	0.430	High Cognitive Orientation
2	Evaluative Orientation	3.48	0.462	High Evaluative Orientation
3	Affective orientation	2.71	0.234	Moderate Affective Orientation
	<b>Overall Mean =</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>0.633</b>	<b>Moderate Orientation</b>

Table 1 shows the political orientations of Filipino voters through descriptive statistics.

The overall mean is 3.23 interpreted as “Moderate Orientation” and has a standard deviation of 0.633. With the calculated mean score of all items, this means that the moderately high mean scores indicate moderate political orientation by the Filipino voter-respondents.

**Table 2.** Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters

	Total Score	Interpretation
Mental Well-being	47.73	Average
Life Satisfaction	21.80	Slightly Satisfied

Table 2 shows the level of mental well-being of Filipino voters in terms of descriptive statistics. With relevant items reverse-scored, the overall score is 47.73 interpreted as “Average Mental Well-Being”. With the calculated score of all items, this means that the average scores indicate an average level of mental well-being of Filipino voters. Furthermore, it shows the level of life satisfaction of Filipino voters through descriptive statistics. The overall score is 21.80 interpreted as “Slightly Satisfied”. With the calculated score of all items, this means that the all score indicates that Filipino voters are slightly satisfied with their lives.

**Table 3.** Relationship between Political Orientation, Mental Well-Being, and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters

		<i>PO</i>	<i>MWB</i>	<i>LS</i>
<i>Political Orientation</i>	Correlation	1	.236*	.331**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.018	.001
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100
<i>Mental Well-being</i>	Correlation	.236*	1	.603**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018		.001

	<i>N</i>	100	100	100
<i>Life Satisfaction</i>	Correlation	.331**	.603**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001	
	<i>N</i>	100	100	100

Note: \*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the relationship between Political Orientation, Mental Well-Being, and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters using the Pearson *r* correlation coefficient analysis. There is a weak positive correlation between Political Orientation and Mental Well-Being of Filipino Voters ( $r = .236, n = 100, p = .018$ ). Since the *p*-value is less than 0.05 this means that it is statistically significant with the indicated *p*-value equal to .018, this implies that there is a significant relationship between Political Orientation and Mental Well-Being of Filipino Voters. Further, there is a moderate positive correlation between Political Orientation and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters ( $r = .331, n = 100, p = .001$ ). Since the *p*-value is less than 0.05 this means that it is statistically significant with the indicated *p*-value equal to .001, this implies that there is a significant relationship between Political Orientation and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters. Finally, there is a moderate positive correlation between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters ( $r = .603, n = 100, p = .001$ ). Since the *p*-value is less than 0.05 this means that it is statistically significant with the indicated *p*-value equal to .001, this implies that there is a significant relationship between Mental Well-being and Life Satisfaction of Filipino Voters.

The result of table 3 supports the study of Apostol and Agbuya (2022) which stated that the mental well-being of citizens is correlated with the quality of the government they are in, which means happy people have a government that is responsive, has access to healthcare benefits, is inclusive, and has a good economy. Consistent with the result of the study of Maravilla and Tan (2021) where they emphasized that Mental well-being is a person feelings towards the government actions and concluded that in studying the mental well-being of the citizen it will also reflect the government's capability, they also stated that factors such as low employment rate, inadequate response towards the urgency for education, excessive debt, and poverty affects the happiness, and these factors are what Filipinos mainly experienced. It implies that Filipino voters' personal mental well-being are affected by different factors such as government actions hence the correlation with their political orientation.

According to Ward (2019), subjective well-being is defined as the happiness and satisfaction of the citizens in a country, in her study she concluded that people who are happy and content in life results into showing lower interest in politics (e.g., political issues, political activities, and participation) because they already reach the comfortableness of life. On the contrary, where people experience poverty, lack of education, and unemployment that affects their entire life and makes them distrust the current government, hence the reason for eagerness to call for a change of administration (Castro-Palaganas et al., 2017). It implies that Filipino voters value their own and family's life satisfaction, hence having a high/low satisfaction correlates with their political orientation.

Furthermore, the result of table 3 agreed with the study of Flavin and Pacek (2014), as cited by Ng et al. (2017), stated that people who have good mental well-being which is labeled as being happy and good life satisfaction have a significant effect on political activities which includes political preference and voting. Therefore, individuals who perceive their life as comfortable, happy, and balanced are evident in their choice of candidate and their motivation to vote. Szabó et al. (2017) found that, regardless of political orientation, maintenance of life satisfaction and well-being plays an important role in the enhancement of a strong ideological stance of people.

The result shows that mental well-being and life satisfaction both have a significant relationship to the political relationship of Filipino voters, this indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that Filipino voters evaluate their own feelings, capability, and ability as well as their overall situation in life, that affects their family and future, to what they have achieved so far and to the things they have not, and if they are happy or not as a citizen in the Philippines. The two variables have a relationship and became one of the many factors that Filipino voters had when changing Political orientation.

According to Lombardo et al. (2018), who explore the relationship of mental well-being and life satisfaction, where they concluded that in any other factors the mental health of a person has a strong relationship towards the life satisfaction of a person. The result also supports the study of Iram et al. (2021), that stated individuals who have a healthy mental well-being have the upper hand and able to take in control over their surroundings as well as having a strong sense of self-worth, they can communicate with other people well, and they know their purpose which contributes largely to their life satisfaction. This implies that having an

average mental well-being such as knowing one's own capabilities, feeling of happiness, and love, or the other way around have a significant relationship towards the level of satisfaction among Filipino voters. The practical implication of these findings is to urge the government and citizens into developing policies that include the importance of mental well-being as a part of overall health, this includes the prevention and intervention of mental illnesses in order to improve the quality of life of Filipino voters. Lastly, this study provides additional literature by providing different factors that may affect the decision making of Filipino voters, such as their current mental well-being and life satisfaction living here in the Philippines.

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## V. Conclusion

Based on the result of this research paper, the following conclusions were made:

1. Filipino voters tend to appraise political matters from a cognitive perspective; they evaluate political issues using a more rational approach most of the time.
2. Filipino voters seem to have a relatively functional mental well-being; they can solve problems with relative ease, and they are capable to decide clearly after cognitive-oriented evaluations of political issues. It shows that Filipino voters can function and make healthy choices as citizens in the Philippines for the betterment of themselves and for the people around them.
3. Filipino voters appear to be slightly satisfied with their life; this implies that they know to themselves that they still have more things to do and to achieve but still appreciate what they have already surpassed, and they are happy with it.
4. Mental well-being and life satisfaction are statistically correlated and are considered important factors by Filipino voters in terms of their political orientation.

## VI. Recommendations

In view of further findings, this study's significance, and conclusions arrived, the following recommendations are shown:

1. **To Filipino Voters**, the result of the study can be used as a basis and awareness of the importance of decision-making and voting. As the variable orientations towards the government's role and function are highly elaborated in this study, Filipino voters will be able to assess their orientation and how these affect them. It is an eye-opener that being politically oriented is the big step to understanding and being knowledgeable of the society to which they belong. Despite difficulties and challenges in life, mental well-being could also start with understanding and considering thoughts and feelings daily. It is subjective well-being. It has stances that mental health could be high or low. Even so, it is the start of enlightenment that can benefit Filipino voters when it comes to stereotyping and stigma that mental health matters.

2. **To future Filipino voters**, the result of the study can be used as a guide to comprehend further being politically oriented. In addition, it can benefit them to analyze and assess the whole real-life situation. It is a big step to examine the society they belong to have more precise knowledge and understanding of mental well-being and life satisfaction in politics.
3. **Future Researchers** should focus not only on political orientation and mental well-being but also on life satisfaction, which depends on being slightly satisfied. Even though the hardships in life still did not attain their purpose or meaning, the result also indicated that they were slightly satisfied. This could add the socio-demographic profile as the independent variable, and the dependent variables are mental well-being and life satisfaction to understand further and explore the factors of having a life satisfaction that is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Moreover, future Researchers could further expand the study to impart the enhancement of mental well-being and life satisfaction to the political orientation of Filipino voters. It is an added study for many researchers to be more aware and curious to explore what could benefit the Filipino voters and the Philippine government. For future studies, the researcher recommends further exploring how being politically oriented could benefit the Philippines in the long run.
4. **To the academe**, they could benefit in this study since the findings provide insight into Filipino voters' current political orientation toward government. It can also help in psychology research to further understand and determine the mental well-being and life satisfaction toward the attitude in political orientation.
5. **The Philippine government** could take time to assess how these two factors work and the root of their citizens' good/bad mental well-being and satisfied/dissatisfied life because it reflects on how they are doing their role as a government. It benefits how Filipino voters are influential and helps the republican and democratic country have a politically aware and politically oriented society. The Philippines recognized the importance of mental well-being amidst Covid-19 where all people, with high/low satisfaction experience different situations that challenge their mental well-being, but especially to those who consider their life as low satisfaction, the effect may not be compared to the same level with high satisfaction. This study may serve as a wake-up call to continue exploring, including, and accepting that mental well-being is a part of Filipino citizens' health and a reminder of how the actions of the government may affect the mental well-being, life satisfaction, and orientations of the citizens.

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