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Level of Political Awareness: Its Impact on the Civic Engagement and Political Behavior of the Youth amidst Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Aim: This study determined the level of political awareness of the youth and its relation to their civic engagement and political behavior amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology: This study used a descriptive-correlation method of research involving 130 senior high school students from Lutucan Integrated National High School during the school year 2022-2023. Purposive sampling was employed to select the representative of the population such that students belonging to senior high school are a big part of the youth. Adapted-modified survey questionnaire was utilized to gather the needed data.

Results: Under the level of political awareness of the youth, respondents' political awareness in terms of political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic obtained the highest mean of 4.09. Students are aware of the importance of political leaders in handling the COVID-19 crisis. On the other hand, the level of civic engagement of the youth during the pandemic in terms of collective action had the highest mean of 3.75. Respondents are engaged in encouraging others in promoting a healthy and safe community in light of the pandemic. Moreover, communication of interests and opinions through online platforms under the level of political behavior of the youth considering the pandemic got the highest mean of 3.13. Respondents are moderately practicing how to stop misinformation specifically about the COVID-19 pandemic by reporting fake news on Facebook. The results of the test of correlation between the political awareness of the youth and their civic engagement indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the respondents' level of political awareness and their civic engagement during COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, there is no significant correlation between the political awareness of the youth and their political behavior. The r-values indicate that the respondents' level of political awareness has no significant relationship to their political behavior considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion: There is a significant relationship between the level of political awareness and the civic engagement of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic. This suggests that as the youths' political awareness increases, the level of civic engagement also increases. On the other hand, the level of political awareness is not significantly related to the political behavior of the youth amidst COVID-19. It can be drawn that the level of youths' political awareness does not affect the level of political behavior and is not associated with the increased and/or decreased level of political behavior.

Keywords: political awareness, civic engagement, political behavior, youth, covid-19

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is marked by advancements in technology and education and so the young generation and the youth of today are exposed to mass media whether written, broadcast, or spoken. A large percentage comprises the youth with about 28.9% of the total population (2020 Census of Population and Housing). They gain updates on the different social media platforms and are very vocal when it comes to sharing their point of view on a variety of political activities they heard, saw, and witnessed.

The youth's role in nation-building was highlighted in the 1987 Philippine Constitution Article II, Section 13 which states: "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote their physical,



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intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs." Moreover, Section 2 of the Republic Act 8044 also known as the "Youth in Nation-Building Act" states that the State recognizes its responsibility to enable the youth to fulfill their vital role in nation-building and hereby establishes the National Comprehensive and Coordinated Program on Youth Development, which creates the structures to implement the same and appropriate adequate funds to provide support for the program and implementing structures on a continuing sustained basis.

According to Paul Goren, political awareness denotes intellectual or cognitive engagement with public affairs, as an involvement that is indicated by factual information about the government that has gotten into people's minds (Goren, 2012).

Political awareness, defined as knowledge about political events, campaigns, parties, elections, and salient issues, is the simplest measure of political sophistication (Berinsky 2006; Converse 1964). It also indicates the propensity to participate politically, because, without political awafyouthrethness, effective civic participation is unlikely to occur in the first place (Galston 2004; Abdo-Katsipis 2017).

The study of political awareness is needed for any democratic political construction that respects human rights and fundamental liberties (Althubetat and Jarrar, 2013). Fortunately, learning the Philippine Constitution is now part of the curricula at all levels of instruction in all schools under Art XIV, Sec. 3 (1). Discussions such as fundamental rights and privileges, the basic concepts of the government such as the branches, and procedures and processes of Philippine politics are included. They need to keep themselves informed about political issues, the functions of political institutions, and more importantly their political rights and their role as political participants (Kuotsu, 2016). On the other hand, it is also necessary to have some awareness not only of the political institutions and the process of politics but also about the issues, as added by Kuotsu.

On the other hand, the non-inclusiveness of younger people to the discussion in politics may affect their awareness of politics. On November 26, 2017, Rev. Fr. Ambrose Ugo said that the non-inclusiveness of the youth in politics dawdles the improvement of many countries in the world, including Africa, remarkably. The leaders in the country are fundamentally characterized as "selfish, opulent, and wealthy people." The short-term goals of the country's leaders give little justification to the essence of the youth's collaboration with leaders to advance a country's state. To give importance to the youth's compliance, Fr. Ambrose said that a nation with zero or 30% youth activeness in politics will always experience growth and developmental sluggishness in the system. Ambrose suggested the youth be included in political matters, as well as have a say in politics if a change is desired to overcome the slow development recorded by countries yearly (Sunday, 2017). The youth need to keep themselves informed about political issues, functions of political institutions, and more importantly their political rights and their role as political participants (Kuotsu, 2016).

In an article written by Maboloc (2015), he proved that the participation of the youth is significant in carrying out social reform. In addition, politics must begin with the choice of the right principles, but people end up debating about unique personalities and attributes. The youth is called responsible for the right thing to do read books and thrive in education, all for the advancement of the country. Without proper education, democracy would mean nothing. The young Filipino voter must also give proper importance to thinking, most especially in making a choice, as the future of the country is reliant on the young.

Bearing this in mind, the researcher became interested in evaluating the level of political awareness of the youth, and its impact on their civic engagement and political behavior.

The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly affected the lives of many people. The effect of this global pandemic transcends all the aspects of human life from health and safety, daily living, economic aspects, and education to their holistic being significantly affecting physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and mental health.

According to a guide note formed by the Compact for the Young People in Humanitarian Action, one of the distinguishing lessons of the COVID-19 epidemic has been that elderly people are more susceptible. Nonetheless, the health and non-health effects on young people are enormous. The pandemic response requires a shared awareness of these effects and the role that young people are playing in developing solutions. Direct and indirect health repercussions on adolescents and youth will likely worsen when the epidemic expands to low- and lower-middle-income nations, which have disproportionately high populations of young people and considerably poorer health systems. This widespread disruption of learning, including non-formal and informal learning, has the potential to have serious repercussions, ranging from impairing nutrition to limiting access to health care, increasing dropout rates, and depriving young people of social support and resources. For adolescents and youth, connecting is key to their sense of belonging and overall well-being. Long-term confinement and isolation from educational spaces will erode the social support networks young people build with each other.



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Given the present circumstances, a large percentage of the youth are being hindered from political participation and civic engagements due to safety protocols and physical distancing measures. A lot of activities were put on hold considering the lockdowns and quarantines in response to the COVID-19 situation. Awareness of the said global pandemic is hindering the youth's role in response to the global pandemic seeing much fake news online and the inconsistencies of statistical data and statements they have heard, seen, or read.

Young people have played leading roles in a growing number of mass protests around the world, fighting for change in governance structures, economic inequalities, democratic inclusion, response to climate change, and more. Physical distancing has put many of these protests on hold, potentially undermining progress to date. All young people, including adolescents below the age of 18, should enjoy their rights to participation, rights that should be upheld in humanitarian crises, fragile contexts, and the current COVID-19 crisis. As is being increasingly recognized, it is precisely in these settings that investing in and tapping into the power of adolescent participation, and acknowledging their role as rights-holders, can make a difference to improve the quality and impact of humanitarian responses (Compact for the Young People in Humanitarian Action). Since the detrimental effects of the global pandemic have forced the youth to stay at home and follow the safety protocols even involved with a variety of concerning issues, particularly men's health and education, still, the youth's participation and engagement in different activities online as the primary way of communication of interests and opinions which also promotes freedom of expression and civic engagements virtually were seen evident albeit faced with the hindrances caused by COVID-19.

Active civic and political participation among the youth was seen during the pre-pandemic times and the researcher intends to know the activities that the youths are engaging in considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Questions

This study focused on the Level of Political awareness and its relation to Civic Engagement and Political Behavior of the youth amidst Covid-19 Pandemic.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of Political Awareness of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. public policies created during the pandemic;
 - 1.2. political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic;
 - 1.3. political institutions primarily responsible for handling the pandemic;
 - 1.4. political processes during the pandemic; and
 - 1.5. political issues and current events in politics highlighting the global pandemic?
2. What is the level of Civic Engagement of the respondents during the pandemic in terms of:
 - 2.1. volunteering;
 - 2.2. community service; and
 - 2.3. collective action?
3. What is the level of Political Behavior among the youth considering the pandemic in terms of:
 - 3.1. voting;
 - 3.2. political activism;
 - 3.3. communication of interests and opinions through online platforms; and
 - 3.4. public forums and discussions?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the Level of Political Awareness and Civic Engagement of the respondents?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the Level of Political Awareness and Political Behavior of the respondents?

Hypothesis

Given the stated research problem, the following hypotheses were tested on 0.05 level of significance:

Hypothesis 1: The Level of Political Awareness is not significantly related to the Civic Engagement of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis 2: The Level of Political Awareness is not significantly related to the Political Behavior of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic.



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METHODS

Research Design

This study used the descriptive-correlational research design in assessing the impact of political awareness on civic engagement and political behavior of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic. Correlational research is useful when the goal is to examine the relationships between two or more random variables within the same population or between the same variables in two different populations (Curtis, Comiskey, & Dempsey, 2016). The researcher aims to know the relationship of the youth's political awareness in terms of public policies created during the pandemic, political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic, political institutions primarily responsible for handling the pandemic, political processes during the pandemic, political issues and current events in politics highlighting the global pandemic to their civic engagement during the pandemic in terms volunteering, community service and collective action as well as their political behavior considering the pandemic terms of voting, political activism, communication of interests and opinions thru online platforms, and public forums and discussions through a quantitative design using the descriptive method. The impact will be assessed by providing a specific treatment determining whether there is a significant relationship between the level of political awareness of the youth and their civic engagement and political behavior or proven.

Population and Sampling

This study measured the level of political awareness and its impact on civic engagement and political behavior among the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 130 Senior High School students were selected as the respondents of the study. The youth subjected to survey questioning in the study were students who belong to the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) Strand at Lutucan Integrated National High School. Purposive sampling was employed to select the representative of the population. The respondents were selected purposely to draw conclusions from the youths' perception level of political awareness, civic engagement, and political behavior. Students belonging to senior high school are a big part of the youth and the researcher intended to know the activities and actions they are engaged in during the pandemic and other variables contributing to active participation. The questionnaire administered examines the political awareness, civic engagement, and political behavior of the youth which taps varied subjects of senior high school students under Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) Strand.

Instrument

A survey questionnaire consisting of 4 sections was employed in this study. The first section included questions concerning the personal profile of respondents such as name, age, gender, address, and civil. The second part consisted of 35- item questions for the level of political awareness of the respondents amidst COVID-19 pandemic with the following parameters: public policies, political leaders, political institutions, political processes, political issues and, current events on politics having 7 questions each. The third part consisted of 21-item questions for the level of civic engagement of the respondents during the pandemic in terms of volunteering, community service and, collective action having 7 questions each. The last part consisted of 28-item questions for the level of political behavior of the youth considering the COVID-19 pandemic with the following parameters: voting, political activism, communication of interests and opinions through online platforms, and public forums and discussions having 7 questions each. For the validation of the questionnaire, it was evaluated by the panel members suggesting to tone down the statements in the questionnaire. It was also evaluated by pool of experts which composed of master teachers in public high school. Suggestions such as, arranging the statements in increasing length and connecting it on COVID-19 conditions were employed before the final conduct of the study.

Data Collection

The researcher sought permission from the Principal IV of Lutucan Integrated National High School to utilize senior high school (HUMSS) students as the respondents of the study. After the necessary documents were secured, the researcher determined the number of target respondents. From the total population, a sample size was drawn. The researcher then adapted-modified a survey questionnaire to be used in measuring the Level of Political Awareness and its impact on Civic Engagement and Political Behavior of the youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Modifications are derived upon reviewing literatures.

A draft of the questionnaire was presented to the adviser and panel member for checking and evaluation. Then the revised copy of the questionnaire was subjected to external validation. The final copy of the questionnaire



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was prepared, reproduced, and administered to the target respondents following the approval of the letter to conduct the study given to the principal and schools division superintendent with the attached data sharing agreement. The responses were tallied, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

The researcher sought the consent of the respondents before administering the survey questionnaire. Furthermore, the Data Privacy Act of 2012 was also reviewed to guarantee that all the data obtained will be only used for the study and personal information will remain confidential.

Treatment of Data

Each item of the survey questionnaire was rated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Highly Aware (5) to Not at All (1)" for the level of political awareness of the youth amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, civic engagement during the pandemic was rated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from " Highly Engaged (5) to Never engaged (1)" and political behavior of the youth considering the pandemic was rated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Highly Practiced (5) to Never Practiced (1)". Mean, frequency count, and percentage distribution were used in interpreting the results.

For the level of political awareness amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the following mean ranges and verbal interpretations were used to interpret the computed mean.

Point Score	Mean Ranges	Interpretation
5	4.50-5.00	Highly Aware (HA)
4	3.50-4.49	Aware (A)
3	2.50-3.49	Moderately Aware (MA)
2	1.50-2.49	Rarely Aware (RA)
1	1.00-1.49	Not at All (NA)

For the level of civic engagement during the pandemic, the following mean ranges and verbal interpretations were used to interpret the computed mean.

Point Score	Mean Ranges	Interpretation
5	4.50-5.00	Highly Engaged (HE)
4	3.50-4.49	Engaged (E)
3	2.50-3.49	Sometimes Engaged (SE)
2	1.50-2.49	Rarely Engaged (RE)
1	1.00-1.49	Never Engaged (NE)

For the level of political behavior considering the pandemic, the following mean ranges and verbal interpretations were used to interpret the computed mean.

Point Score	Mean Ranges	Interpretation
5	4.50-5.00	Highly Practiced (HP)
4	3.50-4.49	Practiced (P)
3	2.50-3.49	Moderately Practiced (MP)
2	1.50-2.49	Rarely Practiced (RP)
1	1.00-1.49	Never Practiced (NP)

Furthermore, to determine the relationship between the level of political awareness and its impact on civic engagement and political behavior of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that all research protocols involving ethics in research were complied with for the protection of all people and institutions involved in the conduct of the study.



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RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Level of Political Awareness of the Respondents

This section presents the political awareness of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic in terms of public policies, political leaders, political institutions, political processes and, political issues and current events in politics.

Table 1
Summary Table of Respondents' Level of Political Awareness

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. Public Policies Created during the Pandemic	3.91	0.91	Aware
2. Political Leaders on the Frontlines of the Pandemic	4.09	0.91	Aware
3. Political Institutions Primarily Responsible for Handling the Pandemic	3.99	0.88	Aware
4. Political Processes during the Pandemic	3.91	0.98	Aware
5. Political Issues and Current Events on Politics Highlighting the Global Pandemic	4.06	0.93	Aware
Overall-mean	3.99	0.92	Aware

Legend: 4.50-5.00- Highly Aware (HA), 3.50-4.49- Aware (A), 2.50-3.49- Moderately Aware (MA), 1.50-2.49- Rarely Aware (RA), 1.00-1.49 - Not at All (NA)

The table shows the summary of the respondents' level of political awareness. Based on the results, it is found out that respondents are politically aware in terms of political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic which got the highest mean of 4.09 with an obtained standard deviation of 0.91. On the other hand, awareness on public policies created during the pandemic with an SD of 0.91 and political processes during the pandemic garnering a standard deviation of 0.98 obtained the lowest mean of 3.91. The table shows that all the variables fall under the mean range of 3.50-4.49 obtaining the same category with a verbal interpretation of aware. Furthermore, it reveals an overall mean of 3.99 with an SD of 0.92 thus indicating that the respondents are politically aware individuals amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the COVID-19 global outbreak in 2019, a lot of productive activities have been put to a halt. The youth were the ones mostly affected by the pandemic, bringing challenges to all aspects of life. Health, safety, and education were hard to acquire during those difficult times. Challenges in the physical, emotional, social, and mental aspects of an individual had been on the tightrope. But the youth did not stop being more politically aware and more empowered.

According to (Booth et al., 2020), young people are turning to social media to both consume and produce political content more than ever: 70% of young people had gotten information about the 2020 election on social media and 36% reported posting political content in the week prior. Over 60% of youth said that creating social media content helped them feel more informed, represented, and heard, although differences in these benefits exist across gender and race/ethnicity. In order to learn about, participate in, and exchange information on COVID-19, politics, and social movements like Black Lives Matter, young people are increasingly using online social media platforms (*Young People Turn to Online Political Engagement During COVID-19*, 2020).

The chance of voting improves with political knowledge, as evidenced by a large body of empirical research on voting behavior (Büchi & Vogler, 2017; N. Jung et al., 2011). Also, several research indicate that political awareness has a favorable impact on political activity (Abdo-Katsipis, 2017; Aydn Akr & Ekeriolu, 2016). Others go so far as to say that political awareness may be a more reliable predictor of unorthodox political behavior than the influence of political knowledge (Ondercin & Jones White, 2011). Additionally, several researches show that political awareness and political knowledge have a dual predictive value for both conventional and unorthodox political activity (Gallego & Oberski, 2012; Johann, 2012). Therefore, it is important to comprehend the combined effects of political awareness and knowledge on political involvement.



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Level of Civic Engagement of the Respondents

This section presents the civic engagement of the youth during the pandemic in terms of volunteering, community service, and collective action.

Table 2
Summary Table of Respondents' Level of Civic Engagement

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. Volunteering	3.42	1.15	<i>Sometimes Engaged</i>
2. Community Service	3.36	1.16	<i>Sometimes Engaged</i>
3. Collective Action	3.75	1.05	<i>Engaged</i>
Overall-mean	3.51	1.12	<i>Engaged</i>

Legend: 4.50-5.00- Highly Engaged (HE), 3.50-4.49- Engaged (E) 2.50-3.49- Sometimes Engaged (SE) 1.50-2.49- Rarely Engaged (RE), 1.00-1.49 - Never Engaged (NE)

Table 2 presents the summary of the respondents' level of civic engagement during the pandemic. The collective action of the respondents during the pandemic got the highest mean of 3.75 with an obtained standard deviation of 1.05. Meanwhile, respondents are sometimes engaged in community service during the pandemic which obtained the lowest mean of 3.36 and an SD of 1.16. It has an overall mean of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 1.12 revealing that respondents are civically engaged during the pandemic. Considering the opportunities for civic engagement in terms of volunteering, community service, and collective action during lockdowns can be an attribute for the values obtained.

According to World Health Organization (2023), people of any age can be infected with COVID-19, including young people aged 15–24. Although the young are less likely than older people to become seriously ill with COVID-19, the pandemic is still having a huge impact on the lives of this group, in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and beyond. Government measures to stop the spread of the disease such as lockdowns, closure of schools and physical distancing pose many challenges, including interruptions to education and daily routines, increasing levels of domestic violence, stress and mental health issues. Furthermore, faced with a shortage of health care workers, many countries are pushing health care students who are approaching graduation to the front lines to join the fight against the virus, placing them in stressful situations and increasing their risk of infection. Yet young people can rise to these challenges, help build resilience in their communities and drive social change during the pandemic – provided they are heard, empowered, engaged and given the chance to lead. However, under stressful or crisis conditions, one's attention is redirected to address the stressor, meaning that attention available for civic engagement decreases (Denny, 2022).

Level of Political Behavior of the Respondents

This section presents the political behavior of the youth considering the pandemic in terms of voting, political activism, communication of interests and opinions through online platforms, and public forums and discussions.

Table 3
Summary Table of Respondents' Level of Political Behavior

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
1. Voting	3.10	1.36	<i>Moderately Practiced</i>
2. Political Activism	3.08	1.38	<i>Moderately Practiced</i>



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3. Communication of Interests and Opinions through Online Platforms	3.13	1.30	<i>Moderately Practiced</i>
4. Public Forums and Discussions	2.96	1.33	<i>Moderately Practiced</i>
Overall-mean	3.07	1.34	<i>Moderately Practiced</i>

Legend: 4.50-5.00- Highly Practiced (HP), 3.50-4.49- Practiced (P) 2.50-3.49- Moderately Practiced (MP) 1.50-2.49- Rarely Practiced (RP), 1.00-1.49 - Never Practiced (NP)

Table 3 presents the respondents' level of political behavior considering the pandemic. The variable communication of interests and opinions through online platform garnered the highest mean of 3.13 with a standard deviation of 1.30 falling into the verbal interpretation of moderately practiced. On the other hand, the variable-, public forums and discussions earned the lowest mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 1.33 also with a verbal interpretation of moderately practiced. All indicators fall under the mean range of 2.50-3.49 thus having the same verbal interpretation of moderately practiced. The overall mean of 3.07 with an obtained standard deviation of 1.34 indicates that the respondents' level of political behavior is moderately practiced. The youth's initiative and motivation to participate politically can be considered as a factor that influences participation. Furthermore, the availability of internet connectivity may also affect the political behavior of an individual as well as the interruptions of different political activities due to strict implementation of COVID-19 measures.

The relationship between the level of political awareness of the respondents to their civic engagement during the covid-19 pandemic

The following data describes the relationship between the level of the youths' political awareness and civic engagement. Table 4 presents the Significant relationship between the level of the youths' political awareness and civic engagement.

Table 4
Correlation between Respondents' Level of Political Awareness and their Civic Engagement

Level of Political Awareness	Civic Engagement of the Respondents		
	Volunteering	Community Service	Collective Action
Public Policies Created during the Pandemic	.279**	.343**	.538**
Political Leaders on the Frontlines of the Pandemic	.198*	.185*	.442**
Political Institutions Primarily Responsible for Handling the Pandemic	.240**	.277**	.523**
Political Processes during the Pandemic	.299**	.338**	.534**
Political Issues and Current Events on Politics Highlighting the Global Pandemic	.289**	.370**	.540**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table shows the correlation between the level of political awareness and civic engagement of the respondents amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The results show a significant relationship between the level of political awareness of the respondents and their civic engagement during the pandemic with R-values verbally interpreted as



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(0.0 to 0.2) very weak positive or no association to (0.4 to 0.6) moderate positive association. Respondents' level of political awareness in terms of political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic revealed a significant correlation to the respondents' civic engagement during the pandemic in terms of volunteering and community service at 0.05 level of significance (2-tailed). Other values revealed that respondents' level of political awareness in terms of public policies created during the pandemic, political institutions primarily responsible for handling the pandemic, political processes during the pandemic, and political issues and current events on politics highlighting the global pandemic showed a significant correlation to the respondents' civic engagement during the pandemic in terms of volunteering, community service and collective action at 0.01 level of significance (2-tailed).

A very weak or no association to moderate association of r-values may be related to a small number of studies that significantly correlates political awareness to civic engagement. On the other hand, according to a study by George et al. (2014), those who consider themselves politically knowledgeable, capable of exercising political governance, and more likely to participate in political conversations tend to engage in more political and civic activities both offline and online. People who possess knowledge of democratic government and processes tend to be more politically efficacious. They have the confidence and ability to stake a position in the marketplace of political ideas as well as to actively engage in governmental and civic affairs (Galston, 2004; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; McDevitt and Chaffee, 2002; Meirick and Wackman, 2004; Campaign for Civic Mission of Schools, 2011 as cited by Owen & Soule, 2015). Furthermore, political knowledge has repeatedly proved to be an important prerequisite for political and civic participation (e.g., Grobshäuser & Weißen, 2020).

Meanwhile, over the past several decades, a number of different approaches have been used to study the effect of civic learning opportunities on offline civic involvement. Generally speaking, academics have discovered that civic learning opportunities like debates about current events and contentious issues, service projects, and role-playing of government procedures have a positive impact on civic knowledge, civic commitments, and levels of civic and political engagement (Gould et al., 2011; Campbell, 2020). Additionally, it is important to assess if civic learning opportunities that focus on offline activities, such as classroom debates of contentious issues, are more likely to encourage offline forms of civic engagement than online politics. In fact, there is reason to anticipate that traditional offline civic learning opportunities will also increase online political involvement to the extent that they have an impact on youth civic identity. Based on a study by Bowyer & Kahne (2022), their findings clearly showed that civic learning opportunities matter. Offline civic learning opportunities are strongly related to increases in civic engagement. This indicates that schools continue to play an important role in establishing participatory norms among students, above and beyond the influence of their families and other primary socialization agents.

This can pave the way to innovations, improvements, and modifications on some subjects in senior high school particularly in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand that can lead to an increased civic engagement among the youth.

Relationship between the level respondents' political awareness and their political behavior

The following data illustrates the correlation between youths' political awareness and political behavior. Table 5 shows the correlation between the youths' political awareness to their political behavior.

Table 5
Correlation between Respondents' Level of Political Awareness and their Political Behavior

Level of Political Awareness	Level of Political Behavior of the Respondents			
	Voting	Political Activism	Communication of Interests and Opinions through Online Platforms	Public Forums and Discussions
Public Policies Created during the Pandemic	.130	.222*	.317**	.162
Political Leaders on the Frontlines of the Pandemic	.028	.098	.139	-.031
Political Institutions Primarily Responsible for	.114	.223*	.310**	.163



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Handling the Pandemic				
Political Processes during the Pandemic	.139	.278**	.356**	.171
Political Issues and Current Events on Politics Highlighting the Global Pandemic	.110	.178*	.270**	.112

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

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

The table shows the relationship between the respondents' political awareness and their political behavior considering the pandemic. It revealed that the respondents' level of political awareness in terms of public policies created during the pandemic, political institutions primarily responsible for handling the pandemic and political issues and current events on politics highlighting the global pandemic has a significant correlation to the respondents' level of political behavior considering the pandemic in terms of political activism at 0.05 level of significance. Meanwhile, other values showed (0.0 to 0.2) very weak positive or no association to (0.2 to 0.4) weak positive association between the independent variable and the respondents' level of political behavior considering the pandemic in terms of political activism and communication of interests and opinions through online platforms at 0.01 level of significance. Overall, the political awareness of the respondents is not significantly related to their political behavior considering the pandemic.

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This study determined the relationship of political awareness of senior high school (HUMSS) students at Lutucan Integrated National High School to their civic engagement and political behavior.

Specifically, the study aims to answer the following questions: What is the respondents' level of political awareness in terms of public policies created during the pandemic, political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic, political institutions primarily responsible for handling the pandemic, political processes during the pandemic, political issues and current events in politics highlighting the global pandemic? What is the level of civic engagement of the respondents in terms of during the pandemic in terms of volunteering, community service, and collective action? What is the level of political behavior of the respondents considering the pandemic in terms of voting, political activism, communication of interests and opinions thru online platforms, and public forums and discussions? Is there a significant relationship between the level of political awareness and the civic engagement of the respondents? Is there a significant relationship between the level of political awareness and political behavior of the respondents?

With the abovementioned questions, the study examined two hypothesis: (1) The Level of Political Awareness is not significantly related to the Civic Engagement of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic and (2) The Level of Political Awareness is not significantly related to the Political Behavior of the youth amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

The study employed a descriptive-correlation method wherein the researcher used an adapted-modified questionnaire which was validated by the adviser, the panel, subject specialist, and external validators. A survey questionnaire was administered to the respondents.

Before the conduct of the study, the instrument has undergone pilot testing. The respondents was composed of 130 senior high school (HUMSS) students from Lutucan Integrated National High School during the academic year 2022-2023. The data obtained from the survey were presented, tabulated, compared, and interpreted. Variables of the study were interpreted using mean, frequency count, percentage distribution and Pearson product-moment correlation.



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Under the level of political awareness of the youth, respondents' political awareness in terms of political leaders on the frontlines of the pandemic obtained the highest mean of 4.09. Students are aware of the importance of political leaders in handling the COVID-19 crisis.

The level of civic engagement of the youth during the pandemic in terms of collective action had the highest mean of 3.75. Respondents are engaged in encouraging others in promoting a healthy and safe community in light of the pandemic.

Communication of interests and opinions through online platforms under the level of political behavior of the youth considering the pandemic got the highest mean of 3.13. Respondents are moderately practicing how to stop misinformation specifically about the COVID-19 pandemic by reporting fake news on Facebook.

The results of the test of correlation between the political awareness of the youth and their civic engagement indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the respondents' level of political awareness and their civic engagement during COVID-19 pandemic.

There is no significant correlation between the political awareness of the youth and their political behavior. The r-values indicate that the respondents' level of political awareness has no significant relationship to their political behavior considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The Department of Education may provide opportunities among senior high school (HUMSS) students to maximize and strengthen their political awareness and other related factors that may pave the way to an increased level of civic engagement.
2. The curriculum subjects of senior high school (HUMSS) students may be revisited. Modifications if necessary and innovations that build up on the political and civic learning of an individual which may lay the foundations for motivation to make a difference, self-improvement, community service, and nation-building may be made.
3. Crafting and utilization of different programs/seminar workshops that focus on civic and political participation may be done to strengthen responsible citizenry and democracy.
4. Teachers may also modify and innovate their teaching strategies and facilitation of learning and provide learning experiences that can make the students reflect and be more engaged in political and civic affairs. On the other hand, students may be encouraged to participate in different activities related to civic engagement and political participation.
5. Future researchers may utilize this research work as a basis for crafting similar studies.

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