Di BOBOto!:
First-Time Voters' Perceptions
on Philippine Elections[1]

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The right of suffrage is considered a vital exercise of democracy, yet not much is known about how voters themselves regard elections. This study addresses this research gap by providing information on how the Filipino youth first-time voters view national elections. It aims to determine the youth's levels of awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and practices concerning national elections. It also looks into the communication dimension of the youth's views about the elections. To achieve the study objectives, a survey was conducted among purposively selected students from various universities in Metro Manila. Findings show that television and personal networks are the respondents' primary sources of election-related information, and that these information sources appear to have greatly influenced their level of knowledge and attitude about elections in the country. Findings further reveal that the respondents did not know much about the Philippine electoral process and they had negative perceptions about elections in the country. They felt that they play a significant role in the elections; however, many of them were not registered voters.

Elections are important in a democracy like the Philippines. Through elections, citizens choose candidates and parties that they believe would help improve their nation. Voting, as a way of participating in elections, is an indirect way of directing (Weissberg, 1976 in Bernstein, 1989) and investing in (Popkin, 1991) the future of the country. It is the single aggregate act that can define the fate of a fledgling country like the Philippines.

Voting, as a personal decision, is influenced by factors like the socio-cultural and demographic context of an individual (Himmelweit, Humphreys, & Jaeger, 1990). Because voting is a decision that carries much responsibility, prospective voters must realize the weight of their vote and understand their own interpersonal processing of elections as an exercise in political communication. Thus, in this study, we addressed the question:

RQ: How do young Filipinos who are voting for the first time perceive the current Philippine electoral process?

To answer this research question, the following research objectives were set:

1. To determine the respondents' sources of information about the elections and the extent to which these sources have influenced their perceptions of elections.
2. To evaluate the knowledge of prospective first-time voters regarding the electoral process.
3. To determine the respondents' attitudes towards certain aspects of the electoral process.
4. To determine the extent of the respondents' actual and intended participation in elections.

Youth Participation in the Philippine Electoral Process

Article II, Section 13 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states the particular importance of the youth: "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs."

However, young people are often regarded by their elders as inexperienced and unable to effect significant changes in society (Velasco, n.d.*b*) because of, among others, their tendency to be superficial voters (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1968). Nevertheless, young people can potentially be critical voters once they deepen their knowledge of their country's political system and develop a coherent system of political beliefs (Himmelweit, Humphreys, & Jaeger, 1990).

Still, it remains that the youth are not very interested and participative in political events. Velasco (n.d.*a*) noted that only 12% of the youth belonged to youth organizations. As of November 1997, only 14% of Filipinos aged 15 to 30 years old have participated in government youth programs, according to the Social Weather Stations (in Velasco, n.d.*a*). A separate study by the Episcopal Commission on the Youth of the Catholic Church (ECYCC) (2002, in Velasco, n.d.*b*) revealed that young people would rather not get politically involved because doing so might have undue repercussions (40%), does not really result in any significant change (30.5%), and is a waste of time (20.0%). Other reasons for political apathy among the youth are their fear of being labeled activists or communists, and the influence of globalization and capitalism on their attitudes (Velasco, n.d.*b*). In a 1998 national survey of the youth 15 to 30 years old (Sandoval, Mangahas, & Guerrero, 1998), it was found that the Filipino youth gave less importance to being politically involved compared to other aspects of life, such as marriage and family life, work, and education. Moreover, 60% of the youth respondents were not very or not at all interested in politics.

The study conducted by the ECYCC (2002, in Velasco, n.d.*b*) further found that only 12% of the respondents believed that being a responsible voter is a way of showing love to one's country. A reason for this could be that the Philippine system is not designed to encourage political participation. Registering for elections and voting are not required by law, and enlistment procedures are not widely publicized (Velasco, n.d.*b*). Since the

Commission on Elections (COMELEC) does little to inform first-time voters about the importance of registration (Velasco, n.d.*b*), it is no surprise that actual voter turnout among the youth is low. Data from the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the COMELEC revealed that many young people had not been able to vote (Bagas, 2004).

Members of concerned institutions argued that these figures reflect the youth's low interest in political involvement through elections, and of the limited usefulness of the venues where the youth can participate in governance. Bagas (2003) pointed out that opponents of the voters' special registration in 2001 claimed that the youth's apathy was the reason for the low rate of registrants. Additionally, the low percentage of actual registrants (47.2% of the expected number) in the 2002 Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections was used as a justification by critics of the SK to push for its abolition (Bagas, 2003).

The low turnout of registrants had also been attributed to a poorly implemented voters' registration system. Youth activist organizations campaigning for special registration in 2000 said that around 4.5 million first-time voters would be disenfranchised if COMELEC pushed through with its plan to end voters' registration in December of the same year (Bagas, 2003). Further, a nationwide survey of the Social Weather Stations (SWS) in June 2006 found that 76% of unregistered voters in the 18 to 24 age bracket were "unaware of the continuing voter registration" (SWS, 2006).

Factors Influencing Voting Behavior

Voting as a political behavior can be influenced by several factors like the individuals' personal characteristics, their social environment, and their exposure to the mass media and other campaign materials. Individual value orientations, attitudes, and personal and group networks—particularly during the election period—have considerable impact on voter turnout and decisions

(Himmelweit, Humphreys, & Jaeger, 1990). Those who possess predisposing intentions and characteristics are more likely to show up on the day of the election with much conviction about their vote (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1968). The personal networks of voters also significantly influence their voting behavior because people form and maintain social relations with others who have the same socio-economic, ethnic, and educational background, as well as political preference. The family, in particular, is a major factor in influencing an individual's vote (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1968). Finally, the "face value" of the parties and candidates can also influence voters. Perceptions of the candidate's various characteristics serve as bases for voting by the people (Berelson. Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1968).

The Role of Media in the Electoral Process

Media's coverage of the elections and the audience's exposure to and understanding of media messages play an important role in the outcomes of the electoral process. Ocampo (1987) argued that people's intention to vote may be influenced by campaign materials and strategies. As audiences process information from media, their attitudes are influenced accordingly. In turn, the extent to which media influence these attitudes is affected by a person's age, sex, occupation, region, and annual income (Sales, 1972).

The media can wield influence on the election outcomes through various means, including political ads, reports on opinion polls (Elumbre & Panganiban, 2005; Kavanagh, 1995; Padua, 2005; Ponnuru, 2002); and articles like news items, editorials, and opinion columns (Asp, 1979; Padua, 2005; Soho, 1988). Some studies have shown that news products (de Leon, 2005; Gottlieb, 1992; Kavanagh, 1955; Lusterio, 1993; Padua, 2005; Ramos, 1933; Soho, 1988) exhibit bias by focusing on

specific personalities and candidates, as well as through editorial policies and journalists' dispositions.

Study Framework

This study's analysis of the first-time voters' perceptions regarding elections is premised on the argument that the young voters' perceptions about elections may be influenced by their sources of information. Specifically, the voters' involvement in interpersonal, group, organizational, and mass communication could affect their perceptions regarding the candidates and political parties, organizations, and institutions that are involved in the electoral process. How much influence these various forms of communication can wield on the youth's perceptions depends on the manner and extent with which young people access information from these sources.

The Elaboration Likelihood Theory of Petty and Cacciopo defines two paths of information processing that prospective voters could take. They may take the central route by intentionally acquiring information, requiring full motivation and attention. Or they may take the peripheral route in which they incidentally acquire information, requiring much less attention and processing (Littlejohn, 2002).

Regardless of which route individuals take, they judge the electoral process based on prior knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. As stipulated in the Social Judgment Theory, there are three possible results of information assessment- acceptance, rejection, or non-commitment. Acceptance is most likely to lead to participation in the electoral process; rejection, to further information inquisition if participation in the election is pursued; and non-commitment, to non-participation.

Methodology

This research aimed to put together an extensive description of how young Filipinos who are voting for the first time regard elections. It used a cross-sectional timeframe, with individuals as the units of analysis. A survey was conducted among first-time voters 18 to 21 years old. The respondents came from five selected universities in Metro Manila, namely Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, and University of the Philippines. From each school, a minimum of 30 respondents were chosen using purposive sampling. The total sample consisted of 153 students.

A self-administered questionnaire featuring different scales was employed to measure the respondents' perceptions about various aspects Philippine electoral process. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis. Frequency tables and cross tabulations were generated to aid the researchers in interpreting the data.

The instrument used for this survey was a six-page questionnaire based on the Attention-Knowledge-Assessment-Practice (AKAP) guide, comprising four parts, namely the sources of information, knowledge on the electoral process, perception on elections, and electoral participation. For these parts, a combination of index items and scales were used, specifically the Likert, Semantic Differential, and Guttman-like scales.

Data for this study were gathered from March 12 to 17, 2007 from a non-probability sample of respondents. The data indicate the perceptions of a specific urban demographic at a particular pre-election period. Accordingly, the data are not to be generalized to the entire national population of Filipino youth and the data do not reveal how the respondents' perceptions could possibly translate to actual participation in the elections.

Results and Discussion

Respondents' profile

Over three-fifths (61%) of the respondents were women. More than 90% of the respondents were full-time students and were single. The biggest group of respondents (41%) said they did not know their monthly household income, while 22% pegged it at under PhP20,000. All of the respondents were between 18 and 21 years old. Over three-fourths (77%) of the respondents were Catholic (76%).

Sources of information about the elections

The biggest number of the respondents (48%) acquired election-related information both incidentally and intentionally. However, more respondents acquired election-related information incidentally (39%) than deliberately (13%), indicating that the respondents consumed electoral information not because they sought it, but because it was almost impossible not to with the extensive media coverage of elections.

With regard to media sources of information about the elections, almost all respondents (94%) identified local television as the primary media source of election-related information. In contrast, only a small percentage of the respondents turned to cable TV and the new media (see Table 1).

Consequently, the respondents also identified television as the medium that most strongly influences their perceptions of elections (see Table 2), underscoring the importance of televised messages on how students may see elections. More specifically, the messages could either make the youth perceive the elections positively and encourage them to participate in this exercise, or make them react to elections negatively and discourage them from participating in it.

Turning to interpersonal sources, family and friends were the respondents' primary sources of information, while Church and civic leaders were the least cited sources. Consequently, the family was also perceived to have the most significant influence

Table 1. Media Sources of Election-Related Information*

Media Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Local TV	143	93.50
Newspaper	98	64.10
Radio	65	42.50
Newmedia	43	28.10
Cable TV	41	26.80

Multiple response; (N=153)

Table 2. Respondents' Self-Perceived Assessment
of the Extent of Influence of Various Media on Their Views
About the Elections (in percentage; N=153)

Levels of Influence	Local TV	Cable TV	New Media	Newspaper	Radio
Has a lot of influence	39.90	17.00	11.80	11.80	6.50
Has much influence	26.10	18.00	13.10	30.10	11.10
Has some influence	22.20	17.00	21.60	27.50	35.90
Has little influence	7.80	9.80	20.90	7.00	24.80
Has no influence at all	3.90	18.30	16.30	9.20	15.70
Not applicable	0.00	12.40	11.80	3.30	4.60
Don't know/Refused/No answer	0.00	5.20	1.30	3.30	1.30

Table 3. Respondents' Self-Perceived Assessment of the Extent of Influence of Various Interpersonal Sources on Their Views About the Elections (in percentage; N=153)

Levels of Influence	Family	Friends	Teachers	Public Officials	Civil Leaders	Church Leaders	Entertainment Icon	Neighbors	School Officials
Has a lot of influence	37.90	12.14	11.10	8.50	6.50	5.20	5.20	4.60	3.90
Has much influence	32.00	28.80	21.60	14.40	14.40	13.10	7.80	8.50	12.40
Has some influence	15.70	35.30	33.30	17.60	22.90	21.60	15.00	24.20	28.80
Has little influence	9.20	14.40	19.60	26.80	17.60	20.30	18.30	27.50	15.00
Has no influence at all	3.90	6.50	8.50	20.90	22.90	25.50	37.30	26.10	24.20
Not applicable	0.70	2.60	4.60	8.50	11.10	9.80	9.80	7.80	10.50
Don't know/Refused	0.70	0.00	0.70	2.70	2.70	3.30	3.30	1.40	3.30

on the respondents' perceptions about the elections, while church and civic leaders came in last (see Table 3). This finding is consistent with the inherent culture of the Filipino that places utmost value and trust for the closest personal networks, and emphasizes familial ties and proximity.

Interestingly, while public officials and entertainment icons were identified as relatively frequent sources of election-related information, the data revealed that they did not figure much in influencing the knowledge and views of the respondents. This suggests that the youth might turn to them chiefly for entertainment and not for political influence as opinion leaders.

Respondents' level of knowledge about the electoral process

The Filipino youth who took part in the study were somewhat familiar with the nature of elections, particularly on candidacy and voting requirements and government structure (see Table 4). In the knowledge test included in the study's questionnaire, the item where the respondents scored the highest was on the knowledge of legal voting age of a Filipino citizen (98%). A big majority also knew about the number of seats available in the Philippine Senate (67%) and when the Presidential elections are held (77%). Only a small number, however, knew about the constituted percentage of party-list groups in the House of Representatives and the number of seats available (7% and 11%, respectively). These findings indicate that the Filipino youth are more familiar with election facts on the national than the local level.

On queries regarding standard operating procedures during elections, most (85%) of the respondents knew who were assigned to canvass votes. Two-thirds (66%) of the respondents also knew the location of such canvassing. However, majority failed to provide the correct answer to questions about how many days a senatorial candidate was allowed to start campaigning

Table 4. Responses to Questions Pertaining to Elections
(in percentage; N=153)

	Right Answer %	Wrong Answer %	Don't Know %
On the legal voting age in the Philippines	98.00	1.30	0.70
On who are tasked to canvass votes	85.00	4.60	10.50
On when Presidential elections are held	77.10	21.60	1.30
On the number of seats in the Senate	66.70	20.30	12.40
On the location of the canvassing of votes	66.00	30.70	3.30
On the number of seats in the Congress	11.10	34.60	54.20
On the number of days a senatorial candidate can campaign before the elections	27.50	43.80	28.80
On the constituted percentage of party list representatives in the Lower House	6.50	34.60	58.20
On the number of voting booths in every polling place	6.50	43.80	49.00

before an election (28%) and the number of voting booths in every polling place (7%).

With regard to knowledge of organizations that participate in the elections, most of the respondents were aware of the correct name of political parties and other sectors.

Overall, it could be said that the youth respondents were knowledgeable about the most fundamental information pertinent to the elections, like the legal voting age and the people obliged to canvass votes. However, it was clear that there was insufficient knowledge when it came to the more specific information, like the requirements of candidacy, the structure of the government, and standard operating procedures of voting and tallying—all of which were supposed to be within every Filipino voters' responsibility to know.

Respondents' attitudes toward elections

This section discusses the respondents' perceptions about various aspects of the elections, namely the election campaign materials and strategies; political candidates; COMELEC; importance of their own role in the elections; election atmosphere; and media's coverage of the elections.

Assessment of campaign materials and strategies

The respondents rated TV interviews (76%) and TV ads (70%) as most effective campaign materials and strategies. They rated the endorsements by a celebrity (42%) and by an incumbent politician (30%) as least effective strategies (see Table 5). The findings are consistent with the earlier finding that television exerts a strong influence on the respondents' perceptions about elections. The findings are also in congruence with the arguments stipulated in the study about the influence of communication sources on the message receivers.

Qualifications of electoral candidates
that respondents deem important

When it came to which particular electoral candidate traits mattered most to the respondents, the youth respondents placed greatest importance on a candidate's education, specifically a college degree (93%) and experience in governance (90%). This finding is not surprising since the respondents were college students and thus were well aware of the importance of education in providing a person with the proper foundation for governance.

On the other hand, the respondents found a candidate's being a celebrity icon (74%) and a media personality (67%) as the two least important traits that would affect their voting choices. This finding suggests that political aspirations anchored

Table 5. Most Effective and Ineffective Campaign Strategies
and Materials*

Most Effective Campaign Strategies		Least Effective Campaign Strategies	
	%		%
TV Interviews	75.70	Endorsement by a celebrity	41.80
TV ads	70.50	Endorsement by an incumbent politician	30.10
Miting de avance	56.90	Posters and flyers	27.40
Campaign slogans	52.30	Campaign slogans	25.50
House-to-house campaigning	45.40	Radio ads	24.30
		Party campaigning at barangay halls	24.30

The figures indicate the percentage of respondents who said that a particular strategy/material is effective; N=153

on political dynasties and celebrity status are considered almost undesirable by this study's youth respondents.

There were several traits ranked as "neutral" by the respondents, or those which did not have much bearing in the criteria of choosing among candidates. These traits were of being an independent candidate (48%), having strong affiliation with a party (39%), being popular (36%), coming from a specific hometown (29%), and coming from a family of politicians (23%).

Views about the COMELEC

The respondents' mindset towards the COMELEC was, by and large, negative. In fact, almost half of the respondents (48% each) agreed with the statements that the COMELEC's jurisdiction is "influenced by outside factors", and that it is not able to accomplish its tasks on time. Correspondingly, the respondents disagreed with assertions that the COMELEC is "able to preserve its accountability to the people", and that it is "strict with the implementation of the rules of the elections". Given earlier arguments and findings regarding the influence of information

sources on the youth's perceptions, the negative assessment of the COMELEC might be attributed to the high-profile media coverage of the string of controversies surrounding the recent national elections.

Respondents' assessment of their own involvement in the elections

A majority of the respondents seemed to be optimistic about their future participation as first-time voters, based on their consistent agreement with the statements focusing on their involvement in the electoral process. For instance, a big majority claimed to be "learning as much as they could about candidates" (69%) and believed "that their vote could make a significant change in the country" (62%). In effect, many of the respondents asserted that their role as society's first-time voters is indeed significant, and that they were willing to participate in the elections if they could be given better accessibility to relevant resources of information and venues of participation.

Assessment of the election atmosphere

The respondents were asked to rate the election atmosphere using a *semantic differential* scale, where the respondents were presented with six adjective pairs describing the election atmosphere. Figure 1 shows that the respondents regarded the election atmosphere with slightly negative feelings. This could

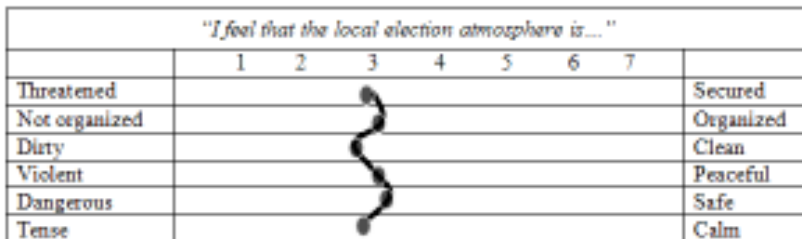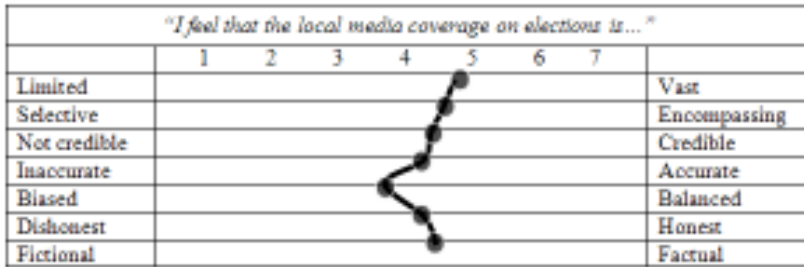Figure 1. Respondents' Assessment of the Election Atmosphere

"I feel that the local election atmosphere is...."								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Threatened								Secured
Not organized								Organized
Dirty								Clean
Violent								Peaceful
Dangerous								Safe
Tense								Calm

Figure 2. Respondents' Assessment of Media Election Coverage

"I feel that the local media coverage on elections is…"								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Limited								Vast
Selective								Encompassing
Not credible								Credible
Inaccurate								Accurate
Biased								Balanced
Dishonest								Honest
Fictional								Factual

have been a result of the information they acquired from outside sources—the media in particular—which often carry news about flying voters, stealing of ballots, and use of violence in order to tilt the final elections results in a candidate's favor.

Assessment of media's coverage of the elections

The respondents had a positive evaluation of media's coverage of the elections. As can be seen in Figure 2, media coverage rated positively on the aspects of being *vast, encompassing, credible,* and *factual.* For *accuracy* and *honesty,* on the other hand, the media garnered mid-range ratings. The media were thought to be least effective in showing *balance.* Reasons for this more negative assessment may be linked with what the related literature says about the media being perceived to exhibit bias by the mass audience.

Respondents' actual and intended participation in elections

To determine the respondents' personal level of participation in elections, they were presented with 10 election-related activities that they rated using the following response options: *Have done it and might do it again, Have done it but will never do it again, Have not done it but might do it,* and *Have not done it and will never do it.* Findings reveal that the respondents were most open

Table 6. Respondents' Range of Electoral Participation
(in percentage; N=153)

Activities	Have Done and Might Do It Again	Have Done It But Will Never Do It Again	Have Not Done It But Might Do It	Have Not Done It and Will Never Do It
Discuss political preference with peers	68.00	9.80	17.60	4.60
Try to convince someone to vote	35.90	9.20	33.30	21.60
Try to influence someone to vote for a particular candidate	30.10	10.50	24.20	34.60
Participate in election polls	22.90	14.40	47.10	15.00
Attend a forum concerning the elections	13.70	9.80	51.60	24.80
Attend a campaign program or miting de avance	13.70	8.50	44.40	33.30
Volunteer in/work for the COMELEC	9.80	7.80	30.70	51.00
Volunteer in/work for private organizations for election-related activities	9.80	7.80	34.60	47.70
Volunteer in/work for the campaigning of a political party/candidate	7.20	7.20	26.10	59.50
Run for public office	5.20	3.90	19.60	70.60

to discussing political preference with peers; and trying to convince people to vote. As can be seen in Table 6, the highest proportion of responses for these two activities is in the category *"have done it and might do it again"*. They were also generally open to trying the following activities: participating in election polls; attending a forum concerning elections; and attending a campaign program or miting de avance. Finally, the following activities did not appeal very much to them: trying to influence someone to vote for a political candidate; doing volunteer work

for the COMELEC and private organizations involved in elections; doing volunteer work or campaigning for a particular candidate; and running for public office.

It might be said then that the respondents prefer their involvement in the electoral process to be limited to the basic exercise of the right of suffrage and the discussion of elections with the people readily accessible to them. One is not likely to see them getting involved in the more 'demanding' forms of electoral participation. Further, taking off from the arguments in the study framework that social action is correlated with access and influence of media, then another conjecture that emerges from the findings is that perhaps the image of public service as transmitted through the media was not at all inviting.

Although of voting age, only 29% of the respondents were officially registered as voters. Among those who were not registered, the main reasons given for the failure to register were: they did not know about the registration schedule set forth by the COMELEC (47%); they were not aware of the registration process (25%); and they did not want to go through the 'hassles' of the registration process (34%).

Of the respondents who were registered, most (87%) had plans of voting. This initiative to vote might be connected to the finding that many still believed that their votes would count and result in significant changes for the country. Meanwhile, those who said that they will not vote in the coming elections primarily reasoned that they were either busy/unavailable or too lazy to vote.

On the choice of candidates, most of the respondents (91%) would vote for candidates coming from different parties rather than engage in voting straight for members of a single party (7%). This is a good indication of the political maturity of the respondents because they apparently believe that, in the Philippines, party affiliation is mostly for campaign purposes and guarantees neither an effective platform nor an effective performance.

Conclusion, Implications, and Recommendations

The Filipino youth respondents, as the findings of this study suggest, are greatly influenced by the most prevalent medium today—television—with regard to their views about the elections. Likewise, the family has a strong influence on their perceptions about this political process. The said medium could therefore be used to increase the youth's knowledge about elections and election-related activities, especially the registration and voting procedures.

Because television and the family exert a strong influence on the youth, it could be expected that when faced with election-related decisions, the youth are inclined to decide according to what they mostly see and know—from packaged information on popular and widely accessed media like television and from second-hand information from family members. It is not enough, however, to watch TV or inquire from the family in order to make informed decisions about election-related matters. One must also study and critically examine all facets of the political scene. In line with this, the youth need to seek other information sources that provide alternative information about elections and the political system in general.

Studies that have been conducted about media's coverage of the election—whether in the Philippines or other countries—have found that media tend to frame the event as a "horse race" and focus on personalities more than on issues. If such is the case, what kind of political knowledge do the youth have? Superficially, they might claim to know "more" about elections because of their constant exposure to media—but do they really know and understand the elections? Moreover, juxtaposing the criticism of media's coverage of the elections that previous researches have raised *vis-à-vis* this study's finding that the youth respondents generally have a favorable view of the way the media cover the elections, there is indeed cause for concern.

The youth respondents did not have a favorable assessment of the election process, and it is quite easy to connect this sentiment with the kind of news that media disseminate about elections. It is an encouraging finding that the youth respondents are able to discern the ills of the country's electoral system; however, it is disheartening to note that their participation in elections tends to be restricted to the basic activities of voting and discussing elections with people close to them. Again, one cannot help but consider how much of this indifference is the result of the youth's exposure to negative media messages about the elections and the country's political situation.

The youth may have their newly-enforced right of suffrage, but the question remains: Are these new voting forces truly the "fresh" voice of society? Or are they still part of the country's recycled and unresolved political past?

The researchers acknowledge that their study has only partially answered this question. Further studies are needed, in particular those that would explore other facets of the electoral

process and other dimensions of media-voter dynamics; use a probability and more representative sample in order to facilitate generalizations; include other youths and not only the first-time voters; and undertake intensive analyses of the correlates of voter perceptions about the elections.

Note

[1]   This paper is based on the study conducted by the researchers in the 2nd semester of AY 2006-2007 as part of the requirements for the course Communication Research 115 (Introduction to Quantitative Analysis). The researchers chose the topic because the 2007 Midterm Elections were just about to be held at the time that they were enrolled in said course. Moreover, being first-time voters themselves, they were curious to find out what their peers know and feel about the May 2007 elections in particular and the Philippine electoral process in general.

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