
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Celebrities' Influence on the Students' Voting Preferences

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| ABSTRACT

Celebrities' participation in the election process is essential. One thing that draws the public's attention is their influence. The ideas and behaviors of their favorite celebrities can readily sway the public, which has varying viewpoints when selecting a candidate. This study aims to ascertain the impact of celebrities on students' voting preferences in the May 2022 election. The primary data collection tool for the study was a descriptive-correlational questionnaire. At the University of Cebu-Main Campus, quantitative data were employed to ascertain the celebrities' influence on students' voting preferences. At the Department of the College of Arts and Sciences, 154 individuals responded. Participants in the survey completed an online questionnaire when they were willing to respond to the questions. The primary tool used to collect the data was a survey questionnaire created for the study that had passed pilot testing to determine its reliability. Frequency and count, weighted Mean, and the chi-square test were employed for data analysis. Statistically, there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, which means there is no significant correlation between the respondent profile measured by age and year level and the Degree of celebrity influence on voting choices. However, the null hypothesis is rejected because there is a significant relationship between the respondents' sex and program enrollment profiles and the Degree of celebrity influence over voting preferences. The four groups of respondents said they would instead support a politician who has worked on humanitarian efforts vis-à-vis the Celebrity. The level of influence of celebrities during the May 2022 election is significantly influential.

| KEYWORDS

Voting preferences, election campaigns, influence, celebrities

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Celebrities and politics are intertwined rampantly in the Philippines and across different countries. Actors and actresses will choose their respective candidates to support the campaigns in an election. Politicians are more likely to be popular when helping specific celebrities elicit different reactions from Filipinos.

In the U.S. 2008 election, former president Barack Obama was endorsed by famous talk show host Oprah Winfrey (Pease & Brewer, 2008), drawing the attention of many voters to his ideas and plans for his country. With the help of Oprah Winfrey, Barack Obama won as the United States of America president in 2008. According to David J. Jackson and Thomas I. A. Darrow, 2016, in a recent survey of young Canadians enrolled in first-year political science courses at universities, the endorsement of certain political viewpoints by Canadian celebrities in popular music and sports raises the amount of agreement among young people. It implies that endorsements by famous people improve support for popular ideas while making offensive remarks more palatable.

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During the recent May 2022 election in the Philippines, political aspirants, from the president down to the senators, have been supported by different Pinoy TV personalities. The two great national political aspirants' competitors have supported their election campaign with many Pinoy celebrities, namely, Vice Ganda, Angel Locsin, and many actors and actresses backing up former Vice-President Leni Robredo and Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan. The opposing candidates, namely the incumbent President Bongbong Marcos and Vice-President Sara Duterte, have garnered support from prominent figures such as Toni Gonzaga, Andrew E, and AiAi Delas Alas during their election campaigns (Kathleen et al., 2022).

In the May 2022 national and local elections, many Pinoy celebrities are vocal about the political aspirants they want to support. They supported the election campaign and rallies to present their supported candidates. Celebrities hold significant epistemic power—the capacity to shape public opinion—unrelated to the necessary competence (Archer & Cawston, 2021). Through this power, celebrities inevitably influence citizens to vote for their candidates. Because of the fandom of the people, it is unavoidable that celebrities can shape public opinion.

Previous researchers have addressed public entertainment in the Philippines concerning the role of social media in the election campaign. However, there are only a few studies regarding celebrities' influence on students' voting preferences. This study will determine the influence of celebrities on voting preferences among students in the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Cebu - Main campus during the May 2022 election. This study would enrich the related literature and studies on the subject matter. It would provide readers and future researchers with additional sources in their readings and studies.

2. Theoretical background

This study is anchored on the Rational Choice Theory by Sam Smith (1993), that history and culture are insignificant to understanding political behavior; instead, it is sufficient to know the actor's interests and to expect that they seek after them rationally. In political science, Rational Choice Theory is an emerging paradigm that may be used to study various topics, including establishing rules, voting behavior, and the creation and execution of policies. As reviewed by Kenneth Arrow (2019), the article will explore a few applications, including coalition formation, rule-and-law legislation, and political party competitiveness. The main principle of rational choice theory is that individual actors' choices will result in aggregate human behavior. Each person, therefore, chooses based on their preferences and the limitations (or choice set) they encounter. Philosophers like Smith contended that people are logical creatures acting in their best interests. The Rational Choice Theory, which examines the function of reason in human decision-making, had been inspired by this idea.

According to Anthony Downs, the fundamental elements of political action can be understood in terms of voters' self-interest. He illustrated how political opinion in democracies aggregates into a bell-shaped distribution, with most voters holding moderate views. Rational Choice Theory proposes that individuals conduct a thorough assessment of their choices, considering the pros and cons of each potential action. Ultimately, they choose the option they believe will yield the most outstanding overall advantage (Creels, 2000).

This belief is that people make decisions based on a logical risk analysis compared to reward and that these calculations are driven by self-interest. A human's top priority as a self-interested being is to maximize the predicted utility of their decisions.

Anthony Downs proposed a methodology for making decisions in 1957 based on individual cost-benefit analysis. The chances that a decision will be made improve with the perceived advantage and decrease with the related expense. The underlying presumption of this theory is that the individual prefers outcomes with a more excellent utility to those with a lower utility and makes choices to obtain more highly valued outcomes (Aldrich, 1993). According to this theory, voters consider their vote a kind of investment that should only be made if the benefits outweigh the costs (Frederickson, 2004). According to the Rational Choice Theory, individuals may abstain from voting because they perceive that voting does not offer sufficient value to justify the effort required to overcome associated barriers.

In other words, people decide what will benefit them the most in their own life. Voters may choose politicians based on logical assessments that they will represent their interests. Conversely, voters might not make logical decisions at the ballot box, possibly voting emotionally or ignorantly and or due to a lack of information (Down, 1990). This rational choice theory is a school of thought that works under the assumption that individuals select a method of action that best suits their personal opinions.

Moreover, the Transfer Theory by McCracken (1989) is also a model for studying the relationship between Celebrities, Politicians, and voters. Once a gathering of people accepts that they need those properties in a candidate and eventually in a political account, they will support them through deliberation, voting, and mobilization (Jain & Roy, 2016). The causes and candidates would be prompted to utilize celebrities to reinforce supporters, mobilize voters, and raise funds. Prior research has also demonstrated that

celebrity endorsement transfers emotions and meanings from the endorser toward the business (Jain & Roy, 2016). This shows there may be a few adequate controls on celebrities to form disagreeable causes and candidates.

The influence of celebrities has a significant impact on society because they represent celebrities who have a part within the development of political stories. According to the traditional view, celebrities are well-known to the public and regarded as societal role models because of their talent or attractiveness (McCracken, 1989). So, Celebrities can influence the objectives, hopes, and dreams of people (Rockwell & Giles, 2009). Moreover, celebrities can serve as the image of a market, forging relations and building relationships with people (Thomson, 2006).

The impact of celebrity endorsement on people's intentions to purchase has been studied concerning political campaigns (Wei & Lu, 2013). Additionally, several authors have investigated a range of related issues, including the impact of celebrity endorsements on the recall of candidates, the credibility and subject-matter ability of the endorsement, and the impact of celebrity image (Amos et al., 2008).

Furthermore, Despite the advantages of political endorsements, it is still being determined whether using famous people in campaigns will be successful (Misra et al., 1990). Advertising in campaigns establishes a relationship between the politician and the Celebrity, resulting in a transfer of meaning that may be positive or bad to the candidates. Celebrities have been utilized to positively impact human behavior toward a candidate (Till & Shimp, 1998).

As per Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, behavioral intentions, which guide planned actions, are significantly shaped by three key factors: an individual's attitude toward a specific behavior, their attitude toward the context in which the behavior takes place, and their perception of their control over the behavior (Ajzen, 1975). Baker and White (2010) investigated how the Theory of Planned Behavior could be used to forecast adolescents' use of social networking. Their research revealed that group norms, attitudes, and perceived behavioral control effectively predict intentions to utilize social networking sites. (Ajzen, 1991) subsequently discovered evidence to support the idea that intentions influence conduct. A person's intention to engage in an activity at a particular time and location is predicted by the Theory of Planned Behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior asserts that behavioral intentions direct individual behavior, and these intentions are influenced by three fundamental factors: an individual's attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

Theory of Planned Behavior, behavioral attitude, and subjective norms were the most crucial components of behavioral intention Friedrich (1991). Based on the initial viewpoint, Ajzen expanded the prior model in 1985 by including perceived behavioral control. He believed attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control jointly determine behavioral intention. A person's intention and perceived behavior control can explain and predict whether the target behavior occurs. A person's intents and perceived ability to control their behavior can explain and predict whether the target behavior will occur. Various researchers use the theory of planned behavior to describe how people act in various situations, including predicting individual purchasing behavior online and many other things.

According to Wojciech et al. (2000), perceived behavioral control is mainly unimportant regarding voting choices. By contrast, attitudes toward candidates have become a powerful predictor of voting intention. To clarify why individuals are expected to vote for a particular candidate, that is to clarify what vote is based on. It assumes that the intention to vote for a candidate can be influenced by attitudes toward voting for the candidate or attitudes toward the candidate, subjective norms and social pressure related to voting for the candidate, and perceived behavioral control over voting for the candidate (Ajzen, 1991).

It serves as a stand-in for behavior. It shows a person's motivation in their conscious intention or choice to engage in a particular behavior (Conner & Armitage, 1998). Generally, behavior is more likely to be carried out the more substantial the intention. The theory that beliefs influence behavior is called the Theory of Planned Behavior, a theory of behavioral prediction. The primary factor influencing behavior is the intention to act or not to act. When it comes to voting, the behavior is usually performed anonymously, meaning that individuals cannot be held accountable for their behavior while social pressure is generally low (Rosema, 2004).

People are connected and are influenced by social media and the mainstream media in today's technologically advanced society. The only criterion for winning and gaining seats or offices in politics is the number of supporters a party or individual has among the public. These criteria also determine how many votes the party or individual receives. Furthermore, because they have a better connection with and a more significant number of followers in the public, most parties seek celebrity endorsements and influence to attract more supporters and voters.

Meanwhile, celebrity endorsements of political candidates and officeholders are becoming widespread in the media after elections. Athletes, talk-show presenters, actresses, and comedians frequently express their thoughts to the public to sway listeners' opinions. These famous people often utilize their power to sway public opinion and promote causes like reproductive freedom, environmental protection, and human rights. Politics and television stars are frequently linked. Actors and actresses will support political candidates in today's generation during their election campaigns. The candidate's name and the impact of an influencer can strengthen their chances of winning the election. Celebrity politics, the result of celebrity culture fusing with politics to bolster the platforms of parties and leaders, is directly tied to celebrity endorsement (Gomez et al., 2021). Political parties also invest much money in celebrity endorsements since it is believed that these endorsements can profit from "secondary brand links" (Madinga et al., 2020).

Similarly, political advertising encompasses various forms of communication, including advertising displays, newspaper ads, billboards, signs, brochures, articles, tabloids, flyers, letters, radio or TV presentations, and other mass communication methods. It is employed to appeal, whether directly or indirectly, for votes, financial contributions, or other forms of support or opposition during an election campaign. It ignites public opinion toward goods, services, political ideologies, parties, and candidates. It stirs feelings and attracts attention (Asemah et al., 2022). Celebrities have the power to affect people's hearts and thoughts. In other words, they can sway public opinion by endorsing their candidate throughout the election campaign. Endorsing candidates can be a tremendous asset when trying to persuade others. The names of such candidates, backed by their hero celebrities, are easily recalled by the public.

One recent critique (Archer et al., 2020) claims that celebrities have much epistemic power (the ability to shape public opinion) unrelated to relevant expertise. More recently, Archer et al. (2020) have argued that celebrity involvement in democratic politics is problematic since celebrities have a substantial amount of disconnected epistemic power (essentially, the power to affect people's beliefs).

More specifically, the epistemic power of fame poses three issues for democracies attempting to uphold either of these democratic values, according to Archer et al. (2020: 33–35). First, celebrities can use their epistemic influence to frame public debates in ways that fit them and to focus attention on the topics that matter to them. They have little influence in public discourse, thanks to their ability to set the agenda. Second, the standard limits on power put in place to prevent other forms of power from having an improper influence on democratic debate do not apply to Celebrity epistemic power. Third, the fact that Celebrity epistemic power is unrelated to any specialized knowledge or professional position endangers the epistemic value of democracy by impairing democratic deliberation's capacity to discover knowledge and pursue the truth.

Moreover, celebrity endorsement in political campaigns has a long history in the United States. However, it mainly gained popularity in the 2012 and 2015 presidential campaigns, when celebrities like Angelina Jolie from Hollywood, Katy Perry from music, and talk show host Oprah Winfrey campaigned for candidates Friedrich & Nitsch (2019).

Kazeem (2020), Unquestionably, in Nigeria, a celebrity endorsement is viewed as a powerful motivation to inspire many people to vote for a particular political candidate. He asserts that celebrities among young people are more politically educated than ordinary people. He points out how vital celebrity status, including that of an actor, actress, musician, or athlete, is in today's political campaigns.

According to Babatunde and Abina (2020), the use of celebrity endorsements for political candidates in Nigeria has increased, given the country's present political climate. Celebrities regarded as well-known and with massive cult-like followings are combined with the candidate's great moral and physical support (usually entertainment figures or personnel). The literature review on celebrities in politics highlighted a few potential channels via which the media might help well-known entertainers advance their political careers. Celebrity candidates have a reasonable probability of garnering much more media attention than rivals, giving them a significant edge in voters' eyes. This would corroborate West and Orman's (2019) claim that media outlets prefer to feature superstars with a more extensive fan base. Therefore, the electoral advantage grows even if one tries to reduce media appearances in non-news items.

Testing these systems to comprehend how celebrities profit from them is crucial. Celebrities, including actors, artists, and others, have spoken out regarding the US elections, either endorsing candidates or advocating for ideas. This has been evident since the early 20th century when silent film legends Al Jolson and Mary Pickford backed President Warren G. Harding (Morello, 2020). Politics and celebrity links, however, have proliferated in recent years, and the public now anticipates well-known figures to back a candidate, ideology, or political party (Jackson & Darrow, 2019).

According to Jackson and Darrow (2019), because young people revere celebrities more than their older counterparts, endorsing a celebrity they respect functions as a confirmation bias if voters are already inclined to support a particular politician. Celebrities influence young voters' decisions, but other external factors also have an impact. According to West and Orman (2019), if the audience already has an opinion on the supplied content, they are likelier to listen to a less trustworthy source that confirms it than an expert who disagrees.

Young voters are a target for campaigns because they have receptive minds and because well-known individuals among them serve as both role models and endorsers. Furthermore, as Von Sikorski et al. (2019) stated, most studies on celebrity support for political candidates focus on how well the endorsement and celebrity "fit." However, the implications of celebrity mismatches with sponsored candidates in the Nigerian context still need to be better understood.

Responders in their early 20s have the lowest political participation and are not politically active was the lowest voter turnout to be in the age of young adults (Kimberlee, 2002; Hooghe et al., 2004; Fieldhouse et al., 2007; Cross & Young, 2008).

Celebrity political endorsements have become a widespread practice, experiencing substantial growth in recent years. Friedrich and Nitsch's 2019 research project highlighted this trend: "Celebrity political endorsement and young voters in Europe: A five-country comparison on celebrity support efficacy in the European elections."

It refers to well-known individuals publicly supporting political parties or candidates throughout election seasons. The study intends to add to the European perspective by assessing the effectiveness of such endorsement in the context of the 2014 European legislative elections. The study's results, which also conflict with the underlying ideas, showed that there were just a few statistically significant effects.

Additionally, celebrity opinions and support of political candidates causes, and officeholders have grown widely in the media before and after elections. Many sports, comedians, talk-show presenters, and performers express their thoughts to the public to sway their audience. These figures frequently impact public opinion by supporting causes like reproductive freedom, environmental conservation, and human rights. According to the study, young folks are more prone to listen to non-celebrity sources of political information. They do, however, consider that celebrity's impact on public opinion. The survey also reveals that respondents' perceptions of celebrity endorsements are influenced by their gender and ethnicity (O'Regan, 2014).

Celebrities have progressively risen to the forefront of contemporary politics, appearing in everything from presidential elections to social awareness campaigns (Madinga, 2021). They frequently serve as informational hubs for the candidates and political organizations that they either openly support or formally endorse. People noticed when South African political parties mobilized the nation's well-known celebrities to support them publicly. Political parties invest much money in celebrity endorsements because it is thought that these endorsements can benefit from "secondary brand linkages." This raises the question of whether voter intent is affected by the rising use of celebrity endorsements in political campaigns.

The study's findings indicate a noteworthy and positive relationship between endorser credibility, political party credibility, and voters' intentions. Furthermore, a positive and significant connection exists between political party credibility and voters' intentions. The paper concludes by discussing managerial implications, acknowledging its limitations, and suggesting areas for future research.

For example, a renowned daytime talk show host, Oprah Winfrey, endorsed Barack Obama in 2007 during his candidacy for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination.

The influence of hearing about her endorsement is investigated in this study using data from an experiment. The number of participants' positive thoughts of Obama or how much they found him likable was unaffected by their exposure to such news (Majic et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, participants who read about the endorsement tended to perceive that Obama had an improved chance of securing the nomination and were more inclined to consider voting for him. These findings emphasize the importance of celebrity endorsement research, encompassing their impact on candidate support and subtler effects like their influence on assessments of viability.

Additionally, celebrities frequently enter the political realm, as evidenced by Scott Baio's support for Donald Trump and Sarah Silverman's backing of Bernie Sanders, which led to the DNC rejecting the "Bernie or Bust" crowd. However, much empirical study has not been done on celebrity political candidate endorsements. In line with branding theory, this study uses advertising effectiveness models to analyze the efficacy of celebrity political endorsements. The primary model translates the source factors

of a celebrity candidate endorser, such as credibility, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, into those of a celebrity product endorser. It was developed from work by Amos, Holmes, and Strutton (2008).

Conventional advertising research uses results like brand attitude and purchase intention to gauge effectiveness. This study defines effectiveness as the readiness to engage in electoral and online civic activities and sentiments toward the candidate, endorsement plausibility, and recognition. Participants were given access to a social media post from a well-known actor promoting a fictitious politician after giving demographic data, details about digital media usage, and information regarding partisanship. They were also asked to rate the actor on 21 source factors—qualities that make a good endorser. Furthermore, they respond to questions about their identification with the Celebrity, their opinions of how well the Celebrity and the candidate fit together, and their assessments of the candidate's chances of winning the election. After that, they were asked to assess the credibility of the endorsement. Moreover, the candidate identifies vital details from the endorsement and states their likelihood of engaging in nine civic behaviors on behalf of the candidate. The statistics indicate that the endorser effectiveness model utilized by advertising experts aids in understanding the source factors and other factors that influence the impact of celebrity political endorsements.

The study concluded that celebrity endorsers with diverse traits might be helpful to political campaigns depending on desired voter outcomes, particularly regarding time during a campaign cycle. It discovered that source factors vary in effectiveness between attitudinal, cognitive, and behavioral measures (Sanati, 2017).

Furthermore, Agina and Ekwevugbe (2017) focused on celebrities who use their existing platforms to disseminate awareness of the political system rather than celebrities who have become politicians to study celebrity endorsement. Researchers find it difficult to calculate the effects of an endorsement since they must take the voter's level of support, membership in interest groups, and political views into account because of this bias (Garthwaite & Moore, 2019). In addition to Agina & Ekwevugbe (2017), political and Celebrity endorsements directed at certain politicians or parties can cause conflict. Celebrities have, however, undertaken nonpartisan efforts to motivate young people to register to vote. The "Our Time Initiative and Concert" was established in Nigeria without promoting any political party and performed throughout its six geographical regions.

This study created the concept of celebrity engagement, which is the audience's relationship with mediated celebrities, through three sub-dimensions: affinity, parasocial links, and identification (Nainan et al., 2014). This study investigated the methods through which young people's connections with celebrities influence their participation in politics and civic life. A study of 248 undergraduate students in Macau, a Special Administrative Region of China, discovered a tangential link between political activism and celebrity involvement. Situational involvement and self-efficacy, respectively, influenced this association.

To ascertain if and under what circumstances Celebrity endorsements can influence voters between the ages of 18 and 24, Dalbey (2017) performed the study *Celebrity Endorsements and Voting Intentions: The Role of Liking and Preference for Consistency*. One hundred eighty-eight participants had access to a survey that was conducted online. Participants in the poll had a quick look at a politician's fake Facebook profile, which included a famous person endorsing the politician. Participants were questioned about their favorite candidate and endorser if they valued consistency, how they voted, and their level of political self-efficacy after viewing the Facebook page. Findings from the study showed that persons who preferred consistency more strongly were more inclined to feel optimistic about a political candidate if they liked the endorsement. Results about how we view celebrity endorsements in the political sector are further investigated.

William G. Smith (2018) stated that women are more active than men in responding to online surveys. They are also participative in class and receive better grades and feedback than men.

Even though academics have long expressed concern about young people who lack voter motivation, this generation turned out in historic numbers for the 2004 presidential election (Austin et al., 2008). To understand how and why celebrity-endorsed, get-out-the-vote efforts may have motivated young voters between 18 and 24 to participate in an election campaign. This study analyzed the influence of campaigns on individual decision-making traits. Surveys measuring political efficacy, engagement, complacency, and indifference were completed by 305 college students from introductory general education classes during the fall of 2004. Findings indicated that receptivity to celebrity spokespeople predicted lower levels of complacency and higher levels of self-efficacy. Complacency had independent effects on involvement and self-efficacy. The results suggest that these campaigns can influence positive change in the political engagement of the younger citizenry.

James Sloam (2016) stated that there is a significant dissimilarity in youth's level of participation; youth participation, compared to an adult, has different forms of political action. There is a large gap between young people's and older adults' political engagement in the United Kingdom.

However, a study by Blouin (2014) found that celebrities significantly influence neither presidential elections nor the voting habits of young people. However, this study discovered that many people think celebrities have a more significant influence than they do. Celebrities' lack of political impact and persuasiveness is explored along with several contributing factors, such as source legitimacy, dependability, and desensitization. This Thesis should advance knowledge and understanding of political science and the media. Additionally, this study will inspire the public and young people to consider their voting decisions thoroughly and critically.

A comprehensive examination of voting behavior and the impact of celebrities is explored in the study titled "Hollywood Left and Right: How Movie Stars Shaped American Politics" by Steven J. Ross. This study provides an in-depth and focused analysis of the significant role that movie stars have had in influencing American politics, particularly in the realm of voting behavior.

The source states that "much of the research on celebrity influence within politics has focused on surveys and personal interviews" (Ross 1). For example, in "1993, researchers Prindle and Endersby surveyed 35 Hollywood' opinion leaders' and compared their answers to similar questions used in a nationally representative poll" (Kendall 2). In a study published in 1984, Rothman and Lichter "surveyed 95 writers, producers, and directors of top fifty box office grossing films between 1964 and 1982 and compared their answers to other 'elites'" (Kendall 2). However, a recent study by Todd Kendall at Clemson University focuses on more economical and quantifiable data. In the Kendall and Clemson study, the author examines several criteria relevant to political party affiliation, including race, gender, country of birth, and educational level.

Eight focus groups also discussed celebrities' influence and legitimacy when speaking on political and social topics. Young people view celebrity influence differently, according to research. Celebrity type, general credibility, identification with, and fit an issue were all essential considerations in evaluating celebrity political credibility. The alleged influence of celebrities was seen as increasing interest in a topic but not necessarily a shift in viewpoint. There was much apparent power over other people, albeit this was not always viewed favorably. Social media was the primary medium for the consumption of celebrity political appeals. Interweaving all critical themes reveals that young voters employ aspirational identification and attachment to celebrities to navigate political messages. The paper also delves into normative implications and provides insights for future research (Gwendolyn et al.; DeWalt, 2016).

However, Batara (2021) noted that a weak party structure, a poor voter knowledge environment, a history of dynastic control, and the predominance of media superstars in elected political offices had marked the Philippine elections. The significance of candidates' personal history was highlighted by the fact that these traits contributed to the conclusion that candidate winnability in the country is commonly regarded as a "personality versus program" dilemma. This study examines a few factors related to young, educated voters' choices for senatorial candidates in 2019. This inquiry analyzed how party identification, issue orientation, candidate orientation, and pre-election surveys affect voters' candidate preferences. Survey data were obtained from 210 purposively sampled youth voters and were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

Overall, the study's findings show a positive correlation between respondents' party identification and voting preferences and a clear correlation between respondents' voting preferences and pre-election polls. Issue orientation is not a primary independent variable or candidate orientation. The study's findings diverge from the general Philippine election trend, which strongly emphasizes candidate-centered criteria to explain Filipino vote preferences.

Additionally, political candidates' desire to win elections has led to their use of marketing strategies like celebrity endorsements (Asomaning, 2020). There have been instances of celebrities endorsing different political candidates. The current study aimed to determine how celebrity endorsements affected young Ghanaian voters' choice of political candidates. Regression statistics were used in the study's quantitative methodology to determine the influence. A sample of roughly 400 students (respondents) was selected for the study. The findings indicated that celebrity endorsements had a marginally beneficial but statistically significant impact on young voters' political candidate preferences. This suggests that political parties that use celebrities to promote their candidates and companies may be able to sway young people to vote for their preferred politicians. It is advised that celebrity endorsements be developed to increase their ability to leave a lasting impression on the minds of young voters. They improved young voters' ability to identify political candidates at polling places and influenced the recall of political figures during general elections. Since most of these advertisements are aimed at and consumed by young voters, policymakers should put procedures in place to limit the content and style of advertisements that celebrities can run for political parties.

The choice of political candidates during national elections is found to be more influenced by celebrity endorsement among undergraduates than postgraduates and graduates. Only celebrity personalities made a statistically significant positive contribution to the choice of political candidates, while celebrity advertising and celebrity personality accounted for a statistically significant moderate positive variance. Celebrity personality and Celebrity advertising alone contributed 10.4% and 36.6% of the significant

positive variance in voting for political candidates. During the national elections in Ghana, political parties and candidates must use celebrity endorsement as a campaign tactic since it will influence young voters' voting intentions in favor of their candidates (Ababio, 2020).

Scholars have only recently attempted to analyze the effects of celebrity endorsements of politicians on voter views and behavior despite much research examining the effects of celebrity endorsements in commercial advertising. Through an experiment examining the effects of various news stories describing a celebrity's endorsement of a political candidate on participants' voting attitudes, perceptions of candidate credibility, and intent to vote, this study adds to the body of knowledge on the effects of celebrity political endorsements. Although participants believe that celebrities with high and low credibility have different levels of credibility, neither the Celebrity's endorsement nor the endorser's sexual orientation affects attitudes toward the endorsed candidate, perceptions of that candidate's credibility, or intended voting behavior (David et al., 2017)

3. Objective Of the Study

The study aims to determine the influence of celebrities on voting preferences among students in the College of Arts and Sciences during the 2022 election. The research project centered on examining the demographic profile of the respondents, assessing the influence of celebrities on college students' voting preferences during the May 2022 Philippine election, and exploring potential relationships between the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and the degree of influence attributed to celebrities.

4. Methodology

The methods and techniques used in the study are in this part. The chapter specifically covered the research design, research environment, research instrument, research procedures, data gathering, data analysis, ethical consideration, the trustworthiness of the study, and the definition of terms.

4.1 Research Design

This quantitative study utilized the descriptive–correlational method to determine the influence of celebrities on voting preferences among students at the College of Arts and Sciences during the 2022 election. This research used an online survey questionnaire through Google Forms to gather data.

4.2 Research Environment

The ss was conducted at the University of Cebu - Main Campus, specifically the College of Arts and Sciences on the second floor of the Don Manuel Gotianuy Building. The College of Arts and Sciences offers four majors, including English Language, Political Science, Psychology, and Performing Arts, with a total enrollment of 1,077 students in SY 2022 - 2023. The University of Cebu's main campus is in Cebu City, along Sanciango Street.

4.3 Research Respondents

The respondents of this study are the College of Arts and Sciences students of the University of Cebu - Main Campus aged 18 - 25 years old, male and female, and registered voters of the Philippines.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents

Type of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Political Science	25	29.2
Psychology	75	48.7
English Language	18	11.7
Performing Arts	16	10.4
Total	154	100

4.4 Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study is an online questionnaire composed of three parts. The consent was the first component. The socio-demographic profile of the responders is in the second section. In the third section, the respondents answered the thirty questions that fall into five categories: the respondents' general perspective, digital citizenship, humanitarian efforts vis-a-vis the Celebrity, societal projection of celebrities in an individual's life, and celebrities who earned a degree. Respondents rated their responses on a scale of 1 to 4. 4 very influential, 3 significantly influential, 2 slightly influential, and 1 not at all influential, respectively. The researchers developed these questions to understand how celebrities influence the respondents' voting preferences.

Table 2
Interpretation of results

Range	Scale	Description
(1.00-1.75)	4	Not at all influential
(1.76-2.50)	3	Significantly influential
(2.51-3.25)	2	Slightly influential
(3.26-4.00)	1	Very influential

4.5 Research Procedures

Before data gathering, the researchers requested to conduct a questionnaire-based interview with two hundred ninety-nine random college students inside the University of Cebu - Main campus. Phase one is the processing of a letter of permission to conduct a study will be secured. Phase 2, after the approval of the request, the researchers will conduct a questionnaire-based interview with two hundred ninety-nine random students at the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Cebu - Main campus. Finally, in phase 3, after gathering the answered questionnaire, the researchers interpreted the data and concluded.

4.5.1 Data Gathering

The researchers asked the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences permission to conduct their research in the College of Arts and Sciences Department by sending her a letter of authorization. After receiving consent, the researchers used a Google form to distribute the online questionnaires to the College of Arts and Sciences departments. To provide a result that includes the College of Arts and Sciences students at the University of Cebu-Main Campus, the researcher also requested the help of the SBO Office.

The researchers presented a letter informing the participants of the interview's guidelines and their right to refuse. Informed consent is obtained, showing that research participants agreed to the study's terms and conditions, although their responses will remain confidential.

4.5.2 Treatment of Data

The survey forms collected from each respondent were noted, tallied, summarized, and analyzed by the researchers. The following statistical tools were used to analyze the collected data: Frequency Count and Percent, which were applied to summarize the respondents' demographic profile in terms of age, gender, program enrolled, and year level. Additionally, Weighted Mean was employed to summarize the perceived level of influence that celebrities have on the voting preferences of the respondents. The study organized the preferences into five categories: General Perspective, Digital Citizenship, Humanitarian Efforts related to Celebrities, Societal Impact of Celebrities on Individual Lives, and Respondents with Earned Degrees. To evaluate the significance of the relationships between these variables in our research profile and the level of influence exerted by celebrities on voting preferences, Chi-square analysis was employed.

5. Results and Discussion

This section of the paper encompasses analyzing and interpreting data collected from the respondents.

Table 3
Sex of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Proportion
Male	53	34.4
Female	101	65.6
Total	154	100.0

Table 3 revealed that out of 154 respondents, the majority were females, with a frequency of 101 or 65.6 percent, while the male respondents only comprised 50 or 34.4 percent. Obviously, in this study, more female respondents responded to the survey. It is also known that the College of Arts and Sciences in the University of Cebu – Main campus, where the study was conducted, had a student population of 7.49% female and 2.98% male. This may later affect the variability of the data.

This information agrees with the study of William G. Smith (2018), which stated that women are more active than men in responding to online surveys. They are also participative in class and receive better grades and feedback than men.

Table 4
Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Proportion
18 – 19 years old	21	13.6
20 – 21 years old	79	51.3
22 – 23 years old	41	26.6
24 – 25 years old	13	8.4
Total	154	100.0

Table 4 revealed that out of 154 respondents, the highest percentage is under the bracket of 20-21 years old, with a frequency of 79 or 51.3 percent. This is followed by the age bracket of 22-23 years old, with a frequency of 41 or 26.6 percent. At the same time, the age bracket of 18-19 years old has a frequency of 21 or 13.6 percent. Lastly, the age bracket of 24-25 got the least, with a 1.3 or 8.4 percent frequency.

This data contradicts the study that responders in their early 20s have the lowest political participation and are not politically active, where the lowest voter turnout is in the age of young adults (Kimberlee, 2002; Hooghe et al., 2004; Fieldhouse et al., 2007; Cross & Young, 2008).

Table 5
Year level of the Respondents

Year Level	Frequency	Proportion
First Year	38	24.7
Second Year	86	55.8
Third Year	8	5.2
Fourth Year	22	14.3
Total	154	100.0

Table 5 revealed that the highest number of respondents are in 2nd year, with a frequency of 86 or 55.8 percent; 1st year has a frequency of 38 or 24.7 percent, while the 4th year has a frequency of 22 or 14.3 percent. The 3rd year has the lowest frequency of 8 or 5.2 percent.

This information agrees with the study of James Sloam (2016), who stated that there is a significant dissimilarity in youth's level of participation. Compared to an adult, youth participation has different forms of political action. There is a large gap between young and older adults' political engagement in the United Kingdom.

Table 6
Respondents' Program Enrolled

Program Enrolled	Frequency	Proportion
AB Political Science	45	29.2
AB Psychology	75	48.7
AB English Language	18	11.7
AB Performing Arts	16	10.4
Total	154	100

Table 6 revealed that Psychology has the highest frequency with 75 or 48.7 percent, Political Science has the frequency of 45 or 29.2 percent, followed by the English Language with a frequency of 18 or 11.7 percent. This data revealed that Performing Arts has the lowest frequency, with 16 or 10.4 percent.

This information agrees that psychologists, who play a significant role in the rapidly expanding multidisciplinary subject of relationship science, are paying more attention to the impact of social connections on human development and behavior (Reis et al., 2000).

Table 7
Level of Influence of Celebrities on Voting Preferences

Level of Influence	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Description
Humanitarian Efforts vis-à-vis with the Celebrity	2.9935	.46437	1	Significantly Influential
General Perspective	2.9481	.49563	2	Significantly Influential
Celebrities Who Earned Degree	2.8961	.48734	3	Significantly Influential
Societal Projection of Celebrities in Individual's Lives	2.8117	.56902	4	Significantly Influential
Digital Citizenship	2.7792	.46084	5	Significantly Influential
Grand Mean	3.1169	.42700		Significantly Influential

Table 7 shows that the humanitarian efforts vis-à-vis with the Celebrity came out on top, or ranked 1, with a mean of 2.9935 and a standard deviation of 0.46437. The general perspective comes in second with a mean of 2.9481 and a standard deviation of 0.49563. Third, celebrities who earned degrees have a mean of 2.8961 and a standard deviation of 0.48734. Fourth is the societal projection of celebrities in individuals' lives, with a mean of 2.8117 and a standard deviation of 0.56902. Finally, with a mean of 2.7792 and a standard deviation of 0.46084, digital citizenship received the lowest ranking. As a result, the research suggests that the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences is significantly influential.

This information concurred with the Rational Choice Theory of Sam Smith (1993), the Transfer Theory of McCracken (1989), and the Theory of Planned Behavior of Ajzen (1991).

This result subscribed to the Rational Choice Theory of Sam Smith (1993); knowing an actor's interests and anticipating that they would be pursued rationally is more important for understanding political behavior than history and culture. Rational choice theory's main principle is that individual actors' decisions ultimately influence collective human behavior. Therefore, each person makes decisions depending on their preferences and the limitations they face.

Moreover, the Transfer theory of McCracken (1989) is a model to study the relationship between celebrities, politicians, and voters. McCracken stated that celebrities are well-known and regarded as societal role models because of their talent or attractiveness. Therefore, celebrities can influence people's objectives, hopes, and dreams (Rockwell & Giles, 2009).

The Theory of Planned Behavior also anticipates an individual's intention to partake in a specific activity at a designated time and location. It postulates that behavior is influenced by behavioral intentions, including an individual's attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

Table 8
Significant Relationship Between Paired Variables: Profile of the Respondents and Level of Influence of Celebrities on Voting Preferences

Variables	df	Computed Value	P-value	Decision	Interpretation	Strength
Sex & Level of Influence	3	11.274	0.010	Reject H _o	Significant	C= 0.271 Weak Association
Age & Level of Influence	9	6.603	0.678	Failed to Reject H _o	Not Significant	n/a
Year Level & Level of Influence	9	4.150	0.901	Failed to Reject H _o	Not Significant	n/a
Program Enrolled & Level of Influence	9	20.488	0.015	Reject H _o	Significant	C= 0.211 Weak Association

As shown in Table 8, there is a significant relationship between the sex of the respondents and the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences, $\chi^2(3, N = 154) = 11.274, p = 0.010$. On the other hand, there is no significant relationship between the respondent's age and the influence of celebrities on voting preferences, $\chi^2(9, N = 154) = 6.603, p = 0.678$. Also, there is no significant relationship between the year level and the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences, $\chi^2(9, N = 154) = 4.150, p = 0.901$. However, there is a significant result for the relationship between the program enrolled and the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences, $\chi^2(9, N = 154) = 20.488, p = 0.015$.

As shown in the table, the profile of the respondents in terms of age and year level and the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences is not significant, which led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. Conversely, a notable relationship exists between respondents' characteristics, specifically their gender and enrolled program, and the extent of celebrities' influence on voting preferences. This relationship rejects the null hypothesis.

6. Conclusion

This study seeks to determine the level of influence on voting preferences of students in the College of Arts and Sciences in terms of general perspectives, digital citizenship, humanitarian efforts vis-à-vis the Celebrity, societal projection of celebrities in individual lives, and celebrities who earned a degree. It sought answers to the socio-demographic profile like age, sex, program enrolled, and year level. It also answered celebrities' influence level among college students' voting preferences during the May 2022 election. Lastly, it investigated the significant relationship between the respondents' sociodemographic profile and celebrities' influence level among college students' voting preferences during the May 2022 election.

It was revealed that almost half of the ages 20-21 years old followed by 22-23 years old next is the age of 18-19 years old and lastly, the age bracket of 24-25 got the least. It was also found that most of the respondents were females. Psychology and Political Science are the next for most respondents, followed by the English Language and Performing Arts, which has the lowest number of respondents. Regarding year level, the highest number of respondents are in the second year, next is the first year, followed by the fourth year, and the least is the third year. On the other hand, the most preferred candidate is those with humanitarian efforts vis-à-vis the Celebrity. Second is the general perspective. Third is the celebrities who earned degrees. Fourth is the societal projection of celebrities into individuals' lives. Lastly, digital citizenship got the lowest rank. The celebrities' influence on the students' voting preferences during the May 2022 election is significantly influential.

The profile of respondents in terms of age and year level has no significant relationship to the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. However, there is a significant relationship between the profile of respondents in terms of sex and program enrolled and the level of influence of celebrities on voting preferences that led to the null hypothesis rejection.

Celebrities' influence over students' voting preferences in the May 2022 election is significantly influential. According to the survey responses, celebrities who earned degrees, the societal projection of celebrities in people's lives, digital citizenship, and the politician's humanitarian efforts relative to the celebrity, in general, significantly impact how the students vote.

This study has several limitations that might have affected the result. First, the survey has been limited to 300 randomly selected College of Arts and Sciences students. Next, the students selected for the surveys were located at the University of Cebu Main Campus. However, the general target date for the survey administration and participation was December 30, 2022, to January 2023. The survey needed to be completed due to various unforeseen issues.

Additionally, the student participants must be knowledgeable enough about politics. However, many were from various disciplines, and more political knowledge is needed. Although this study finds similar results to other recent research, more research is needed on a larger scale to corroborate or disprove these findings.

Consequently, the following topic is recommended for further research: Assessment of the University of Cebu – Main Campus voting preferences; Level of Perception on the Influence of Celebrities during Election; Students Voting Preferences During Election; Level of Influence of Political Candidates Humanitarian Efforts vis-à-vis with the Celebrity; The Impact of Celebrities' Digital Citizenship during Election; and Level of Influence of Celebrity Running as Political candidates during Election.

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